



**REPORT TO: COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD 10 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECT: ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)**

This briefing provides a progress update on the development of the Economic Recovery Action Plan since the previous update was provided on 24 November 2020.

## Economic Recovery Plan Update

Action	Update
<b>Revenue</b>	
Small Business Support consultancy service (70k across two years) 35K from HIE in 21/22 subject to due diligence	Consultancy services procured and commenced in January giving SMEs access to one to one advice and support on Brexit issues and assistance in developing bids for procurement processes. See update below under Small Business Support.
<b>Business Grants and Start up Support</b>	
Young Company Capital Investment Scheme – Offering grants of up to £50k for investment in equipment (HIE funding £1m)	7 grants awarded under the YCIG totalling £139k.
Ecommerce Funding up to £25K (HIE Funding £500k)	
Digital Boost – Offering grants of up to £5k to support digital and ecommerce. (Government Funding)	30 HIE Digital Enablement Grants awarded totalling £397k in Moray. The scheme was granted a further £2m from the original £500k.
	<b>DigitalBoost Grant Fund Suspended: 14/01/2021</b> The £10 million made available through the DigitalBoost programme following the successful £700k pilot phase last year was launched on 11 Jan and had 2,400 applications on a first come first served

Action	Update
	<p>basis. It has been very quickly oversubscribed and DB have therefore paused additional registrations for the programme – additional funding may be made available from Scot Govt in due course once applications have been sifted for eligibility. We will keep businesses briefed on progress.</p>
<p><b>Small Business Support</b>  Consultancy provision to small business to support procurement and supplier development assisting companies in preparing bids. (Moray Council funding £25k, new request subject to SMART delivery plan approved by Council) HIE 25k funding subject to due diligence</p> <p>Consultancy provision to local companies to provide import and export advice, this may well help to mitigate impacts of Brexit depending on the trade deal negotiated. (Moray Council funding £10k, new request subject to SMART delivery plan approved by Council and HIE £10k subject to due diligence by HIE )</p> <p>HIE general programmes of business support more widely available to businesses.</p> <p>HIE support for tourism Destination Management Organisations across Highlands and Islands (£3m)</p>	<p>This contract was procured and awarded in late Dec 2020. The council will shortly be publishing a PIN on PCS for the re-let of a Civil Engineering Small Works Framework – PIN includes info about procurement support through BG Moray for businesses seeking help to write tenders.</p> <p>This new support has been marketed and shared on social media platforms and also with stakeholder partners <a href="https://www.bgateway.com/local-offices/moray/local-support">https://www.bgateway.com/local-offices/moray/local-support</a></p> <p>This contract was procured and awarded in late Dec 2020 and support has already been sought in Jan 2021 by Moray businesses experiencing difficulties with Import / Export Documentation. Supplier Requests have already been raised by BG and the contactor is engaging with these business to assist. This new support has been marketed and shared on social media platforms and also with stakeholder partners <a href="https://www.bgateway.com/local-offices/moray/local-support">https://www.bgateway.com/local-offices/moray/local-support</a></p> <p>Review of account management underway. More companies assisted with young company and digital grants.</p> <p>Application from Visit Moray-Speyside currently under consideration.</p>
<p><b>Town Centres</b>  Town Centre Fund further grants for empty space to living space and 50% grant for alteration of large retail premises to smaller units in town centres.</p>	<p>Received 8 applications for transforming empty space to living space. 7 were approved at a grant value of £165,065 with £513,196 match funding.</p> <p>Received 6 applications for alteration of large retail premises to smaller units providing grants of up to £248,300 with £476,799 match funding.</p>

