

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 11 OCTOBER 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 30 August 2016. This report covers the period 13 August to 26 September 2016.

1. INVESTMENT – PROPERTY AND LAND

1.1 Property and Land

1.2 The occupancy rate for the commercial property portfolio sits at 87.74 %. We have witnessed a slight down turn in enquiries over the summer month. It is too early at this point in time to say if this is a result of the continuing oil price slump or Brexit or simply a seasonal dip given the holiday season.

1.3 There have been three commercial properties let:

Unit 14 Montrose Road Industrial Estate, Brechin to Masonry Heating Builders
Unit 10 Brechin Business Centre to Park Brew.

Both businesses have expanded their businesses and have moved from their homes to the commercial units.

1.4 Art n Frames who were current tenants of Unit 5 Montrose Business Centre have expanded their business and are now occupying units 5 & 11 Montrose Business Centre.

1.5 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.

1.6 We are introducing a new tenants' welcome pack for commercial occupiers. This explains clearly the roles the tenant and Angus Council has in terms of legal responsibilities, together with expanded information on what services Angus Council provide and specifically the assistance Economic Development can provide in terms of funding and grants, sectoral support, business advice for start-ups, staffing, growing companies, internationalisation and innovation.

1.7 We have successfully undertaken a tenant satisfaction survey, encouraging feedback from Angus Council commercial property tenants on a number of issues. We are pleased to report just over 70% said they were very satisfied with the service we provide. The survey did highlight a number of issues on accessing information which we have dealt with in the tenants' welcome pack above. In addition we are now establishing tenant forums, allowing a more structured platform for Economic Development to engage with tenants allowing us to be more responsive to their specific needs and provides an opportunity for us to provide bespoke business advice.

2. MONTROSE SOUTH

2.1 Montrose South received its biggest investment boost to date when GSK recently announced its intention to invest £110 million at its Montrose site. This will deliver a new, state-of-the-art facility for the manufacture of respiratory active ingredients. GSK advised in addition to the jobs associated with the construction of the new facilities, the project will support current employment at the site and is expected to lead to the creation of new employment opportunities. The company currently employs over 450 staff in Montrose, making it one of

the largest employers in Angus. This major investment is not only a vote of confidence for Montrose and Angus but a major boost for the life sciences sector in Scotland.

- 2.2 The design for section 1 of the spine road (Wharf Street to River Street and linking to Caledonia Street) has been reviewed and finalised. However, the acquisition of properties and the works can not proceed unless Scottish Ministers confirm the Compulsory Purchase Order that was served in February 2016. Officers have responded to some minor queries and a decision is awaited.

3. FUNDING AND ADVICE FOR BUSINESSES

- 3.1 The following applications were approved through the grant schemes available to businesses in Angus in 2016/17.

3.2 INCLUSION Fund

Business	Grant awarded
AC Welsh, Montrose	£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
£7,000.00	£2,000.00	£5,000.00

3.3 INNOVATION Fund

Business	Grant awarded
Knittyknittybangbang, Forfar	£500.00

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

Budget Available	Committed	Remaining
£5,000.00	£500.00	£4,500.00

3.4 INTERNATIONALISATION Grant

Business	Grant awarded
Glenesk Hotel, Edzell	£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	£6,000.00	£6,000.00

3.5 INVESTMENT Grant

Business	Grant awarded
The Flower Pavilion, Montrose	£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	£6,000.00	£4,000.00

3.6 BUSINESS GATEWAY DELIVERY FOR APRIL - JUNE 2016

	Angus	Dundee	Perth	Total
Business Start Ups	119	70	55	234
Growth Start Up (40%)*	17	18	18	53
Growth Start Up completed action plan (60%)**	15	8	7	30
Start Up Workshops	9	16	12	37
Existing Bus Workshops	1	5	3	9
GAS/GP Referrals#	3 GAS 1 GP	3 GAS 2 GP	6 GAS 1 GP	16
DRM(A/cMgd) 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

As can be seen, Business Gateway has done particularly well in dealing with new businesses in Angus however these numbers also include a number of starts up from pre April.

4. BUSINESS ANGUS

- 4.1 There has been a slight increase in visits to the website in July by 2.96% compared to June. July had a total of 2,382 page views and the top 5 pages viewed were the funding, events, financial support, business development and Business Angus grant guidelines. The average visitor session was for 1 min 24 seconds, with 2.44 pages viewed per session.
- 4.2 The Business Angus e-newsletter saw the following opening rates (the industry benchmark is 21.73%):
- 32.6% open rate in July.
 - 32.2% open rate in August.
- 4.3 Business Angus now has over 1,000 followers on twitter. In July, 107 tweets were posted which generated of 85.4K tweet impressions (number of times the tweet appeared in the twitter feed).
- 4.4 The team attended the Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce (DACC) AGM and Business Showcase – Aug 2016, Piperdam. The event was well attended with over fifty business delegates and 27 exhibitors. This was a busy event, discussing both what support we can provide businesses as well as promoting the forthcoming Angus Business Week 2016 events. Our new Business Angus brochure was used for the first time and well received by businesses.

