

## Moray Economic Partnership

### Teams Meeting

Wednesday 24 November 2021 @ 14:00

Graham Leadbitter (Chair)	Moray Council
Amy Cruickshank	Moray Council
David Reid	HIE
David Patterson	Moray College UHI
Jim Grant	Moray Council
John Cowe	Councillor, Moray Council
Kara Stewart	Moray Chamber of Commerce
Katherine Mackintosh	Robertson
Laurie Piper	Visit Moray Speyside
Pearl Hamilton	FSB
Sharon Dunbar	Moray Council
Stephen Sheridan	SDS
Stuart Black	HIE
Raj Singhal	White Label Creative
Bonnie Stephensmith	White Label Creative
Kerry Williams (Minutes)	HIE

### Apologies

Andrew Anderson	tsiMoray
Dr Jamie Hogg	NHS Grampian
Michael O'Donnell	HIE
Rhona Gunn	Moray Council
Tim Eagle	Councillor, Moray Council

<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome by Chair</b> Welcome from Chair and apologies given. Introduction to David Reid as the new incoming Interim Moray Area Manager for HIE, replacing Stuart Black in January 2022	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes from last meeting and matters arising</b> Minutes agreed and no matters arising	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Economic Recovery Update</b> JG spoke to the report that had previously been circulated to members. The report provides pre-and-post pandemic baseline data for the Key Performance Indicators.  GL was curious to know how Moray high street vacancy figures compare to other highstreets within Highlands and Islands regions. There are various reasons for fluctuations in data, such as change in building use affecting	

	<p>business rates; change of retail space into service space and conversion of upper floors of buildings into domestic accommodation, that although reduce retail economy, it also increases footfall to the town centres. There has been a national drop in retail units in town centres.</p> <p>Employment numbers for the younger generation and apprenticeships are better than expected in Moray and opportunities are available in construction and hospitality as leading industries. Conversely, unemployment figures for older generations are higher and this needs as much focus as under 25 programmes, such as Kickstart and MERI (Moray Employment Recruitment Incentive) delivered by DWP and funded by UK Government. Further Education and Higher Education can be seen as an alternative to apprenticeships.</p>	
<p><b>3a</b></p>	<p><b>Moray Chamber of Commerce Update Report</b></p> <p>Summer saw an increase in activity as the economy picked up.</p> <p>Rising Covid cases over the winter is causing nervousness among businesses with the potential for restrictions to be imposed – awaiting further announcement from FM.</p> <p>65% of businesses surveyed were against the introduction of vaccination passports in hospitality.</p> <p>Rising costs with energy, national living wage and staffing means businesses are facing more challenges alongside the pandemic.</p> <p>The agricultural sector under immense pressure with fertiliser now costing 3x more than last year and this is having a big impact on food prices overall.</p> <p>Recent focus on COP26 and climate change has highlighted incentives such as Green Job Fund and grants for business development towards green activities and the new Ventilation grant.</p> <p>Interest in the renewable energy sector has increased eg Buckie O&amp;M announcement.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Employability Update</b></p> <p>Amy Cruickshank presented the national and local picture of the Moray Pathways partnership as a single point of contact and introduced the No One Left Behind programme in the wider context.</p> <p>Over £85M in total will be invested in employability across three phases of change from SERI, to Employability Fund and Community Jobs Scotland, and Fair Start Scotland. SG and COSLA to move funds to local governments.</p>	

	<p>Incentives up to £8k can be paid to employers who support 12-month placements.</p> <p>Over 25 age group will see a boost in funding for the Third Sector and public sector only with CBP to promote the scheme.</p> <p>There are 32 employability agencies with national frameworks. SDS and Employability will join up the dots strategically.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Look at options for local employment through CPOG and feed back through MEP.</b></p>	<b>CPOG members</b>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Growth Deal</b></p> <p>JG made reference to the OBC documents previously shared with members. Three of the OBCs (MAATIC, Bus Revolution and Cultural Quarter) have been agreed and full Council will sign off on 30<sup>th</sup> November with UKG/SG ministers and MPs/MSPs signing the full deal on 20<sup>th</sup> December along with representatives from MGD board and Moray Council.</p> <p>JG asked for MEP to approve the recommendations and delegated authority to continue with the Growth Deal. No objections or comments from Community Planning Board either.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>MEP Strategy Refresh</b></p> <p>A consultant has now been appointed to carry out the update. A series of workshops and discussions will follow with a draft to be prepared for January.</p> <p>Members were asked whether the inclusion of Gaelic should be in the Economic Strategy or the Cultural Strategy? There is a statutory requirement to refresh the Gaelic Plan but this would be better placed in the Cultural Strategy as it is not an economic driver for Moray, rather more associated with place names and distilleries.</p> <p>There's a need to consider how Gaelic should feature, how it can be reasonably achieved, cost analysis and benefit to region, taking into account Government asks but also the economic requirements. Job opportunities around Gaelic are extremely low in Moray.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SS to clarify the statutory responsibilities for Gaelic plan through local Gaelic officer.</b></p>	<b>SS</b>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>MEP Media Contract</b></p> <p>White Label Creative have been busy refreshing and reinvigorating the MEP social media channels. Having reviewed the MyMoray website, it would be</p>	

	<p>more beneficial and cost effective to start from scratch on a new web platform. The original tender budget allows for this and members agreed to endorse the recommendations. The new website will not be available until the end of January and will unfortunately miss the MGD announcement but the existing site will continue to be live until a switch over is planned.</p> <p>LP asked if findings from social media sites could be shared.</p> <p><b>ACTION: White Label Creative to share social media report findings</b></p>	<b>White Label</b>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. No formal announcement yet received on future of Kinloss Barracks.</li> <li>b. Buckie windfarm, Ocean Winds announcement will see positive investment in the region for the next 30+ years. This will provide training opportunities with UHI.</li> <li>c. SB thanked MEP members for all their hard work and contribution as he will be taking on the role of chief executive of HIE in the New Year.</li> </ul>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Date and Time of next meeting</b>  Wednesday 2 March 2022  Time: 2:00pm – 4:00pm</p>	