

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 30 AUGUST 2016

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 7 June 2016. This report covers the period 24 May to 12 August 2016.

1. INVESTMENT – PROPERTY AND LAND**1.1 Property and Land**

1.2 There have been two commercial properties let in July:

Unit 14 Montrose Road Industrial Estate, Brechin to Masonry Heating Builders and Unit 10 Brechin Business Centre to Park Brew. Both businesses have expanded their businesses and have moved from their homes to the commercial units.

1.3 A new lease for Unit 11 Brechin is currently with legal services with an entry date of 1 August 2016.

1.4 We have enhanced the marketing of vacant units with regular promotion on the Business Angus twitter page. We currently have 13 properties vacant from a portfolio of 106.

1.5 South Montrose Regeneration

1.6 In July GSK announced a £110m investment in the Montrose site as part of their wider UK £275m investment. This investment will provide a new, state-of-the-art facility for the manufacture of respiratory active ingredients.

1.7 Rix Shipping (Scotland) is nearing completion of a c40,000 sq ft warehouse on its site between Barrack Road and Cobden Street. This will support the company's port related business and bring what was a neglected, brownfield site back into active use. This is the third significant regeneration project undertaken in the area by Rix in recent times.

1.8 Whittaker Engineering has opened a small marine fabrication facility within the port offering support services to visiting vessels. Whittaker's is a design and manufacturing company operating in marine and offshore markets, trading globally with its headquarters in Stonehaven. The total private sector investment in South Montrose since 2013 is now £86 million and these projects have or will create 190 jobs.

1.9 A stage 1 application for £690,000 from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund was submitted to the Scottish Government in June. This is to part fund the development of section 1 of the proposed spine road and in the process further support investment and regeneration in the South Montrose area. The outcome of the application, which will be one of many submitted to what is normally an oversubscribed fund, should be known in September. A number of projects will then be invited to submit more detailed stage 2 applications.

1.10 Montrose Port hosted a visit from 25 senior delegates from the Gaungxi region of China interested in renewables and energy sector and skills. There were presentations from Montrose Port, the John Lawrie Group and South Montrose followed by a tour of the area.

2. FUNDING AND ADVICE FOR BUSINESSES

2.1 The following application was approved through the grant schemes available to businesses in Angus in 2016/17.

2.2 INCLUSION Fund

Business	Grant awarded
P2P Risk Ltd, Montrose	£1000.00

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

Budget Available	Committed	Remaining
£7,000.00	£1,000.00	£6,000.00

2.3 INTERNATIONALISATION Grant

Business	Grant awarded
Links Hotel, Montrose	£1,000.00
Rix, Montrose	£1,000.00
Montrose Golf Links, Montrose	£1,000.00
House of Turin, Forfar	£1,000.00
Monifieth Golf Links Ltd, Monifieth	£1,000.00

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

Budget Available	Committed	Remaining
£12,000.00	£5,000.00	£7,000.00

2.4 INVESTMENT Grant

Business	Grant awarded
Premium Products Scotland Ltd, Edzell	£500.00
The Hideaway Experience, Auchterhouse	£500.00
D.J.Laing, Carnoustie	£1,000.00
P2P Risk Ltd, Montrose	£500.00
Impact Fitness, Montrose	£1,000.00
KITs Therafit, Arbroath	£500.00

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

Budget Available	Committed	Remaining
£10,000.00	£4,000.00	£6,000.00

2.5 BUSINESS GATEWAY DELIVERY FOR APRIL 2016

	Angus	Dundee	Perth	Total
Business Start Ups	67	17	12	96
Growth Start Up (40%)*	4	4	4	12
Growth Start Up completed action plan (60%)**	4	2	0	6
Start Up Workshops	3	5	4	12
Existing Bus Workshops	0	1	0	1
Growth Advisory Service Growth Pipeline Referrals#	0 GAS 0 GP	0 GAS 1 GP	1 GAS 0 GP	2
Direct Relationship Management (Account Management) Referrals###	0	0	0	0

* 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

3. BUSINESS ANGUS

3.1 June had a total of 2,000 page views and the top 5 pages viewed were the homepage, funding, financial support, business development and events. The average visitor session was for 1 min 5 seconds, with 2.11 pages viewed per session.

3.2 Generally, the number of visits to the website has been marginally lower each month since February 2016 compared to the same period in 2015. The decrease in visits this year to the website highlights the need to improve the content, layout and functionality, which is the recommendation of our website review. The agreed revised website structure will provide a clearer customer journey. Up to date content is currently being written for the pages which will provide customers with clear and relevant information to help their business grow and thrive. The content on the pages will be optimised to ensure that the information is found for key search terms used when looking for business information for Angus. A Business Angus social media strategy has been drafted to co-ordinate communication to promote business opportunities, advice, support, funding and property and land available.

