

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 MARCH 2017

OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS SUPPORT AND INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

ABSTRACT

This report provides an overview of business support and investment activities supported by economic development officers since the last information report presented on 29 November. This report covers the period 29 October 2016 to 10 February 2017.

1. INVESTMENT – PROPERTY AND LAND

1.1 Property and Land

- 1.2 The occupancy rate for the commercial property portfolio is 88.68%, an increase from the last report. Three new tenants have taken occupancy of units at Arbroath Business Centre. Component AV Services Limited have taken two units and Linzi Austin Studio has taken one unit.
- 1.3 SGR Group Limited have taken occupancy of Unit 9 Montrose Business Centre. This means that Montrose Business Centre is now 100% occupied. .

2. FUNDING AND ADVICE FOR BUSINESSES

2.1 The following applications have been approved through the grant schemes available to businesses in Angus

2.2 INCLUSION Fund

Business	Grant awarded
Author Interiors Brechin	£1,000
La Sia Hair & Beauty, Brechin	£1,000
Variofab, Newbigging	£1,000

Table below with 3 columns first column budget available 2016/17 second column committed third column budget remaining:

Budget Available	Committed	Remaining
£7,000	£7,000	£0

2.3 INVESTMENT Grant

Business	Grant awarded
Phillips Parry, Arbroath	£1,000
N L Sports Therapy, Carnoustie	£500
Stakam Ltd, Montrose	£1,000
Bella Capelli Hair & Beauty Lounge, Forfar	£1,000

Angus 3D Solutions, Edzell	£1,000
NFD Finance, Forfar	£1,000

Table below with 3 columns first column budget available 2016/17 second column committed third column budget remaining:

Budget Available	Committed	Remaining
£13,000	£12,000	£1,000

2.4 INNOVATION Fund

Business	Grant awarded
Myreside Farms, Arbroath	£1,000
Stakam Ltd, Montrose	£1,000

The above grant for Myreside Farms is the result of networking and a discussion at the Food Influencers dinner followed by email and meeting between applicant and Economic Development Officers.

Table below with 3 columns first column budget available 2016/17 second column committed third column budget remaining:

Budget Available	Committed	Remaining
£5,000	£3,000	£2,000

2.5 BUSINESS GATEWAY DELIVERY FOR APRIL - DECEMBER 2016

	Angus	Dundee	Perth	Total
Business Start Ups	201	204	178	583
Growth Start Up (40%)*	44	49	49	142
Growth Start Up completed action plan (60%)**	34	25	20	79
Start Up Workshops	24	46	34	104
Existing Bus Workshops	5	10	9	24
Growth Advisory Service/Growth Pipeline Referrals#	GAS 9 GP 2	GAS 18 GP 7	GAS 18 GP 5	59
Direct Relationship Management (Account Managed) Referrals##	0	0	0	0

- Start Up targets are ahead of flat profile at present.
- GAS/GP targets are on profile at present.
- Start Up and Existing Business workshops are ahead of flat profile.

* Potential higher value business start ups with an agreed action plan for growth

** Higher value business start ups who have completed action plans and achieved

VAT / PAYE status.

- # *Businesses projecting increase in turnover of £200k+ over next three years*
- ## *Businesses projecting increase in turnover of £400k+ over next three years accepted by Scottish Enterprise for Account Management*

2.6 **New Contract Delivery**

- 2.7 Elevator have been appointed to deliver the Business Gateway service in Tayside from April 2017 to March 2019 with the option to extend the contract by a further three single years up to March 2022. Elevator are the current Business Gateway service provider.
- 2.8 However in light of the Tay Cities Deal submission and discussions over potential new models of business advice delivery the contract will be reviewed annually.
- 2.9 Funding for the Business Gateway Contract is given to Dundee City Council by Scottish Government as lead partner on behalf of Angus and Perth and Kinross Councils. The annual contract value is made up of £1m contribution plus £217,317 from the European Regional Development Fund ie in total the maximum total annual value of the contract is £1,217,317