Action	Update
<p>£433,000k (Government funding)</p> <p>Works to improve and adapt Town centres resulting from master planning and LDP delivery £200K (Moray Council Capital new request, subject to business case) (HIE £200k subject to due diligence)</p> <p>Pop up shop scheme in the main five towns of Buckie, Elgin, Forres, Keith and Lossiemouth and Speyside £50k (Moray Council funding, new request subject to SMART delivery plan approved by Council)</p> <p>Town Centre Start Up – Offering a 50% grant up to £10k maximum for individuals start ups following participation in the Pop Up Shop programme. £100k (Moray Council funding , new request subject to SMART delivery plan approved by Council)</p> <p>Town Centre adaptation spaces for people £13k HIE</p> <p>New COVID 19 Fund potential for further funding for SME/Hospitality adaptation through newly developed fund in response to COVID 19 (450k Government/EU funding)</p> <p>Local Development Plan delivery programme including promotion of vacant and derelict sites, retail impact assessments, master planning for town centres and promotion of town centre living and adaptation for climate change and local place plans. <a href="#">(70k reported to Planning and Regulatory Services as a budget pressure, 15 September 2020)</a></p> <p>Development Management and Building Standards support for town centre development including free pre enquiry advice and ID with prioritisation of support from Transport, Environmental Health and Legal for town Centre proposals.</p>	<p>Draft Masterplan for Elgin being published March 2021. Projects will be refined, costed and prioritised following consultation which will run for 12 weeks March to end May 2021.</p> <p>Other Town Centre masterplans to be progressed late beginning Q3 2021.</p> <p>The pop-up scheme has been delayed due to COVID 19 level 4 restrictions.</p> <p>Funds have been approved but no project defined yet.</p> <p>Audit of vacant and derelict sites to be carried out Q2 2021 and used to inform an action plan and funding bids. A number of vacant and derelict sites will be progressed through the MGD Housing Mix Delivery project.</p>

Action	Update
	Work to commission a new retail model for Moray is being progressed and quick quotes will be invited in April 2021.
<p><b>Housing and Infrastructure</b> Provision of employment land and industrial units in Forres. £1.5 million, and provision of £1m towards expansion or development of industrial units in Speyside/east of Moray (Moray Council Capital, new request, subject to business case)</p> <p>Accelerate Development of masterplan and site development costs for business and industrial areas at Mosstodloch as identified in the Local Development Plan to increase the effective employment land in Moray in conjunction with HIE with a view to developing a business case.</p> <p>Delivery of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan over the next 2 years will provide 224 affordable homes with a spend of £22.7 million (Scottish Government, HRA and RSL funding)</p> <p>Moray Growth Deal work is underway to complete outline business cases by December 2020 to try and achieve final sign off of the deal by March 2021 which would enable draw down of funding in 21/22 and early provision of capital spend on some projects including the cultural quarter, aerospace academy, business hub and housing mix.(current indicative spending for Growth Deal between 2021 and 2024 is £30 million including all partner contributions)</p> <p>Open new land to southern edge of Forres Enterprise Park and develop business units (900k HIE investment)</p>	<p>New officer in post.</p> <p>Early discussions have taken place with Crown Estate regarding developing a Masterplan.</p> <p>Moray Cultural Quarter Planning and Design – Procurement Underway by Moray Council – Expressions of Interest by 15.1.21 – HIE support of £175,000 towards £300,000 total project cost.</p>

Action	Update
	<p>Road project currently under construction.</p>
<p><b>Procurement</b>  There is a need to review our procurement strategy and our approach and key objectives. Our current approach has been driven by the need for savings and compliance with relevant legislation and although the strategy includes objectives for wider community benefit progress on these issues has been slow and the proportion of local spend has been in decline over recent years.</p> <p>An alternative approach would be to place Community Wealth Building at the heart of our procurement strategy with a clear focus on increasing local spend and wider community and sustainability benefits, this is wider than our traditional approach to procurement as it would require closer analysis of local spend which can be difficult with limited data and spend out with the area and efforts to improve the local supply capacity to reduce spend out with the area and to create and retain jobs locally.</p> <p>This approach requires a culture change but will have a greater impact if it was adopted across all public sector partners in Moray, this level of change will require an additional staffing resource and budget it is wider than just procurement as it seeks to develop the supply chain in Moray including social enterprise and community provision (Est £35k, Moray</p>	<p>Job description agreed for Community Wealth Building officer and is currently being graded by HR with a view to advertising the post late January/ early February.</p>

