

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28 NOVEMBER 2017**

**OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 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 10 October. This report covers the period 9 September to 27 October 2017.

**1. INVESTMENT – PROPERTY AND LAND**

- 1.1 The occupancy rate for the commercial property portfolio is at 74%, down from the previous report as two office tenants chose not to renew their leases. These units are now being prepared for marketing.
- 1.2 Reviewing the demand for the portfolio over the last year it has become evident that there has been a material drop in demand for office accommodation. We are reviewing the type, quality and location of offices and considering change of uses in order we continue to respond to the needs of businesses, increase employment, and to secure income for Angus Council.
- 1.3 Two commercial tenants whose long leases are expiring have chosen to renew in Arbroath Business Centre and Brechin Business Centre.
- 1.4 Our annual face to face survey with tenants of the Economic Development commercial property portfolio will end in October and a full report of our findings and tenants' comments will be published in due course. Initial indications suggest a large proportion of our tenants value the service we provide as 'very good' or 'excellent'. Other initial findings suggest many of the companies have plans to grow, with a potential need for larger or alternative premises but a strong desire to remain in their local area. There may be opportunity for us to assist a handful of companies physically expand into larger Angus Council owned property.
- 1.5 We are half way through our programme of physical maintenance works to the property portfolio and already the feedback from tenants has been positive. Anecdotal evidence suggests it has already brought cost savings and improved the quality of environment for a number of local and international businesses.
- 1.7 We were pleased to support the continued growth and expansion of Mackays in Arbroath. As reported in the press and on TV and radio, they have taken occupation of an additional large industrial unit in Angus Council's ownership at Kirkton Industrial Estate. This allows Mackays to reconfigure their existing accommodation in order to increase production of marmalades, jams and other condiments as demand from both local and international markets continues to increase.

**2. GOLF SECTOR**

**2.1 Carnoustie Country Campaign**

- 2.2 The visit of 200 Danish golfers to Carnoustie Country over a 4 week period commencing on 11th September proved very successful with 7 local Clubs receiving bookings. 270 of the 700 rounds played took place at Montrose Links. The golfers arrived into Dundee airport on 7 charter flights direct from Billund in west Denmark. Golfers also visited the Gin Bothy and local spirit and beer tastings took place at the Links Hotel in Montrose. The visit resulted in significant media coverage in local press and on local STV news. Tour operator Green 2 Green has confirmed further trips to Carnoustie Country in 2018 and with some bookings already confirmed.

- 2.3** Filming for 2 Carnoustie Country golf destination films took place week commencing 9th October. The 2 short films will feature the history, variety and quality of golf in the local area and will be promoted mainly on social media channels.
- 2.4** 9 members of the Carnoustie Country Industry Group (6 golf courses and 3 accommodation providers) exhibited at Scottish Golf Tourism Week from 24-26th October at Trump Turnberry Resort. Each business was guaranteed 40 meetings with UK and internationally based tour operators and supports the aim of increasing tour operator business to the local area.
- 2.5** Carnoustie Country runs a Spotlight On campaign on Facebook. In September, the 'Spotlight On' course was Arbroath Golf Links and the Facebook competition to win a 4 ball reached 55,070 people. In October, the 'Spotlight On' course was Scotsraig and the Hole in One Minute was shared on Facebook reaching 26,968 people. During September, Carnoustie Country Facebook page reached a total of 283,701 people. The top countries reached included the target markets identified in the Carnoustie Country communication plan which include UK, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Netherland and Denmark. This shows that our online social media plan is reaching the intended target audience.
- 2.6** From 1 July – 30 September 2017, the Carnoustie Country website received 10,621 visitor sessions which was an increase of 4% compared to the same period in 2016. This increase can be attributed to the digital marketing activity taking place with PSP Publication, targeting the Scottish golf audience promoting The 147th Open and great value golf destination. The referrals from Carnoustie Country Facebook page also made a significant impact on the visits to the website with an 8% increase in visits during this period compared to the same period in 2016.
- 2.7 Carnoustie Country Industry Group**
- 2.8** A group of approximately 80 MBA students at Aberdeen Business School are doing a project to discuss how Carnoustie Country can use The Open 2018 to give the local area sustainable competitive advantage. The deadline for project completion is 8th January. The idea came from Edzell GC member and Carnoustie Country Golf Leadership representative, Andrew Turnbull, who is a marketing lecturer at Aberdeen Business School. It is hoped the project outcomes will help Carnoustie Country capitalise on The Open and will inform future marketing initiatives.
- 2.9 The Open 2018**
- 2.10** The Open 2018 marketing plan was presented by the R&A at a stakeholder meeting at Carnoustie Hotel on 19th October. The meeting was attended by representatives of the R&A, Carnoustie Golf Links, Visit Scotland and Angus Council. The plan is already being rolled out and a follow up meeting will take place in early January. Early ticket sales are encouraging. An ambitious target of 185,000 spectators has been set which is an increase of 25,000 on the last Open in 2007. A 3 year Carnoustie Country marketing plan is aimed at supporting the R&A to deliver on their objective of selling tickets as well as delivering economic benefit to the local area in the years pre, during and post 2018.
- 2.11** An Open 2018 section has been set up on the new Carnoustie Country website which will give potential visitors information on where to stay, how to get here, where to play/eat/visit etc. This will be further developed over the coming weeks. Of the 120 local accommodation businesses which were listed as having accommodation available at the beginning of August, 22 are now full for The Open. This list is being updated monthly.
- 2.12** The Managing Director of The Golf Channel in the US visited the area on a week long familiarisation trip from 19<sup>th</sup> October on a fact finding mission to gather content ahead of The Open 2018. His trip included visits to Carnoustie and Montrose Links, Arbroath Harbour and tasting Smokies at the But n Ben in Auchmithie.

