

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

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 26 May 2015 and includes a number of year end performance statistics.

1. PROPERTY

- 1.1.1 Since the last report the property portfolio has remained at occupancy rate of 90.6% albeit units have become available but were quickly occupied by new tenants. We are pleased to report continued demand for our business units and hope to achieve last year's occupancy level high of 91.8%.
- 1.2 Demand for employment land continues to be focused on the North of Angus albeit we are now seeing Orchardbank, Forfar being perceived as a viable option by the market. We can report 2 new land transactions currently with legal across the portfolio.

2. INWARD INVESTMENT

- 2.1 In the last month we have responded to a number of inward investment enquiries, one of which involves an Oil and Gas related business looking at space at Orchardbank. We continue to support investment projects and hope to report further success shortly.

Economic Development is currently exploring future strategies for the release of more employment land.

3. SOUTH MONTROSE REGENERATION

- 3.1 Section 2 of the spine road, from Caledonia Street to Ferry Road to Barrack Road should be completed by the end of September. Section 1 of the spine road cannot be progressed until a small number of properties are acquired. Officers continue to seek negotiated settlements but nevertheless are preparing to promote a Compulsory Purchase Order.
- 3.2 The private sector continues to invest in the area. GSK is nearing completion of a new £40 million aluminium salts production facility. In addition work has commenced on the erection of a new £25 million active pharmaceuticals ingredients production facility. Montrose Port Authority has refurbished a warehouse unit for RopeQuip, a Dutch wire rope distributor to the marine and offshore industries, thus consolidating the company's presence in Montrose. The Port has also undertaken surface improvement works on the north side of the harbour. Rix (Scotland) has demolished its old Meridian Street offices and warehouse and is presently building a new 32,000 sq ft transit shed, thus further improving port facilities. Officers continue to work to attract and support investment in the area.
- 3.3 A full time officer is now in post to lead the regeneration of the area.

4 BUSINESS GATEWAY

Over the last year there has been an overall increase in the level of business support activities delivered in Angus by Business Gateway. Given the importance of supporting new businesses this performance is encouraging. The outstanding headline number is the 102 business start-ups for the first quarter of 2015. Although the first quarter is traditionally a strong one, to get into 3 figures for Angus is an exceptional outcome.

Table 1 – Business Gateway performance in Angus, Q1 2015:

Activity	Q1 2015	Q1 2014	+/-
Number of business start-ups assisted	102	78	+24
Number of 'Growth Companies' supported (companies predicting a turnover of above £200,000 within 3 years)	2	3	-1
Number of companies transferred to Scottish Enterprise for 'Account Management' * (companies predicting an increase in turnover of £400,000 or more within 3 years)	3	2	+1
Number of business start-up workshops	0	1	-1
Number of workshops for existing businesses	8	9	-1

* Account managed companies have a Scottish Enterprise account manager and access to a range of business support tools to help achieve growth aspirations. At the end of March 2015 there were 41 Angus companies account managed by Scottish Enterprise.

5. FUNDING AND ADVICE FOR BUSINESSES

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

5.2 Angus Market Development Grant

Business	Amount requested	Status	Amount Paid
Carlogie Consulting Ltd	£378.30	Approved	£378.30
John M Henderson Machines Ltd	£900.00	Approved	-
Ogilvy Spirits Ltd	£500.00	Approved	-
Fresh Food Express Ltd	£717.50	Approved	-

* Grants are paid on receipt of final claims and therefore may vary from amount approved

Budget Available 2015/16	Committed	Actual Paid	Budget Remaining
£7,000.00	£3,245.80	£1,005.23	£3,754.20

5.3 Angus Business Start Up – capital grant

Business	Amount requested	Status	Amount Paid
Abbeyside Coffee Bothy (Arbroath)	£500.00	Approved	-
RTG First Aid Ltd (Forfar)	£500.00	Approved	-
Fisherman's Inn (Arbroath)	£500.00	Approved	-

5.4 Angus Business First Employee Grant

Business	Amount requested	Status	Amount Paid
Uan Wool Ltd (Forfar)	£750.00	Approved	£750.00
Earth Energy Ltd (Forfar)	£500.00	Approved	£500.00
Fisherman's Inn (Arbroath)	£500.00	Approved	-

Budget Available 2015/16	Committed	Actual Paid	Budget Remaining
£16,893.00 **	£3,750.00	£1,750.00	£13,143.00

** Budget to support Angus Business Start-Up & First Employee Grant.

5.5 Angus Training Fund

Business	Amount requested	Status	Amount Paid
Hydrus Energy Engineering Ltd (Brechin)	£148.50	Approved	-

Budget Available 2015/16	Committed	Actual Paid	Budget Remaining
£6,476.25	£148.50	£0	£6,327,75

5.5 In financial year 2014/15 funding and business advice was provided to 32 local businesses and this helped create 41.5 new jobs and helped safeguard 111.5 existing jobs. Total funding provided directly or from external sources totalled £115,000 and this helped leverage further funding of £502,000 from the private sector.

5.6 Angus Council in partnership with Dundee & Angus College and local community representatives have developed an Angus Crowdfunding Portal for local individuals, projects and businesses to lever in the funding they require for their activity. The launch event is scheduled for 25th August and will be held at Park Hotel in Montrose.

5.7 Angus Council in partnership with local businesses has been successful in securing £25,000 from Local Energy Scotland. The Montrose Local Energy Project (MLEP) will develop a new fuel source from the agricultural sector that will feed into local heat demand and potentially local electricity demand. The fuel will be created through the processing and drying of used animal bedding (a mix of straw and animal waste), principally cattle.