5. FOOD AND DRINK SECTOR

- 5.1 Taste of Angus sponsored the Market Marquee at the Taste Angus Festival at Glamis on 20/21 August. This event has previously been held at Drovers Inn but this year was moved to Glamis and was much bigger. Visitor numbers were estimated at 3,000.
- 5.2 Taste of Angus had a stand at Dundee Flower & Food Festival, raising awareness of local food and had Sacred Grounds Coffee Company as stand partners.
- 5.3 Hilary Tasker, Sector Officer for Food & Drink, and Prof Derek Stewart from the James Hutton Institute went on a learning journey to Vastmanland in Sweden to look at potential collaborations in crop research and innovation, food tourism and the green economy.
- 5.4 A group of representatives from hospitality businesses in Dundee were taken on a trip to visit Angus food producers and to learn about the importance of using local produce in their food offering. The aim of this event, run in partnership with Dundee & Angus Convention Bureau, was to encourage more chefs to use Angus produce in their menus.
- 5.5 There was a Taste of Angus reception at the Scottish Parliament on 21st September, hosted by Graeme Dey MSP. MSPs and invited guests were given the opportunity to try a selection of local food and drink in Angus, and to learn about how important the sector is to this area.
- 5.6 The consultation period for the application to award the Forfar Bridie PGI status has now come to an end. A variety of comments were received which must be addressed before the application can go forward to the EU. We are working with the Think Local Campaign on this.

6. GOLF SECTOR

- 6.1 7 Carnoustie Country golf businesses (3 golf courses, 3 accommodation providers and 1 tour operator) have signed up to exhibit at the inaugural Scottish Golf Tourism week taking place at Fairmont Hotel, St Andrews from 11-15 October. The event will be attended by over 60 golf tourism exhibitors from all over Scotland, with each business guaranteed at least 30 meetings with international golf tour operators. SE delivered a Business to Business Event Ready workshop for exhibitors at Murrayshall Hotel on 7 September.
- 6.2 Carnoustie Country exhibited at the London Golf Show from 26-28 August. The stand was delivered in partnership with Carnoustie Country industry group member DP&L Golf which is the new Dundee based golf tour operator specialising in Carnoustie Country packages. An estimated 18,000 visitors attended the show. A fly/stay/play competition was run on stand to collect email addresses for future marketing.
- 6.3 As part of our international marketing activity two media familiarisation trips took place:

Two journalists from Belgium and the Netherlands visited Carnoustie Country and Dundee from 31st August to 5th September as part of our promotional activity to highlight the new Dundee/Amsterdam flight route. Articles will be produced on an offline and reported later.

Two golf writers from Denmark visited Carnoustie Country from 2 to 7 September as part of our East of Scotland Golf international marketing activity with a strong focus on Scandinavian, German speaking and Benelux markets. Carnoustie Country destination features will appear in Golf Bladet and Golf Digest in early 2017.

7. TOURISM

7.1 Visit Angus Website

- 7.2 Between 1 July – 25 August 2016, the Visit Angus website had 42,210 visits, an increase of 15.86% compared to the same period in 2015. There was a significant peak in visits to the website looking at content on Arbroath Sea Fest with people viewing the event page and the Arbroath Signal Tower webcam. There was also a peak in visits to Angus Heritage Week and Doors Open Days events pages as a result of Facebook advertising.
- 7.3 During this same period, visitors spent an average of 2 minutes 2 seconds on the website; this is an increase of 22.02% compared to the same period in 2015.

- 7.4 The top 5 destinations of visitors to the website came from Dundee, Arbroath, London, Aberdeen and Edinburgh. This typically represents the day visitor who lives within a 90 minute drive of Angus, with the exception of London.
- 7.5 The most popular page was the Arbroath Signal Tower Webcam which received 11,036 page views during this period, with a significant peak during Arbroath Sea Fest. Other top viewed pages include events and things to see and do which received a collective 13,520.
- 7.6 67% 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. 15% of visitors came from referrals and 13% came direct to the website.
- 7.7 Desktop remains the most popular device used to access the website with 43.59% of visitors using this device. 31.81% access the website on a mobile and 24.6% use a tablet. But evidence suggests that the overall trend shows a change in behaviour with a slow decrease in desktop users and a slow increase in mobile users.

7.8 **Visit Angus Social Media**

- 7.9 Glamis Castle featured as the 'Spotlight On' for August, a digital campaign aimed at raising the profile of Angus tourism businesses. Glamis Castle offered a competition prize and benefitted from exposure across Visit Angus social media channels.
- 7.10 Visit Angus participated in #ScotlandHour, a monthly tourism twitter chat. The topic for July was welcoming visitors and content received over 13100 views. Angus tourism businesses have been encouraged to participate via the Visit Angus e-newsletter.

7.11 **Visit Angus B2C E-newsletters:**

- July – 2997 delivered with a 22.6% open rate
- August – 2961 delivered with a 31.4% open rate.