### 3. FOOD AND DRINK SECTOR

- 3.1 The Provost visited two local drinks companies, Gin Bothy and Park Brew, to learn about how the businesses started, plans for the future, and how the team has supported them.
- 3.2 A food photography workshop was held to teach local businesses such as Forbes of Kingennie, Kirrie Dumplings Catering and Hospitalfield House how to create stunning images to help in their promotion and marketing. Feedback from this event was very positive with all attendees saying it will make a difference to their business.
- 3.3 Hilary Tasker gave a 'Taste of Angus' talk to primary 6 at Southesk Primary School as part of a local food project they were undertaking for Scottish Food & Drink fortnight.
- 3.4 Sacred Grounds Coffee Company, Parkhill Rare Breeds, Fresh Food Express and Redcastle Brewing took part in a 'Meet the Producer' day which saw a group of 13 businesses including chefs from Dundee and Angus go on a day trip round Angus to meet some of our key producers, with the aim of them using more local produce on their menus.
- 3.5 Gin Bothy, Ogilvy Spirits, Shed 35 Brewing, Redcastle Brewing and the Glenesk Hotel had stands at Granite Expo which is a general business trade show in Aberdeen. This was a joint presence supported by Taste of Angus. There are now plans for a similar event in Angus and Dundee in 2018.
- 3.6 'East of Scotland Food & Drink – Who Can Help My Business' was an event at Abertay University held jointly with Angus, Fife, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils. The event brought together 70 food and drink businesses from across the region who got to meet and chat with many of the public sector agencies which can support them, as well as getting a tour of the new food innovation labs at Abertay.

### 4. TOURISM

- 4.1 Angus Heritage Week took place from 1 to 10 September, incorporating Doors Open Days on 2 & 3 September. There were a total of 22 venues open for Doors Open Days, and 18 Angus Heritage Week events including talks, exhibitions and guided walks. 7,000 event guides were printed and distributed within a 90 minute drive of Angus, and were supplemented by a programme of PR, advertising and social media activity. Combined visitor numbers for these events were upwards of 4,000 with 85% of these visitors who completed a visitor survey rating their overall satisfaction as excellent.
- 4.2 There are two Visit Angus newsletters which are sent out monthly – one newsletter which is sent to 353 tourism businesses, and one sent to 3,327 local residents and people who have an interest in Angus.

The last business newsletter was sent out on 13 September. This had an open rate of 25.4% which is consistent month on month with approximately 5% either way. The content included events such as the Taste of Angus learning journey and World Host customer service training and information such as how to create your own accessibility guide for visitor with access needs.

The last customer newsletter was sent out on 3 October. This had an open rate of 25.2%, which is consistent month on month with approximately 5% either way. Content included events taking place in October such as a guided walk to Mortuary Chapel and Halloween at Glamis Castle as well as a Taste of Angus section about places to eat locally and a section about our 'Spotlight On' business for October, Montrose Basin Visitor Centre.

- 4.3 Between 1 April and 30 September 2017, [www.visitangus.com](http://www.visitangus.com) has received 122,236 visitor sessions which is a decrease of 2.6% on the same period in 2016. Number of page views has increased by 1.04% to 359,187 compared to 2016. There has been a significant decrease in organic search traffic to the site (where visitangus.com appears high in search engine results pages for keywords/search terms) since the new site went live in July 2017. Work is now being undertaken to optimise the website for search engines to ensure that it's found for keywords, to allow the website to compete with other regions.
- 4.4 Visit Angus runs a #SpotlightOn campaign on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com). In September, the spotlight was on Hospitalfield House, Arbroath. This month long campaign reached over 16,661 people.