3. **FOOD AND DRINK SECTOR**

- 3.1 We had one-to-one meetings with 8 local businesses to give business advice and support in the areas of grant funding, property/premises, skills development and collaborative opportunities. As a result our property team are looking for suitable larger premises for one Kirriemuir business and another business (Myreside Farms) has been awarded an innovation grant. Park Brew was also shortlisted in the Dundee & Angus College Think Big competition sponsored by economic development and was awarded £2,000 in the Growth Category.
- 3.2 A food and drink influencers' dinner was held in November. This gave us the opportunity to highlight to businesses the activity that has taken place in the sector in the past year supported by Angus Council and the Taste of Angus campaign, and to ask for input into the framework and action plan for next year. As a result a number of areas of interest were identified, including consolidating food education in schools and communities across the area, and developing a portal for local food and drink business to communicate with each other and work together to shorten supply chains and improve distribution. These topics have been included in the action plan for 2017.
- 3.3 We have worked with Dundee and Angus Convention Bureau to secure Angus-based events for 3 major conferences next year, using a variety of local locations and The Food Life to provide a 'food village' for delegates. Across the three conferences catering will be required for over 700 delegates.
- 3.4 The pop-up shop space at the Harbour Visitor Centre in Arbroath was let out to The Book Larder for a week from 12-18 December, selling books and local produce. It is hoped that this will become a regular occurrence and will lead to an increase in others using the space.

4. **GOLF SECTOR**

- 4.1 Six Carnoustie Country businesses taking part in the inaugural Scottish Golf Tourism Week at St Andrews received business advice and subsequently applied for and were granted internationalisation grants to enable them to take part – Montrose Golf Links, Monifieth Golf Links, Panmure Golf Club, House of Turin, Glenesk Hotel and Links Hotel.
- 4.2 As a result of a recent media trip to Carnoustie Country, an article has been published in Danish golf magazine Golf Blade. Another will be published in spring.

5. TOURISM

- 5.1 Angus Council will exhibit at VisitScotland expo in April 2017, alongside neighbouring local authority areas Dundee, Perthshire and Fife, who are working together collectively to promote the East Scotland as a destination to the travel trade. A number of Angus businesses will be represented on the Visit Angus stand, including the Links/Park Hotels, Montrose, Glamis Castle, Hospitalfield and the Glenesk Hotel, Edzell. These businesses, along with the Dundee stand partners, attended an Innovation Workshop in January, organised by Scottish Enterprise, to encourage collaboration to maximise the opportunities at expo.
- 5.2 A tourism industry meeting was held at Forbes of Kingennie on 9 November 2016. 39 individuals, representing 34 tourism related businesses or organisations attended the meeting. The outcomes from the meeting will help to inform the key activity for 2017/18, and the results from the feedback survey, completed by 23 event participants, will be used to inform a programme of support for the sector. 17 individuals indicated an interest in helping to develop an Angus Tourism Partnership, which is one of the actions highlighted in the Tourism Framework and Action Plan.
- 5.3 The Visit Angus website saw an increase in traffic around the 5th of October with people looking for fireworks and bonfire events in Angus. The majority of traffic was referred to the website from The Courier website articles about fireworks/bonfires displays in Courier Country.
- 5.4 Glenesk Hotel in Edzell was the #SpotlightOn business in November. The campaign successfully reached over 62,574 people on Facebook and 4,488 impressions on Twitter organically. Glenesk Hotel provided an overnight stay as a competition prize, special offer, images and content to promote during the campaign. This was one of the most successful campaigns on Visit Angus social media to date.
- 5.5 Visit Angus ran a 'Countdown to Christmas' campaign on social media promoting festive events, food and drink messages and competitions. Forbes of Kingennie offered a meal for two as part of the Visit Angus festive competition, reaching an impressive 35,708 people and Pavilion Café in Montrose offered a £20 voucher and gift voucher and reached an impressive 46,666 people. This campaign generated over 450 new likes on www.facebook.com/visitangus and an increase in traffic to the website, resulting in an 11.95% increase in visitor sessions compared to the previous year. Where possible, social media users were directed to the website for more information therefore achieving the campaign aim.

6. UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

- 6.1 The overall unemployment rate in Angus as of December 2016 was 2.0% which accounts for 1,410 people. This shows a decrease on last reporting period and but overall increase in Job Seekers Allowance in comparison to the same time in the previous years (December 2015 1.7% 1230, December 2014 1.8%, 1290) and a decrease compared to 2013 (December 2.2% 1,545). [Source: Nomis]
- 6.2 At present 68.8% (970) of those claiming Jobseekers Allowance are males and 31.2% (440) are females. This trend of more males being unemployed than females has been consistent for the past several years. Overall the levels of claimants in Angus is lower than the national average of 2.2% but higher than the UK Average (1.8%) [Source: Nomis]

7. SKILLS

- 7.1 New contracts from SDS confirmed the following targets for 2016-17 effective 1/04/16:

PROGRAMME	STARTS	TARGET
Modern Apprentices	16	19
Employability Stage 3	6	6
Mainstream Clients	301	400
Scottish Recruitment Incentive	15	15

7.2 **Modern Apprenticeships**

There are two months left on the 2016/17 contract and the Skills Team are hopeful that the contract will be filled within both Angus Council departments as well as local business.

7.3 Throughout the contract year we receive updates on performance and outcomes. Our most recent outcome for period 9 (up to and including January 17):

Scottish wide outcomes 81%
Skills Team 96%

7.4 **Employability Fund**

All six places have now been accounted for with the last candidate starting their placement the beginning of January 17 with a local construction company.

7.5 Our outcomes from Skills Development Scotland for this contracted period 2016/17 for the Employability Fund Stage 3 in Angus is 47% Skills Team 60%

7.6 **Scottish Employment Recruitment Incentive**

Angus Council Skills Team received an additional 6 places and all have been taken up by local business offering employment opportunities to young people with barriers to employment. SERI is a year long financial incentive to local business aimed specifically for this particular group of young people.

7.7 **Food Production Academy**

The third and final Food Production Academy has now taken place with training and work experience completed. Over the 3 Academies 5 candidates have taken up employment with 1 carrying out full time voluntary work. All candidates went on to gain work experience.

7.8 **Developing Young Workforce**

All pupils involved in this programme continue to work and gain valuable work experience in their placements throughout Angus. While there they are also working toward an Employability Unit which will assist them in identifying work areas for development. This cohort will finish March 2017.

8. **FUNDING**

8.1 **Angus Integrated Green Transport Hub**

8.2 The Angus Integrated Green Transport Hub feasibility study has now been finalised. There is currently a Car Club feasibility study and Active Travel Audit being drafted, both of which will be completed by the end of March 2017. Following these studies being finalised a workshop will be held with interested parties to develop a deliverable action plan taking into account the findings.

8.3 **INTERREG North Sea Region**

8.4 Work has started on the Angus Council partnership project called Like! with Groningen municipality, Aalborg, Suffolk County Council, Province of Drenthe, Vechta University, Vechta municipality, Rotterdam municipality and Roeselare municipality) with representatives attending the work session in Groningen in December 2016.

8.5 Like! will significantly enhance the capacity of the public sector to facilitate and deliver innovation and result in the development of a wide range of services with innovative solutions for improved public service delivery. Local governments, citizens, universities and SMEs will come together to co-create smarter, more efficient and more innovative services through 9 transnational pilots.