Action	Update
<p>Council new budget request, HIE £35k subject to due diligence) in addition the central procurement team is working beyond its capacity and with additional work associated with accelerating elements of the growth deal an additional member of staff is required. (Est £53k, Moray council new budget request)</p> <p>Proposal in principle subject to a separate report for Council and Community Planning Partners to consider before implementation.</p>	
<p><b>Social Enterprise/Community Support</b></p> <p>It is important to recognise that the community and social enterprise companies have an important role to play in the economic recovery. Many of these organisations have already played a central role in supporting communities through COVID 19, Community capacity building is an important part of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan delivery process and opportunities for communities to take on roles through Community Asset Transfers have been well received. There are further opportunities for communities through community benefit funding and potential investments. Communities and social enterprises will receive support where staffing resources allow from the Economic Development Team and HIE to develop capacity to operate social enterprise to support the local economy.</p> <p>Rural Tourism Fund BID to develop network of facilities for toilets and mobile home use match funding from HIE £30k, Moray Council £142K existing commitment which can be carried forward on a committed project.</p>	<p>HIE Update: January 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On track with Covid 19 Supporting Communities Fund delivery, extensions, claims etc – 13 awards £429,039</li> <li>• 6 Covid 19 Community Led Tourism Infrastructure Fund projects on track to deliver by 16 March 2021 – being closely monitored – 6 awards £182,541</li> <li>• Tomintoul &amp; Glenlivet Development Trust – Tomintoul Housing Project – Demolition of old Secondary School contract started 5 January on site. Completion of demolition by 31 March 2021 ready for development phase. £153K HIE support.</li> <li>• Place Based Engagement: Working closely with Forres Area Community Trust on the re-development of Forres Town Hall. Also considering support regarding feasibility for further asset acquisition to develop as hostel/tourist accommodation. Portgordon Community Harbour Group – Developing more intense engagement to support the group in considering acquisition of Crown Estate Scotland assets including Portgordon Harbour – in partnership with CES. Dufftown Community Association – Developing more intense relationship following on from engagement with Supporting Communities Fund. DCA has been successful in securing funds to create a Community Development Plan, which is currently underway.</li> <li>• HIE approved £50,097 to Elgin Town Hall towards £73,786 core costs November 2020-April 2021. Approved £30,000 towards £60,000 cost of 2 year Town Hall Manager post.</li> <li>• HIE approved £63,000 to tsiMORAY to contribute to 2 posts: Partnership Development Lead and Third Sector</li> </ul>

Action	Update
	Development Officer for 2 years Jan 2020 to December 2022
<p><b>Moray growth Deal Business Hub</b></p> <p>We will explore how we can work in a way that public agencies are more accessible and cohesive in their communications and support for business bringing forward elements of the business hub project in the growth deal to provide effective support through current COVID 19 restrictions and as we recover to normal. This may include temporary premises but will also include accessibility through digital platforms and video conference.</p>	
<p><b>Employability and Skills</b></p> <p>Work in collaboration with local businesses [including 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector] to maximise opportunities via new and enhanced job creation schemes, this includes the Kickstart scheme for 16-24 year olds. The scheme provides minimum wage for 6 months employment to 16-24 year olds on universal credit. It is proposed the Council participates in this scheme using Moray Chamber of Commerce as the intermediary. As a living wage employer the Council could top up the money from the Kickstart scheme to meet the local government living wage for jobs created in the Council this would require a budget of up to £66k for up to 15 jobs although may be less depending on age (Moray Council funding for council posts, new funding, subject to SMART delivery plan approved by Council). Other community planning partners should be encouraged to apply the living wage to jobs they create.</p> <p>Encourage investment in local apprenticeships and training through future economic development and procurement contracts across the public sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 90 employers applied for Kickstart places, waiting on the vacancies going live on DWP system and batch number 2 being currently processed. Moray Council departments currently processing job vacancies, more promotion required to provide 15 X TMC places.</li> <li>• MERI Scheme – Applications now open offering employers equivalent to 50% wage subsidy for 12 months. A tiered process is in place for different levels of contracted hours, ranging from 16-40 hours. This is a wage incentive scheme offering a 12 month supported job placement for harder to reach 18-24 years.</li> <li>• Employers must outline the economic and employment benefits in their applications. This includes the sector based potential for growth.</li> </ul>