Every Saturday, Visit Angus promotes a different Angus business as part of the 'Where to eat today?' feature. This is part of the campaign to raise awareness of the variety of eateries in Angus and to promote small businesses.

From 1 July to 30 September, Visit Angus Facebook reached a total of 717,618 people. The majority of those reached live within a 90 minute drive of Angus with the exception of London. This is in-line with the Visit Angus target audience.

- 4.5 Almost 100 businesses from across the region attended an event in Perth on 4 October to find out how they can work with the travel trade to reach UK and international markets. The event was organised in partnership by Angus, Dundee City, Fife, and Perth & Kinross Councils who are working collaboratively on various projects to raise the profile of East Scotland as a destination. A number of speakers including VisitScotland, destination management companies and online travel agents highlighted how businesses can expand their international reach and maximise the opportunities of working with both the cruise and coach markets.
- 4.6 A number of Angus businesses have come together to form the Angus Tourism Cooperative (ATC) with the aim of working together to promote Angus as a visitor destination; promoting collaborative working between local businesses and identifying new opportunities for the tourism sector in Angus. The new organisation held an official launch at the Caledonian Railway on 10 October and held an event on 1 November at the House of Dun, to encourage more businesses to get involved.
- 4.7 Business Angus supported an event organised by Developing the Young Workforce Dundee & Angus to highlight career opportunities within the travel and tourism industry. The conference, held on 23 October, allowed senior secondary school pupils studying Travel & Tourism to engage with businesses and volunteer organisations who showcased the industry and promoted any employment or volunteering opportunities they might have.

## 5. **VOOM Festival of Business 2017**

The VOOM Tour 2017 is the Virgin Media festival of business, which aims to raise awareness of support available locally & nationally. To date the VOOM tour has visited London, Manchester, Cardiff and Bristol.

On 8 November 2017 the Business Angus team hosted the Virgin Media VOOM tour at Carnoustie Golf Hotel for a festival of business support. This event was aimed at new, existing and developing businesses keen to find out what support is available to them nationally and locally with regards to funding, IT, marketing, social media, legal and innovation.

## 6. **SKILLS**

### 6.1 Modern Apprenticeships

Two new Modern Apprentices have begun their training within a department of Angus Council and a local employer with a further 6 potential apprentices waiting on references and start dates. This brings the total of 9 new starts within this contract year. The majority of apprentices are working toward a SCQF level 5/6 (previously level 2/3) in Business Administration.

The following list is of departments and local employers who have offered opportunities.

Location	Modern Apprenticeship Places
Angus Council – People - Children and Learning	1
Shaul Consultancy, Arbroath	1

### 6.2 Employability Fund

A contract of 10 places was awarded by Skills Development Scotland in April, 2017. 9 of the 10 places have been taken with the final place ready to be filled by an individual looking to get back into the oil industry.

The range of training undertaken by the 9 clients who have started their training range from:

- Forklift Truck
- Domestic Energy Assessor for the Oil Industry
- 5 clients working towards/have passed their training in HGV/LGV/PSV with 2 clients already promised employment.
- Wind Turbine Basic Safety training
- Chainsaw Operator

### 6.3 Mainstream Clients

Since the last report the Skills team have continued to assist a further 63 clients making a total of 223 clients since 1/4/17 through funding or training/assistance with childcare or sustaining the individual until they received their first wage since coming off benefits.

From this figure a total of 94 clients have entered employment. This breaks down as below:

Full time	71
Part time	22
Self employment	3

The range of employment includes:

Journeycall, Arbroath	Home Fund
Two Sisters Food Group	Self-employed within the care industry
Links Hotel Montrose	Self-employed Painter and Decorator
Lorry Driver	Self-employed within the oil industry

### 6.4 Scottish Employment Recruitment Incentive

Skills Development Scotland awarded 14 Scottish Employer Recruitment (SERI) places to Angus Council. As highlighted in the previous report all 14 places have been allocated to local employers throughout Angus/Tayside who have recruited a young person with some form of barrier to employment.

Following on from the success of filling all 14 contract places Skills Development Scotland are now looking at re distribution of unfilled SERI places and have invited us to put forward an indication of places that we could fill by the completion of the contract year, March 2018.

### 6.5 Hospitality Academy

Working in partnership with Carnoustie Golf Hotel and the Department of Work and Pensions, 10 unemployed clients were successful in starting an intensive 2 weeks of training with the Skills Team. This included 3 days GOALS training (a motivational and confidence building course) with a 1 day World Host customer service course covering areas on how to work with angry customers, providing a WOW customer experience etc. The remainder of the two weeks were spent covering Job Search skills, participating in mock interviews and updating CVs. All 10 clients gained valuable work experience within Carnoustie Golf Hotel covering a range of hospitality posts throughout the hotel and on completion of the course 4 were offered positions.