7.12 **Visit Angus B2B E-newsletters:**

- July – 348 delivered with a 31.9% open rate.
- August – 346 delivered with a 31.5% open rate

8. **MANUFACTURING & ENERGY**

- 8.1 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. The survey has been completed, and the results are being incorporated into an upgraded website with many additional features. The ultimate aim here is to create an online portal for all information relevant to the sector.
- 8.2 The fourth & final CeeD learning workshop for 2016 is on Strategic Leadership and was scheduled for 12 September to support Angus Business Week

9. **UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**

- 9.1 The overall unemployment rate in Angus as of July 2016 was 2.2% which accounts for 1,555 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 1.9% 1340). 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% (1,025) of those claiming Jobseekers Allowance are males and 33% (525) 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 2.3% 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 July 2016 was 4.9% with Scotland at 3.8% and the UK at 2.7%. 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 (4.3%) and is still an overall reduction from 2014 (5.3%). [Source: Nomis]
- 9.4 The other age group 25-49 (July 2016 2.3%, Scotland 2.4 % and UK 1.9%) and 50+ (July 2016 1.3%, Scotland 1.6% and UK 1.5%) are showing lower figures against Scotland.

10. SKILLS

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

PROGRAMME	STARTS	TARGET
Modern Apprentices	11	15
Employability Stage 3	3	6
Mainstream Clients	148	400
Scottish Recruitment Incentive	9	9

10.2 Modern Apprenticeships

Although the above figures do not reflect the programme being filled there are 4 vacancies currently at interview stage with start dates due for September. We have applied for and had accepted our request for an additional 4 places following enquiries from local employers interested in offering Modern Apprenticeships in Business Administration.

10.3 Angus Shared Apprentice Programme (ASAP)

- 10.4 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.

10.5 Employability Fund

- 10.6 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.

- 10.7 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. The second academy has now started and underway with 2 weeks work experience with local employers about to commence.

- 10.8 The Skills team assisted local employer Dawnfresh (formerly RR Spink) with a recruitment drive to enrol 20+ Production operatives. Our Arbroath premises were the venue for a 1 day presentation by Dawnfresh and the Skills team with two days of interviews on the 6th and 12 September 2016. 24 people have as a result been offered employment and the Skills Team will advise all successful applications on the various assistance on offer to support them sustain employment until they receive their first wage.

- 10.9 The Skills Team have been invited to deliver one SVQ unit from a suite of Employability qualifications i.e. Personal Development: Self and Work to approximately 45 secondary pupils from across Angus. This is part of Angus Council's Developing Young Workforce where pupils will also gain valuable practical work experience from attending 1 day a week over a 22 week period throughout Angus Council services.

11. FUNDING

11.1 Angus LEADER Programme (Hosted By Angus Council)

- 11.2 The LEADER team second assessment panel was held on 7th September 2016. The meeting considered three applications. The three applications totalling £411,578 had fulfilled all of the requirements and have been approved pending To date the Friockheim Hub is the only project to have formally accepted with £137,930 awarded towards the cost of the project.
- 11.3 A fast track process for applications of £5,000 or less has now been developed with one application of £2,000 approved to date. This project was to support the development of cooperation with other areas and allowed 2 local representatives to attend the LEADER Transnational Cooperation event in Estonia from 23 – 26th September where there was a feature on supporting youth projects. Attending this event produced excellent leads to possible cooperation projects with other countries' LEADER programmes, and also raised awareness in Europe of the Angus area.
- 11.4 Angus LEADER programme received a positive monitoring visit from the Scottish Government programme monitoring team on 16 August 2016. Work has begun with internal audit colleagues in preparation for the annual verification and assurance report to be made to Scottish Government by 31st October. The Angus LEADER programme has recently recruited a further two new members of the LEADER Local Action Group, to increase the strength and resilience of its decision-making.
- 11.5 Angus Council, in the role as the Accountable Body for Angus LEADER, continues to manage the implications of the BREXIT vote on the LEADER European programme. The Council advises the Angus LEADER Local Action Group on the risks involved in awarding further funds, and liaises with Scottish Government and other LEADER programmes to monitor the developing situation.
- 11.6 SEPA-Scottish Landfill Communities Fund, Angus Environmental Trust
- 11.7 Directors approved £5,471.57 of funding to East Haven Together towards the costs of carrying out a Community BioBlitz, on 26 & 27 August 2016. The aim was to produce an up to date species list, inform future conservation studies, increase knowledge, develop skills, encourage interest and participation from community and school pupils.

12. LOW CARBON TRAVEL & TRANSPORT BID (LCTT)

- 12.1 Transport Scotland has been awarded up to £25m under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2014-2020 programme to deliver a Strategic Intervention. They have been allocated ERDF funding of up to £13.9m until the end of 2018.
- 12.2 Angus Council successfully submitted a bid for initial feasibility funding of £10,000 to explore the options of creating a Low Carbon Transport Hub at Orchardbank which would provide a mixture of low carbon vehicle refuelling infrastructure, such as electric vehicle charging points, hydrogen refuelling stations and alternative transport facilities such as cycling as well as integrating with bus transport to improve accessibility throughout Angus for residents, commuters and tourists. This study will be concluded by 31 December 2016.

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