Action	Update
<p>Jointly plan and deliver an integrated approach to employer engagement with schools/post school employability team that ensures every young person receives an entitlement to work based learning</p> <p>Enhance keyworker support within the No One Left Behind model of delivery and enabling participation this includes funding from the youth guarantee scheme which is estimated at £570k government funding for Moray</p> <p>Enhance pipeline provision within the Moray Pathways Consortium and ensure commissioning framework is fit for purpose</p> <p>Deliver industry led employability provision for vulnerable young people. Including supported employment and volunteering.</p> <p>Develop a generic pre apprenticeship programme which compliments new interventions including the SDS Pathways to Apprenticeship and Kickstart</p> <p>Create a plan in partnership to support secondary schools curriculum to be responsive to the LMI and prepare young people for evolving opportunities</p> <p>All partners sharing job and training opportunities through the Moray Pathways site</p> <p>Parent Poverty employability project (government funding)</p> <p>In-work employability support</p> <p>Develop industry led sector based flexible short course provision modelled on existing Moray College UHI curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional boost for start up apprenticeships, increased from £2000 to £5000. Job incentive schemes are a pathway to apprenticeships and provides a trial period.</li> <li>• 4 X new DYW Co-ordinators recruited to support employer engagement in schools and deliver on the young person's guarantee commitment.</li> <li>• 2 X Keyworker vacancies to be advertised and a TSI development worker to increase the capacity of 3<sup>rd</sup> sector provision and employer support for young people</li> <li>• Moray Employer Recruitment Scheme (MERI ) to be funded from the young person's guarantee funds</li> <li>• Young Persons Guarantee funds for 3<sup>rd</sup> and public sector provision – proposal to go to committee to match these funds to the ESF Challenge Fund.</li> <li>• Employability procurement framework to be created by a sub group of the local employability partnership (LEP): Employability and Skills Group</li> <li>• Third and public sector providers to apply/scored and then be added to the new framework</li> <li>• TSI project officer to be funded by YPG funds to work with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector employers to enhance</li> </ul>



Action	Update
<p>Identify sites that support delivery of education, skills and training – responds to C-19 environment. Online platforms and opportunities.</p> <p>Moray Pathways Community Hub (ICT Suite and support) for employability clients to ensure access to digital and internet and offer of ICT equipment</p> <p>Develop the digital skills environment through college and training e-learning to promote and enable development of skills to address an acceleration towards the digital/technological workplace.</p> <p>Develop. Enhance, and promoted PACE service to individuals and businesses at risk, and experiencing, redundancy.</p> <p>Transition training fund and North East Gas fund</p> <p>Adopt an Apprentice scheme</p>	<p>the offer to young people and focusing on growth sectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-produce sector based provision at stage 1 and 2 of the pipeline to support the harder to reach young people</li> <li>• Access to construction course running in March.</li> <li>• Pre apprenticeship programme has been developed and is currently being reviewed by DWP commissioning team.</li> <li>• Pathway Apprenticeship opportunities and are now currently available across 6 frameworks, mainly through virtual delivery</li> <li>• DYW team and Moray College UHI work in collaboration with education officers to develop the Curriculum to support vocational and work related opportunities.</li> <li>• Moray Skills Pathway is well placed to address LMI in the curriculum, the Skills Framework has been cross referenced with current skills frameworks and remains the agreed language.</li> <li>• Training menu of opportunities is being re-written within the Moray Pathways website to provide a comprehensive list of local and national training and learning opportunities.</li> <li>• PESF project officer and keyworker vacancies being created and to be advertised to launch the project</li> <li>• In-work keyworker support to be provided for all young people matched to MERI scheme</li> <li>• PESF project includes in-work support.</li> <li>• The keyworkers within the all age focused Moray Council employability team now provide end to end support and this includes in-work support.</li> <li>• Sector based flexible provision is one of the themes within the new employability procurement frame work and bidders will need to evidence the provision is co-produced with industry.</li> <li>• 3 week employability provision developed in partnership with industry, Moray College UHI, DYW and DWP is due to start 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. This will be run as a pilot. Plans to run this type of programme on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>• DWP funding secured to support a new employability and training hub at the Elgin</li> </ul>

Action	Update
	<p data-bbox="719 226 1283 349">Youth Café. This will support digital inclusion within the community and provide a welcoming environment to encourage the hardest to reach clients to access moray pathways providers.</p> <ul data-bbox="671 506 1283 1245" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="671 506 1283 595">• DWP funding will provide Moray Pathways Project Officers, digital literacies worker and equipment for the hub.</li> <li data-bbox="671 752 1283 909">• PACE funding received from Scottish Government to provide a warm handover to Moray Pathways and enhance the keyworker support to those at risk and facing redundancy. National action plan to be rolled out.</li> <li data-bbox="671 976 1283 1155">• NTTF fund in Moray managed through Moray College UHI has supported 47 individuals to date to retrain mainly within the wind farm sector. A further 20 places have been awarded taking the total to 67 individuals by the end of March 2021.</li> <li data-bbox="671 1178 1283 1245">• Adopt and Apprentice scheme is in place and ongoing for eligible Redundant Apprentices</li> </ul>

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