3.3 The Business Angus e-newsletter saw the following opening rates (the industry benchmark is 21.73%):

- 35% open rate in June.
- 33% open rate in May.

3.4 Business Angus now has over 1,000 followers on twitter. In June, 136 tweets were posted reaching an audience of 78,500.

3.5 Angus Business Breakfast - How Technology Can Benefit Your Business – June 2016, Piperdam.

This event featured workshops from Soil Essentials explaining how technology is a key element of their business, Carnoustie Country Online Booking system outlining how the online technology worked for a group of golf local businesses and the Digital Boost programming discussing the support available including advice, workshops and online guides around how you can successfully use technology for the benefit of your business. The event attracted 23 delegates.

4. FOOD AND DRINK SECTOR

- 4.1 A new food network called 'The Food Life' has been formed by local businesses. This group, supported by Angus Council, consists of artisan producers, mobile caterers and anyone else who is passionate about local food and drink. The group's first event was a pop up street food event at East Haven beach on 31st July and featured music, storytelling and children's sports activities as well as a wide range of local food and drink.
- 4.2 Local food was represented at the Senior Open at Carnoustie through Hamish's Hogs and Artisana mobile tea room and patisserie. This is the first time we have been able to secure pitches for local businesses at a major golf tournament.
- 4.3 Dundee and Angus Convention Bureau held a partner evening at House of Turin on 23rd June which was attended by representatives from Dundee and Angus hotels and events venues. Eden Sinclair of Sinclair Private Caterers did a cooking demonstration and explained the benefits of using local produce. This will be followed up by a trip to various Angus producers in September.
- 4.4 Dundee and Angus Visitor Accommodation Association (DAVAA) held a showcase of local producers sponsored by Taste of Angus at Kinnettles Castle on 27th June. This was attended by over 40 accommodation providers who had the chance to network with local suppliers.
- 4.5 Taste of Angus had a stand at Edinburgh Foodies Festival from 5-7 August and took along stand partners Gin Bothy, Kirrie Ales and Sacred Grounds Coffee.
- 4.6 Taste of Angus is sponsoring and supporting a number of food events throughout the year including the Taste Angus festival at Glamis on 20-21 August.

5. GOLF SECTOR

- 5.1 Carnoustie Country had a presence at the Senior Open at Carnoustie Golf Links from Wednesday 20 to Sunday 24 July, on a large exhibition stand shared with Angus Alive. Visitor numbers were estimated at approx. 20,000.
- 5.2 A new golf guide was produced showcasing the 34 golf courses in the area, as well as places to stay, attractions to visit and food and drink. In addition, an offers leaflet was produced promoting special golf offers provided by the clubs.
- 5.3 To encourage footfall onto the high street, a Carnoustie town leaflet was produced with details of local shops and places to eat. In addition, there was a 'Guess the Golfer' competition with posters in shop windows from 11 to 24 July with a prize of a family watersports session at Monikie Park.
- 5.4 On stand, there was a data capture competition for a stay and play break at Carnoustie provided by Carnoustie Country, as well as a competition for a family ticket to Dragon Matrix provided by Angus Alive.
- 5.5 Working with the proposed Carnoustie Business Improvement District group to target Carnoustie Businesses, we put 40 individuals through the WorldHost customer service training in preparation for the Senior Golf Open. The course has been well received with DJ Laing and Carnoustie Hotel offering their premises to host each of these events free of charge. 10 companies have benefited from the training with the Carnoustie Hotel looking to achieve the WorldHost Destination accreditation.

6. TOURISM

6.1 Angus Visitor Survey

LJ Research, an Edinburgh-based market research agency, has been commissioned to undertake a 12 month survey amongst visitors to Angus. The survey results will provide a valuable insight into Angus's visitor profile, demographics, their reasons for visiting and their overall satisfaction with the area. The study will inform the future marketing of Angus and help contribute to development of new tourism products and packages.

6.2 Visit Angus Website

1 April – 30 June 2016, the Visit Angus website had 59,900 visits, a small decrease of 2.63% compared to the same period in 2015. The website has a total of 167,077 page views with people viewing Arbroath Signal Tower webcam, the homepage, what's on and Montrose Music Festival. The top 5 destinations of visitors to the website came from Dundee, London, Arbroath, Aberdeen and Edinburgh. This typically represents the day visitor who lives within a 90 minute drive of Angus, with the exception of London.