### 6.6 Developing Young Workforce – Angus Works

The Skills Team have now contacted and been out to meet both pupils/employers and carried out the induction. Pupils have also started work on the SQA work based unit 'Personal Development Self and Work'. All pupils involved in the Angus Works experience will undergo this qualification which will have the pupil identify their own strengths and areas for development relating to task management skills.

## 7. FUNDING, POLICY & PROJECTS

### 7.1 Digital Engagement

The new Angus Funding Facebook page launched on 1 August 2017. Since its launch the page has achieved 520 followers, with posts to date reaching over 11,500 people between 9 September and 27 October 2017.

Link: [Angus Funding Facebook](#)

The Angus Funding Twitter page currently has 1756 followers, with over 22,000 engagements between 9 September and 27 October 2017.

Link: [Angus Funding Twitter](#)

The Angus Funding Team monthly newsletter Angus Funding News currently has 431 subscribers, the October Newsletter opened and read over 200 times.

Link: [Angus Funding News](#)

## **7.2 Hanlon – Management Information system**

The Hanlon Management Information System (MIS) was implemented in 2011 and coordinates all of the economic development performance reporting. This allows us to identify good practice and areas of improvement relating to business support, employability, funding and key sectors. The system also provides all of the Scottish Government performance requirements through SLAED.

Work is underway with Children and Learning to use Hanlon to monitor and allocate Work Experience through the Angus Works Programme initially and then further expanding this to a variety of other Work Experience opportunities. Using Hanlon will allow all eight Secondary School access to see what Work Experiences are available, allow the pupils to log in via an Online Portal and view outlines of these. The system will also show the pupil where the opportunity is located and give them details of travel arrangements for car, public Transport and walking times from their home address.

Angus Council Hanlon launched in October to record, monitor and evaluate the new EmployabilityTAY programme. This programme is the first Regional Employability Programme in partnership with Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils through the Employability Innovation and Integration Fund funded by the Scottish Government. It was agreed with DCC and PKC that Hanlon would be the regional MIS to allow all councils to record client information, support and outcomes. The first of many courses started in Dundee on 2 October 2017 with Angus and Perth & Kinross courses starting January 2018.

## **7.3 Crowdfund Angus Delivering Angus Council Community Grant Scheme**

Since 1 April there have been 31 expressions of interest for the match fund and 20 successful campaigns. In total £63,647 has been raised utilising £16,100 from the Angus Council grant scheme.

The team have supported local projects to crowdfund including Montrose Playhouse, Selkie Rock Adventures, Forfar, Kirriemuir, Arbroath, Carnoustie & Monifieth Christmas lights events and Brechin outdoor pool. This is empowering communities and ensuring local projects are delivered.

Following attendance at the Scottish Expert Advisory Panel for the Collaborative Economy at the end of August, the panel has identified Angus Council as a good practice example of Crowdfunding. A second report has been requested on how Angus Council uses Crowdfunding and the benefits on community engagement and tourism within Angus.

## **7.4 Angus LEADER Programme (Hosted By Angus Council)**

Since the last report, 7 new expressions of interest have been received, and a number of basic enquiries. A fast track application of £8,634 was awarded to Kirriemuir and Dean Area Partnership for a community led feasibility study to look at next steps for the group.

There has been increased interest from both community and enterprises in the Programme and currently there is a reasonable chance of all funds being fully awarded before the cut-off date of March 2019.

A minimum expenditure of £275,000 must be allocated to cooperation projects including transnational cooperation (TNC). Three TNCs are being developed into full applications.

Angus LEADER and South Esk Catchment Partnership staff recently visited Finland and have developed key contacts and joint project ideas.

In response to contact from a Belgium LEADER programme, Angus LEADER and local partners recently met the Belgian/Romanian delegation who visited Angus looking at tourism, rural skills and food and drink.

Angus LAG also hosted jointly with Fife LEADER a large delegation from an Estonian LEADER programme including discussions for youth cooperation and support to small enterprises.

#### **7.5 The European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development**

As part of the programme developed with partners in Borjomi, Georgia we welcomed a delegation of Georgian Local Action Group members to the area on 18 September 2017. This was their second visit to the area to meet with locally funded projects to share good practice. The project is in the final stages now and will be complete in March 2018. This project has generated €57,000 for Angus and supported the EU accession plans of Georgia.

#### **7.6 Early Action System Change Funding – Big Lottery**

In partnership with Voluntary Action Angus the team supported the development of a £320,000 bid to the Big Lottery Early Action System Fund. This will focus on criminal justice service delivery for women in Angus.

#### **7.7 COSLA Awards**

For the third year in a row the Economic Development team has been successful in the COSLA awards this year achieving a bronze under the 'Delivering Better Outcomes' theme with the Hanlon management information system (see 7.2 above).

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