6. EVENTS AND PROMOTION

6.1 The fourth Angus Business Breakfast – Ask the Advisor took place on Wednesday 18 March 2015, with 26 delegates attending. There were a range of experts available to give free advice on a range of topics including Property, Marketing, Social Media, Business Rates, Finance, Employment Law, HR and Training.

6.2 The statistics for the July edition of the Visit Angus Enewsletter are as follows:

Number delivered	2,806	98.08%
Unique opens	953	33.96%

The average industry benchmark for unique opens in the Entertainment & Events, and Hobbies sectors, is 30.82%.

- 6.3 The Summer in Angus campaign runs from April to September, as part of the new Visit Angus marketing campaign to promote Angus as a destination and to encourage more visitors to the area. Event organisers were invited to submit their events, all of which are listed on www.visitangus.com and www.whatsonscotland.com. Key events were selected and included in a printed leaflet which was distributed within a 90 minute radius of Angus. Press releases, are issued at the beginning of each month, highlighting events taking place that month and encouraging people to visit the website. In addition, monthly Facebook competitions on the Visit Angus Facebook page have been placed to highlight a specific event each month.
- 6.4 The Carnoustie Country Classic (4 night/4 round stay and play golf package staying at Carnoustie Golf Hotel and playing at Carnoustie Championship, Montrose, Monifieth and Panmure) took place from 10-14 May and attracted 110 players - mainly from overseas - and had an estimated economic impact of £168,000.
- 6.5 The Amateur Championship took place at Carnoustie and Panmure from 15 to 20 June. SKY TV broadcasts had a reach of 150 million households. The 300 players and supporters spend 3,500 bed nights in the area and the estimated economic impact was £500,000. Carnoustie Country hosted a Civic Reception for 350 players and guests at Carnoustie Golf hotel.
- 6.6 Carnoustie Country supported the Scottish Mixed Foursomes Golf Week at the beginning of July and brought over 150 couples (300 golfers) to the area. The economic impact to the region is approximately £290,000
- 6.7 A Carnoustie Country competition with Bunkered magazine attracted over 1,500 email entries to be used for future e-marketing. Contacts were shared with the partners who supported the promotion for their own marketing.

7. FOOD & DRINK

- 7.1 £15,000 of Community Grant fund money has been ringfenced this year for Year of Food and Drink Activity. So far there have been 2 successful applications:

The Big Easthaven Picnic – this was held on 27th June to celebrate the 20th anniversary of national cycle route 1 which goes through the village. Taste of Angus picnic boxes made with local produce were available for sale, with people being encouraged to walk or cycle to the village to make their purchase. Angus Council's Taste of Angus team were in attendance. It is estimated that 400-500 people attended throughout the day.

Taste Angus Festival – the third Taste Angus Festival was held at Drovers Inn on 19th July. 12 local producers were in attendance and local chefs took part in demonstrations throughout the day. This was an excellent showcase for local produce and culinary talent. Over 500 people attended this free event.

- 7.2 Angus produce is appearing in a number of publications and campaigns to celebrate Year of Food and Drink, including the Scottish Berry Trail and VisitScotland's Food Trail which showcases Arbroath Smokies.
- 7.3 An application for PGI status for the Forfar Bridie is being prepared in partnership with the Think Local Campaign, Saddlers and McLarens. The promotional campaign for this will be launched at the Dundee Flower and Food Show in September.
- 7.4 Taste of Angus was at the Royal Highland Show as part of the Go Rural initiative. Information about Angus produce and producers was given out, along with samples of both Arbikie and Ogilvy Vodka.
- 7.5 ESEC sponsored the Scotland Europa Summer Reception in Brussels on 15th July. Food and drink from Angus, Dundee, Fife, Aberdeenshire and Falkirk was featured, including the Angus contribution of Arbikie Vodka, Bouvrage, Smokie Pate from Iain R Spink and Aberfeldy oatcakes. Cllr Mairi Evans chaired the event and Professional Masterchef winner Jamie Scott who works in St Andrews but lives in Arbroath was the keynote speaker.

8. TOURISM

- 8.1 A media familiarisation trip which was undertaken by Carnoustie Country in collaboration with our East of Scotland Golf partners in October 2014 has produced a significant amount of online and offline coverage over Spring & Summer 2015 in targeted European golf and lifestyle publications with an estimated equivalent advertising value of 144,000 euros with a reach of over 240,000 consumers.
- 8.2 8 European golf tour operators visited Carnoustie Country in April as part of a post EXPO VisitScotland familiarisation trip. Their overnight trip included one night at Carnoustie Golf Hotel, a visit to a Smokie house, golf on the Championship Course and dinner at Kinnettles Castle.
- 8.3 In collaboration with our East of Scotland partners and Visit Scotland, Carnoustie Country visited Sweden in June 2015 – and was also promoted in Germany - participating in trade events with targeted media and buyers and supported by a PR campaign aimed at raising the profile of the destination.
- 8.4 A draft Carnoustie Country Golf Framework and Action Plan (2015 -2020) has been produced and which lays out the aims, ambitions and objectives of the Carnoustie Country marketing campaign. It is aligned with the National Golf Tourism Strategy, the Angus Economic Strategy and the Council's International Framework.

9. UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

- 9.1 The overall unemployment rate in Angus as of July 2015 was 1.8% which accounts for 1,262 people. This shows a reduction in Job Seekers Allowance in comparison to the same time in previous years (May 2014 2.0% 1,464; May 2013 2.8% 2,015).
- 9.2 At present 68% (857 people) of those claiming Jobseekers Allowance are males and 32% (405) are females. This trend of more males being unemployed than females has been consistent for the past year and has led to focused support for client groups. Overall the levels of claimants in Angus are lower than the national average of 2.2%.

Contact for further information
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