8.6 **Angus LEADER Programme (Hosted By Angus Council)**

- 8.7 LEADER funding continues to attract interest from business and community applicants and LEADER staff continue to develop applications with likely applicants throughout rural Angus. There are currently 15 expressions of interest being developed, and a further 27 basic enquiries, but the conversion of these into formal applications is low, with no applications featuring at LAG meetings since September 2016, but two envisaged for the 1st March meeting. Staff will deliver further engagement activities in the community from January to March 2017 to create continued demand for the LEADER fund from March onwards.
- 8.8 Angus LEADER has coordinated meetings with Angus Council, Business Gateway and Voluntary Action Angus to review business support and funding for local micro businesses and social enterprises, including discussing the community-led business support model used in Perth & Kinross.
- 8.9 The team also recently supported a learning visit to Fife Rural Skills partnership, from which it is hoped to develop a similar approach for Angus, perhaps jointly with Perth and Kinross across Tayside. Seeing Fife projects has inspired some new ideas already for Angus, and profiled LEADER with Angus Council staff, Dundee and Angus College and the third sector.
- 8.10 The first edition of the online newsletter has also been issued.
- 8.11 LAG members and staff visited the on-going Borjomi project during the week of 12 December, and provided valuable advice and support about the evaluation and monitoring process, and participated in the first joint meeting between our Borjomi LEADER project and another Georgian LAG. The final project wrap-up activity in Angus is also being discussed for a return visit to Angus in 2017.
- 8.12 Through the LEADER network an innovative project Outside the Box were attracted to Angus. The Rural Wisdom project is a partnership between Outside the Box, Volunteering Matters Cymru and National Development Team for inclusion. The project has recently been awarded funding of £975,370 from the Big Lottery Fund to develop this in Angus.
- 8.13 LAG members and staff visited the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation, developing initial ideas on possible collaborations based in Angus.
- 8.14 **ENTRUST- Landfill Communities Fund, Angus Environmental Trust**
- 8.15 Angus Environmental Trust is a company limited by guarantee, established in September 1997 under The Landfill Tax Regulations (1996) and enrolled with Entrust the regulator of the UK Landfill Tax Credit Scheme. The scheme is administered by Angus Council on behalf of the AET Directors.
- 8.16 Responsibility for the new Scottish Landfill Tax was transferred to the Scottish Government in April 2015, the impact being that the Landfill Communities Fund would cease in Scotland with a 2 year transition period until March 2017 to commit all remaining monies and complete all approved projects.
- 8.17 Since 1997 Angus Environmental Trust has received 122 applications from not for profit organisations, community groups and organisations and supported projects such as improvements to village halls, environmental improvements to public areas, war memorials, path and access projects and conservation and biodiversity projects. Of the 122 applications received 111 projects have been fully funded, 5 part funded, 1 ineligible and 5 cancelled/withdrawn.
- 8.18 The overall total of LCF funding distributed by AET since 1997 through the scheme is £1,761,336.18
- 8.19 Angus Environmental Trust continues to distribute funds throughout Angus and Scotland through the Scottish Communities Landfill Tax.
- 8.20 **SEPA-Scottish Landfill Communities Fund, Angus Environmental Trust**
- 8.21 At their 10 November meeting, Angus Environmental Trust welcomed new Directors Marshall MacLean Haliday and Kelly Ann Dempsey, and approved funding for the following projects:

8.22 Keptie Friends & Our East Haven - £250.00

Keptie Friends and Our East Haven are volunteer led community groups who deliver environmental projects in Arbroath and East Haven. Both groups have been approached by their communities to address complaints of dog fouling in their area. Funding approved towards the costs of dog fouling awareness posters from Keep Scotland Beautiful. Project meets with SLCF Object C, to provide, maintain or improve a public park or other public amenity. This funding will allow the groups to address the issue of dog fouling and monitor outcomes, reporting to Keep Scotland Beautiful as part of a nationwide campaign to tackle the issue.

8.23 Forfar in Flower - £1,836.23

Forfar in Flower is a community led project which aims to encourage and deliver pride in place through their horticultural projects in and around Forfar, Angus to improve the aesthetics of the town for locals and visitors. Funding approved towards costs of planting and greenhouse materials for their project base in Forfar. Project meets with SLCF Object C, to provide, maintain or improve a public park or other public amenity. This funding will provide fit for purpose equipment to continue activities which are of physical, environmental and economic benefit to the Forfar and Angus.

