

## Moray Economic Partnership

**Wednesday 17 April 2024 (MS Teams) – 9.00am**

Graham Leadbitter (Chair)	Moray Council (TMC)
Jim Grant	Moray Council
Beverley Smith	Moray Council
Lorna Williamson	Moray Council
Michael Kelly	Moray Council
Sandy Keith	Moray Council
Fabio Villani	tsiMoray
Andrew Anderson	tsiMoray
Mike Duncan	Federation Small Business (FSB)
Sarah Medcraf	Moray Chamber of Commerce (MCC)
Carol Wink (Minutes)	Highlands and Islands Enterprise

### Apologies

David Reid	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Rhona Gunn	Moray Council
Marc Macrae	Moray Council
David Patterson	Moray College UHI
Gemma Cruickshank	Visit Moray Speyside
Stephen Sheridan	Skills Development Scotland

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting. Sincere thanks were conveyed to Jim Grant, who is due to retire at the end of April, for the key role he has played as a member of the MEP and in the wider economic development of Moray.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Beverley Smith who will take over from Jim as representative on the MEP Board.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Minutes from last meeting</b></p> <p>The Minute from 14 December 2023 was agreed.</p> <p><b>Update on Actions</b></p> <p>A full update on actions will be given at the next MEP meeting.</p> <p>Fabio Villani, tsiMoray queried whether consideration had been given to including Edward Fittell, the recently appointed Social Enterprise Development Manager, on to the Business Enterprise Hub (BEH) Project Board. TMC will pass the request to the BEH contact at Moray College UHI.</p> <p>Sarah Medcraf, MCC, requested an update on the Childcare Frameworks and progress being made by the Childcare Working Group. Jim Grant reported that</p>	

	<p>the regional Working Group continues to work on high level lobbying to Scottish Government and the Care Commission as many of the issues, particularly in rural areas, concern the interpretation and application of rules set out by the Care Commission making childcare in rural areas an unviable proposition. The Employability Team at Moray Council are working on the wrap-around childcare issue looking at ways of getting parents back into work. The local Childcare Working Group is starting up again and due to meet next week. Graham Leadbitter, TMC, expressed an interest in being part of this group and will be invited to attend as an observer.</p> <p>Graham Leadbitter queried what additional work is required to get private sector providers to consider expanding their childcare offering. The Moray situation is unique due to having the highest dependence on private sector provision but limited sites available to increase places available. This unique set of circumstances could be used as a case study for lobbying Scottish Government and the Care Commission. Jim Grant reported that the local Childcare Working Group had done a lot of work looking at the viability of making school premises available for wrap around childcare. This piece of work is being followed up by the Employability Team and is essential for developing a business case.</p> <p>Sarah Medcraf highlighted the valuable information gathered from the Childcare Parent and Carer, and Childcare Provider survey's previously undertaken and that a further manageable piece of work is required with the businesses who expressed their wish to expand.</p>	
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Main Topic – UKSPF Update Paper</b></p> <p>The UKSPF update paper sets out proposed amendments to the spend on some of the existing approved projects and seeks approval to the proposed spend of unallocated year-3 budget.</p> <p>The paper was discussed in detail and was formally approved by MEP members.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Other Topics</b></p> <p><b>Moray Growth Deal Update</b></p> <p><u>Digital Health</u> project is now in delivery stage and doing well. A presentation delivered to UK and Scottish Government recently by the Digital Health team was very well received.</p> <p><u>Manufacturing Innovation Centre Moray (MICM)</u> project is being presented to the HIE Board for final consideration on 22 April 2024.</p> <p><u>Business Enterprise Hub (BEH)</u> project Full Business Case is being prepared. Moray College UHI is looking at alternative sources to fill a funding gap.</p> <p><u>Early Years STEM</u> Full Business Case is being finalised and is currently with Scottish Government for review.</p>	

	<p><u>Cultural Quarter</u> presented an early draft Full Business Case to the Growth Deal Board at end March 2024 and aims to have the final version ready by end June 2024.</p> <p><u>Bus Revolution</u> project is now in delivery stage and passenger numbers have been encouraging. Although doing reasonably well some scale and maintenance issues have been experienced due to the electric bus market not being as far developed as the electric car market. The project team are working to resolve these issues. Problems in securing insurance cover for the Car Share Scheme are being experienced so this could mean additional demand for the electric bus service.</p> <p>Michael Kelly will arrange update sessions for MEP members on the Growth Deal projects that are up and running.</p> <p>The Growth Deal annual report is currently being drafted and will be circulated to MEP members for review prior to the final report being presented to Council in May 2024.</p> <p><b>Levelling Up Fund Update</b> A decision is awaited from UK Government on the bid submitted for Round 3 Levelling Up funds. This decision is time critical to enable the complex capital projects to be delivered by the deadline of March 2026.</p> <p><b>Town Centre Funding Update</b> A formal Town Board has been established and a Chair along with 15 Board Members appointed. The first full meeting is scheduled to take place on 19 April 2024. There is a tight timescale for the development and submission of an Investment Plan to UK Government. The Town Board will call for ideas followed by public engagement to consult and capture feedback on the ideas coming forward. The Town funding covers the whole of Elgin with opportunities for community safety; high street regeneration; and transport. There is a tight timescale with the aim for an Investment Plan to be drafted by June 2024 and the final draft version being submitted to UK Government by end July 2024.</p>	
5.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Fabio Villani reported that the Impact Journey training programme has been completed. Participants have enjoyed and benefitted from the programme which will help to increase and enhance the social economic impact of their businesses. Follow up sessions are being planned.</p> <p>Fabio Villani also reported that tsiMoray/third sector has attracted and distributed around £1.25m of funding over 23/24 to support local development projects.</p> <p>A date for the next meeting will be circulated in due course.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and brought the meeting to a close.</p>	

<b>Actions carried forward from 14 December 2023</b>	
TMC will provide an update on the School Age Childcare Delivery Framework and National Children's Charter for School Age Childcare in Scotland.	TMC
HIE will provide an update on Talent/Working Age Population.	HIE

<b>Actions from 17 April 2024</b>	
TMC will pass tsiMoray's request for consideration to be given to include Edward Fittell, the recently appointed Social Enterprise Development Manager, on to the Business Enterprise Hub (BEH) Project Board.	TMC
Graham Leadbitter, TMC, to be invited to attend the local Childcare Working Group meetings as an observer.	TMC
TMC will arrange update sessions on the up and running Growth Deal projects for MEP members.	TMC
The draft Growth Deal annual report will be circulated to MEP members for review prior to the final report being presented to Council in May 2024.	TMC