63% of visitors arrived on the website via organic searches as visitangus.com appeared high in search engine results pages i.e. Google, with customers clicking on the visitangus.com link. 18% of visitors came from referrals and 15% came direct to the website.

6.3 Visit Angus Social Media

Visit Angus Facebook and Twitter page launched the new Spotlight On campaign aimed at raising the profile of Angus tourism businesses. The first business to participate was Forbes of Kingennie who benefited from a series of posts and competitions across both social media channels.

Visit Angus participated in #ScotlandHour, a monthly tourism twitter chat. The topic was summer planning and content received over 12900 views. Angus tourism businesses have been encouraged to participate via the Visit Angus e-newsletter.

6.4 Visit Angus B2C E-newsletters:

- April – 2944 delivered with a 26% open rate.
- May – 2932 delivered with a 28% open rate.
- June – 2983 delivered with a 26% open rate.

6.5 Visit Angus B2B E-newsletters:

- April – 356 delivered with a 37% open rate.
- May – 356 delivered with a 33% open rate.
- June – 354 delivered with a 31% open rate.

6.6 Digital iSigns

From April to June 2016, there has been a total of 16,767 clicks on the Angus iSigns. Clicks are recorded when people browse through the information on the units at Peel Farm, Glamis Castle, Carnoustie Hotel and those accessing the information from other iSigns throughout Scotland. People are most interested in things to see and do, where to eat and what's on in Angus.

6.7 As part of our commitment to customer service, Business Angus has signed up to offer WorldHost training to 70 staff from Angus Alive. There has been 3 successful courses run to date with another 4 programmed to the end of November.

7. Manufacturing & Energy

7.1 Following on from the programme of workshops/Company Visits and networking events being undertaken through the Tayside Enterprise Network (TEN) in 2016, we have drafted and distributed a full member survey to support the development of the 2017 events programme, and web-site upgrades.

7.2 The 3rd learning workshop on strategic business planning being delivered through our membership of the Centre for Engineering Education & Development (CEED) took place at the Northern Hotel in Brechin on 19 July.

7.3 Montrose Local Energy Project

7.4 With the support from Economic Development an Angus local energy project was successful in securing £200,000 funding as part of the £10 million allocated to support innovative large-scale, low carbon local energy through the Scottish Government's Local Energy Challenge Fund.

- 7.5 This is Stage 2 of The Montrose Local Energy Project, which is led by Alex Sanger of Rosemount Farm, with the aims to develop a new fuel source from the agricultural sector, feeding into local heat demand and potentially also local electricity demand.
- 7.6 The new fuel is to be created through the processing and drying of used animal bedding i.e. the mix of straw and animal waste that is generated through the bedding of animals, principally cattle in the project proposed. It is intended to deploy the new fuel in pellet form in applications close to the source of the material. The fuel may be used in boilers on its own, or probably blended with biomass fuel, either wood chip or wood pellet.
- 7.7 **Sustainable Energy Action Plan**
- 7.8 The Economic Development team has been working with colleagues from other North East Councils: Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City & Moray in developing a joint North East Scotland Sustainable Energy Action Plan (NE SEAP).
- 7.9 This would create a high level strategic document which covers all areas of sustainable energy across business and commercial, domestic and transport including certain aspects of land use and fuel supply. It will provide a baseline for the area in terms of Carbon emissions and provide an action plan to meet emission reduction targets whilst providing opportunities for sustainable economic growth.
- 7.10 The purpose of the plan would be to coordinate, enable, align and prioritise sustainable energy implementation which will place Angus and the North East Region at the forefront of Scotland's transition to a resilient low carbon economy with the associated economic, environmental and social benefits.
- 7.11 It is anticipated that the SEAP would cover a time period from 2016-2030 and would allow the participants and the region to move towards the emissions reduction target set for 2050.
- 7.12 The SEAP will drive growth in decentralised energy generation and supply using renewable and low carbon fuels, delivering employment, attract investment and exemplary reductions in carbon emissions required to achieve recognition under the European Covenant of Mayors mechanisms and to attract funding to support its aims. The SEAP aims to deliver its goals utilising locally based supply chains, knowledge and skills to deliver an increasingly resilient and sustainable energy economy for Angus.
- 7.13 The SEAP will work alongside Angus Council's Climate Strategy & Action Plan, but in order to achieve these benefits it is important that the all public and private sectors work jointly across the area to exploit opportunities more effectively.
- 7.14 The Councils have commissioned consultants Aether to help in the creation of this NESSEAP. The process will cover baseline emissions inventory for Angus, stakeholder workshops, governance structure and intervention activities.
- 7.15 The consultants Aether gave a briefing to Angus Council officers on 18 May which outlined the benefits of a SEAP and the next steps to take it forward. This was received positively by all staff, who recognised that an Angus SEAP gave the opportunity of an innovative "one team" approach to all Council energy saving projects in line with the Transforming Angus ethos. Current council activities could be banded together under this umbrella and supplemented by external private and public businesses and organisations to maximise the impact of emissions reductions work.
- 7.16 A Stakeholder Workshop which was facilitated by consultants Aether was held on 21 July. This was attended by representatives from Angus Council Community Planning Partners, plus local businesses. This was an interactive workshop which focused on local priorities and covered, the key emission sources (energy demand, energy supply, transport, waste and land use) plus strategic drivers such as economic, social and political changes facing the region. A list of key priorities and potential projects were identified.
- 7.17 Aether will collate this information and compile a report that will focus on the following themes:
- Overview of local authority status, location and environmental risk.

