

Moray Economic Partnership

Teams Meeting

Wednesday 30 September 2020 @ 14:00

Graham Leadbitter (Chair)	Leader, Moray Council
Andrew Anderson	tsiMoray
Jacqui Taylor	Moray College UHI
Jim Grant	Moray Council
John Cowe	Councillor, Moray Council
Katherine Mackintosh	Robertson
Laurie Piper	Visit Moray Speyside
Michael O'Donnell	Moray Council
Pearl Hamilton	FSB
Rona Campbell	HIE
Stephen Sheridan	SDS
Stuart Black	HIE
Tim Eagle	Councillor, Moray Council
Kerry Williams (Minutes)	HIE

Apologies

Rhona Gunn	Moray Council
Ewen Mackintosh	Gordon & MacPhail
Dr Jamie Hogg	NHS Grampian
David Patterson	Moray College UHI
Sarah Medcraf	Moray Chamber of Commerce

1.	Welcome by Chair	
2.	Minutes of meeting of 26 August Minute agreed.	
3.	Round Table Updates The end of the furlough scheme and its replacement job support package is likely to lead to an inevitable increase in unemployment. There have been recruitment problems within the NHS and this has been resolved with support from external agencies. The PACE partnership is offering a presentation to the local HR network next week. The construction industry is seeing projects coming to an end over the next couple of months with no pipeline projects coming through thereafter. There's a lot of uncertainty in the industry.	

	<p>HIE have launched two new finance products – the Digital Enablement Grant and Young Company capital investment grant.</p> <p>The tourism industry has been looking quite healthy over the past month. The recent TV campaign performed well and there has been a spike in visitors. NE250 re-activated a previous campaign and over-achieved outputs by 450%. The new message from Scottish Government ‘rule of 1 household’ means cancellations of larger group bookings. Major concerns around the end of furlough for the tourism and hospitality industries.</p> <p>Anxiety in communities about the impact of Covid19. TsiMoray funding at a lower level with employability now the key area for focus. The follow-on from the LEADER development officer programme is an important priority</p> <p>Moray College UHI continuing with day to day activities. Students are settling into courses with various teaching methods - some 100% online and some blended. Teething issues have now been sorted. Applicants are enlisting in Facebook live sessions for this academic year and 2021/22. The college is looking at more ways of flexible delivery eg evening and part-time but this is challenging. Also working alongside SDS for future requirements.</p> <p>Modern apprenticeship numbers low.</p> <p>Will keep a close eye on numbers of student dropouts around December.</p> <p>The college has run three construction courses (CSCS card) with strong demand from Job Centres.</p> <p>Workplace-based academies eg in distilleries, are being explored.</p> <p>Awaiting details on the Flexible Workers Development Fund training and the date when it is to be launched.</p> <p>All growth deal project partners have been preparing the Outline Business Cases to be submitted by December for signing off by March 2021.</p> <p>Environmental Health have been working closely with businesses to mitigate the risk of a local lockdown ensuring compliance and information is available to keep cases of Covid-19 low. Concerns were raised over the funfair in Elgin but this was felt on balance to be good for the economy and comparatively safe. Organisers had spoken at length with Environmental Health to adhere to the regulations and deliver a safe experience.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Working Group Updates</p> <p>Small Business Development Group</p> <p>The Business Resilience Forum had been the forum for discussion on small business issues and led to the launch of the digital and new company</p>	

	<p>products.</p> <p>There has been an increased demand for business space and start-up support centres in the region with space not staying empty for long, especially if wrap-around admin support is included. It was suggested it would be a good idea to group together business hubs or incubator units in outlying geographical locations such as Buckie. Operators would need to be mindful not to complement existing activity.</p> <p>Skills and Employability Group</p> <p>85 to 90% actions in the Skills Investment Plan were complete prior to Covid-19 situation. A review of the skills investment plan was put on hold due to COVID 19 however the group has continued to meet fortnightly and developed the action plan which forms part of the Economic Recovery Plan on the agenda today.</p> <p>Talent Attraction Group</p> <p>Involved in skills initiatives. Moray has a growing population and the opportunities and retention/attraction issues amongst youngsters are very different to the landscape 18 months ago.</p> <p>Dr Gray’s Hospital has seen a change in recruitment and training and so the delivery model has changed. There is smaller pool of specialist doctors versus generalist doctors and Dr Gray’s are working on blended recruitment between hospitals to provide support in these specialities.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Moray Economic Recovery report</p> <p>JG referred to the Economic Recovery report that had been circulated to members previously. Concerns were raised about where funds would come for the projects. HIE will be looking to support a wider range of Moray businesses and community organisations.</p> <p>Most members were championing local procurement to keep jobs and to develop local sectors to meet tenders, with value in sub-contracts and in collaboration to secure larger contracts. Local procurement meets with the climate change strategy by reducing carbon footprints.</p> <p>KM asked how KPIs and success will be measured? JG confirmed a more detailed report will be produced with a breakdown at working group level to report back to MEP.</p> <p>The chair asked if all members were comfortable with the recommendations in the report and this was agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Issues raised by members –</p> <p>Brexit</p> <p>The UKG are in the final couple of weeks of trade talks and we need to be prepared depending on what the negotiations bring by mid-October. The immigration policy prevents EU low skilled workers coming to the UK which is of concern to local employers who rely on this workforce. It would be good to</p>	

	<p>have devolved policies, however, not much information is available. The UKG opened a new trade hub in Scotland. SB said if there are any companies with concerns, to please contact HIE. There will be a further update on Brexit at the next meeting at the end of October.</p> <p>Action: SB/JG to report on effect of Brexit negotiations</p> <p>Duty Free Retail</p> <p>There are some concerns over removal of the scheme for Duty free VAT rebate for international shoppers. This will affect a number of luxury brand businesses in the area</p> <p>Covid 19 Measures</p> <p>Previously discussed in Item 5</p> <p>Business Rates Revaluation</p> <p>There is a call for business rates to be reviewed to assist businesses coming out of Covid recovery phase. The rateable values do not reflect current market values and would need to be looked at again in terms of turnover, business use, square meterage, etc.</p>	SB/JG
7.	<p>AOB</p> <p>No other business.</p>	
8.	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 28th October 2020 at 14:00</p>	