8.24 Angus Cycle Hub - £65,319.97

Angus Cycle Hub is a community group focussed on promoting the benefits of and increasing participation in cycling. Funding approved towards costs of setting up a community bike recycling centre in Angus. This funding will allow the group to purchase an electric vehicle to collect bikes destined for landfill from recycling centres in Angus, and employ 2 full time bike mechanics to recycle them to encourage safe and affordable cycling in Angus. Project meets with SLCF Object B, Community based recycling, re-use and waste prevention projects, and is the first of its kind under the Scottish Scheme.

8.25 Scottish Wildlife Trust Balgavies Loch - £5,446.00

Balgavies Loch Wildlife Reserve, near Forfar is a popular and well-used site, attracting around 8,000 visitors annually, both from the local community and from further afield. Funding approved towards the costs of improving draining and installing a bridge which will allow year-round safe access to the 2km circular walk around the Wildlife Reserve. Project meets with SLCF Object C, to provide, maintain or improve a public park or other public amenity.

8.26 Inch Maintenance and Preservation Society (IMPS) - £2,994.62

IMPS is a volunteer led community group aiming to improve the Inch recreation area, Brechin to encourage participation in outdoor activities. Funding approved towards the costs of natural seating, wildflower meadow and nature walk at Inch Park. Project meets with SLCF Object C, to provide, maintain or improve a public park or other public amenity. This funding will allow the group to provide facilities for locals and visitors to enjoy, creating a welcoming and interesting place to visit.

8.27 DD8 Music - £ 3,789.60

DD8 Music is a Community Music Project in Kirriemuir, Angus. Funding approved towards the costs of installing a new energy efficient heating system in the DD8 Music Studio. Project meets with SLCF Object C, to provide, maintain or improve a public park or other public amenity. This funding will ensure a comfortable and safe environment for volunteers and participants, allowing for the project to continue its community activities.

8.28 Angus Environmental Trust received a SEPA compliance inspection visit on Wednesday, 21 December. The resulting compliance inspection report concluded:

- AET was found to be compliant with the SLCF requirements and regulations.
- No compliance action is required.
- SEPA agrees with the funding approval and refusal decisions taken for projects
- SEPA is satisfied by the way project applications were received, assessed and put to the board for consideration

9. SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- 9.1 At the Guardian awards on 29 November the economic development team were runners up in the Finance Category for Crowdfund Angus. The winners of the award were Seven Oaks Council who have become completely self-funding. Angus Council has approached Seven Oaks Council to explore good practice.
- 9.2 The Funding Team held a pop-up information event at Angus House reception on Thursday 15 December between 12-2pm. The event, aimed at engaging with Council colleagues to share funding information and advice for council projects and activities, received interest from a number of officers and will see follow up activity for 6 potential projects in Angus. Following the success of this event the Funding team plan to hold further events in 2017.

10. Improvement Service – SLAED Indicators

- 10.1 The SLAED Indicators Framework is a 'basket' of measures developed by SLAED (Scottish Local Authority Economic Development Group) with input from the Improvement Service and the Scottish Government. The Framework is used by all Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development services to provide a consistent basis for:

- Measuring the economic performance of councils and highlighting the central role of economic outcomes in the SOA and the prevention agenda
- Benchmarking comparative performance and identifying areas for potential improvement, where appropriate
- Assisting and informing design and delivery of interventions, monitoring effectiveness and delivery towards the overall strategy and
- Providing SLAED with aggregate data on overall levels of council economic development activities and outputs.

- 10.2 The 2015/16 report has been produced with Angus Council's Guardian Award finalist and COSLA Gold Award Winning "Crowdfund Angus" featuring as a case study (page 58). <http://www.slaed.org.uk/documents/slaed-indicators-framework-report-2015-16.pdf>

- 10.3 Angus Council highlights from the 2015/16 report:

- 57 Business Start Ups per 10,000 Working Age Population
- 66.1% Business Survival Rate
- Leverage of External Funding - £16.47 per £1 Council Contribution
- 585 registered clients who progressed to Employment as a result of participation on one of our programmes.
- 547 unemployed people participating in Council Funded or Operated Employability Activities. Of these participants 36% is in 0-30% decile of the SIMD.

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