- Review of current climate change and sustainability strategies and success to date.
- Review and description of opportunities available to the local authority in the context of establishing a SEAP. These opportunities to be classified according to feasibility.
- Review of implementation options available to local authority e.g. finance, case studies, funding options etc.
- Next steps in relation to regional workshop and collaboration.

7.18 **Digitalising Business Parks in Angus**

- 7.19 Working with IT we installed a high speed wireless broadband connection at Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar. This was to assist in improving the offer and attractiveness of Angus as a business location and to support businesses on the Park by offering improved broadband connectivity. To gain an understanding of current broadband provision in other business parks in Angus a survey went out to businesses in Kirkton Arbroath, and Forties Road, Montrose. The survey closed on 15th July.
- 7.20 An open day was held on 11 August at Kirkton Industrial Estate in which information on the needs of the businesses were identified which would ensure the proposed system is designed to meet their needs.
- 7.21 It is proposed to utilise the wireless network that has been installed at Angus House (servicing Orchardbank) to connect the other business parks across Angus. This will help reduce installation and operational costs.
- 7.22 The system would link by wireless from Angus House down to Kirkton via a mast sited at Craigowl which is due to be installed as part of the upgrade to a number of Angus Schools and council premises.
- 7.23 This tender will go live by end July with contract award date in November 2016. This means that timescale from the contract award date to supply of Kirkton Industrial Estate would be lessened and wireless in place by January 2017.
- 7.24 Cost: each Business park is estimated at £30k in year 2016/17 plus £4k annual revenue costs – commencing 2017/18.

8. **DUNDEE AND ANGUS CONVENTION BUREAU**

- 8.1 We continue to work with the Convention Bureau to bring business events to Angus. They are currently working with venues such as Guthrie Castle, Kinettles, House of Turin and Glamis Castle on social events for forthcoming conferences. In particular they are coordinating accommodation bookings for the Scottish Rural Parliament being held in Brechin 6-8 October 2016.

9. **UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**

- 9.1 The overall unemployment rate in Angus as of June 2016 was 2.1% which accounts for 1,500 people. This shows an increase on last reporting period and an overall increase in Job Seekers Allowance in comparison to the same time in the previous year (June 2015 1.8% 1305). There is a slight increase in from 2014 (2.1% 1,410) and a decrease compared to 2013 (June 2013 2.9% 2,090). [Source: Nomis]
- 9.2 At present 67% (1,010) of those claiming Jobseekers Allowance are males and 33% (490) 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 now lower than the national average of 2.2% but higher than the UK Average (1.8%) [Source: Nomis]
- 9.3 The Overall claimants by Age Group for 18-24 year old as of June 2016 was 4.3% with Scotland at 3.2% and the UK at 2.5%. This shows an increase in this age category compared to National statistics. When compared to previous years the 18-24 age category has increased from 2015 (3.9%) and is still an overall reduction from 2014 (4.6%). [Source: Nomis]
- 9.4 The other age group 25-49 (June 2016 2.2%, Scotland 2.3 % and UK 1.8%) and 50+ (June 2016 1.4%, Scotland 1.7% and UK 1.5%) are showing lower figures against Scotland. In comparison to the UK the 50+ is lower however the 25-49 is 0.4% higher.

10. SKILLS

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

PROGRAMME	STARTS	TARGET
Modern Apprentices	8	15
Employability Stage 3	3	6
Mainstream Clients	119	400
Scottish Recruitment Incentive	9	9

10.2 Modern Apprenticeships

10.3 We started off with a good start to the contract year with steady recruitment ongoing. Enquiries continue to come through with recruitment of Modern Apprentices in progress.

10.4 Angus Shared Apprentice Programme (ASAP)

10.5 To date there has been 11 apprentices on the programme with all successfully completing year 1 of their training. Recruitment for the next cohort of year 1 apprentices is currently underway and local construction companies being signed up as host employers. The Programme has also been shortlist for the London Construction Awards with the winner being announced later in the year.

10.6 Employability Fund

10.7 Three young people have started on our programme, 1 within Communities, 1 with Carnoustie Golf Hotel and another with a local building contractor with interviews taking place for other opportunities.

10.8 The first of 3 Food Production Academies has now taken place and from the 6 candidates all received work experience training as well as additional training assisting them to overcome any barriers they have to gaining employment. Since the Academy 2 candidates have gained employment.

10.9 The Skills team were awarded a contract by DWP to deliver 3 Food Production Academies over 2016, April, August and November to 18 long term unemployed claimants who would be interested in this type of work.

10.10 A successful Hospitality Academy was held and 4 unemployed candidates were offered employment by Carnoustie Golf Hotel. All candidates were interested in the hospitality trade gaining valuable work experience within the Hotel as well gaining an insight to the industry, the group also gained certificates in World Host by attending and taking part in a one day intensive customer service course. Other training involved GOALS, a motivational course, Personal Licence for working behind a bar, and First Aid Training.

10.11 Scotland's Employer Recruitment Incentive

10.12 This is the second Incentive that the Skills Team have delivered on behalf of Skills Development Scotland (SDS). The initiative is to encourage Providers and or local employers to recruit young people aged 16-19 years who have the greatest barriers to employment.

10.13 The incentive began on the 1 April 2016 and the final place has just been signed off. The team have approached SDS for additional places but the programme will not be reviewed until September 2016.

11. FUNDING

11.1 Angus Leader Programme (Hosted By Angus Council)

11.2 The LEADER team held the first assessment panel on 1st June 2016 at which one application had fulfilled all of the requirements. The application for Friockheim Hub was approved and formally accepted by the applicant with £137,930 awarded towards the cost of the project.

- 11.3 The level of expressions of interest and of applications for funding is low in Angus compared to other LEADER programmes in Scotland. Angus LEADER is trying to publicise the fund further, and to encourage and support the development of suitable projects among local communities and businesses.
- 11.4 A farm diversification scheme is currently under development to allow targeted support to farmers and will be launched in the coming months. A fund of £275,000 as a minimum is available. Business support for small and micro rural businesses is also under development with grants of £5,000 to £30,000 available.
- 11.5 A fast track process for applications of £5,000 or less has now been developed.
- 11.6 An Angus LAG member was part of the Scottish delegation who attended the European Rural Parliament Event in Sweden in May.
- 11.7 Angus LAG is continuing to support the Borjomi LEADER project in Georgia with two LAG members attending in late June to discuss project assessment methods.
- 11.8 **Angus Environmental Trust**
- 11.9 Entrust-UK Landfill Communities Fund, at the recent meeting of Angus Environmental Trust Directors approved £7,708.36 of funding towards the heating and lighting renovations on behalf of Forfar Dramatic Society. To date AET have supported 119 environmental projects in Angus.
- 11.10 SEPA-Scottish Landfill Communities Fund, at the recent meeting of Angus Environmental Trust Directors approved £1,000 of funding towards the costs of interpretation panels and tools for the Cameron House Enchanted Wood project, Dunbartonshire.

12 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FLOOD RELIEF GRANTS – ANGUS

- 12.1 The Scottish Government launched the flood relief grants following the severe flood events of December 2015 and January 2016. Funding was provided by the Scottish Government for Local Authorities to administer to each flood affected property and Business through the provision of flat rate grants of £1,500 and £3,000 respectively.
- 12.2 Breakdown of grants paid in Angus as follows:

	PROPERTY (£1500) GRANTS	BUSINESS (£3000) GRANTS
Duration of Scheme	Open for applications for 6 weeks between 18 January 2016 and 29 February 2016	Open for applications for 7 weeks between 28 January and 11 March 2016
Applications	123 Applications Received, of which: 101 Paid 22 Ineligible	25 Applications Received, of which: 23 Paid 2 Ineligible
Ward Breakdown	2 Arbroath East & Lunan 5 Arbroath West & Letham 55 Brechin & Edzell 9 Forfar & District 24 Kirriemuir & Dean 11 Monifieth & Sidlaw 17 Montrose & District	0 Arbroath East & Lunan 1 Arbroath West & Letham 14 Brechin & Edzell 2 Forfar & District 7 Kirriemuir & Dean 0 Monifieth & Sidlaw 1 Montrose & District
Payment	Total Paid £151,500	Total Paid £69,000 (to reclaim from Scot Gov)