

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 27 AUGUST 2019

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 4 June. This report covers the period from 4 May to 12 August 2019.

1. INVESTMENT – PROPERTY AND LAND

- 1.1 The occupancy level for May to June 2019 is 92%, which is a 1% drop from the previous month. There is currently 1 letting instruction being processed by Legal and Democratic Services, at Panmure Industrial Estate.
- 1.2 We have progressed discussions with 4 clients regarding commercial properties and have issued heads of terms for their consideration.
- 1.3 In May 2019 we received 15 enquiries, a significant increase on the previous month and in June 2019, we received 14 enquiries. Of these 29 enquiries, 73% were looking for industrial units, 7% looking for office accommodation, 3% were looking for retail accommodation and 17% were land enquiries.

2. BUSINESS SUPPORT

2.1 Business Angus

During April, the Business Angus website received 909 visits. The top five webpages viewed in April were the Homepage, Development Land, Land & Property, News and a 'Back her Business' news article.

During May, the Business Angus website received 885 visits. The top five webpages viewed in May were the Homepage, the Orchardbank Development Site page, Land & Property, Team page and Development Land.

Communication with businesses is mainly via Business Angus Twitter and there are 2,154 followers. We reached 39,700 people in April, and 40,800 people in May.

2.2 Business Gateway

The table below shows the Business Gateway delivery statistics by local authority area between for June 2019. Start-up delivery, and start-up workshop delivery are on profile. Existing business workshops are on profile. Growth Advisory Service/Pipeline delivery is ahead of profile. Procurement for Digital Boost services concluded at the end of April, delivery commenced in May and is on profile. Early stage growth is behind profile and will be closely monitored.

Please note that Angus clients also attend events and meetings in Dundee as it can be more convenient. This accounts for approximately 20% of clients and will factor into the Dundee statistics and is not shown in the Angus figures

Business Gateway Delivery by LA area for June 2019

	Angus	Dundee	Perth & Kinross	Total
Business Start Ups ◇	44	61	82	187
Early Stage Growth *	5	7	4	16
Start Up Workshops	9	11	11	31
Existing Business Workshops	2	2	3	7
GAS / GP Referrals #	2 GAS 2 GP	4 GAS 3 GP	10 GAS 4 GP	25
Digital Boost Events	1	2	2	5

◇ *Start-Up figures reflect businesses which have started up and which have received support from Business Gateway services. The start-up figure for Angus could be higher – this figure does not therefore reflect those businesses which have started up but which did not seek support from Business Gateway.*

* *Early Stage Growth (ESG) clients are start-up clients or businesses which have been trading for less than eighteen months, and plan to create additional jobs in their local economy.*

Businesses projecting increase in turnover of £200k+ over next three years.

Businesses projecting increase in turnover of £400k+ over next three years and meet the criteria for Scottish Enterprise Account Management will continue to be referred to SE. There is not a target for this but BG will report on any successful referral.

3. GOLF SECTOR

3.1 The total reach on Carnoustie Country (CC) Facebook for April was over 129,000 people.

From 1 to 30 April 2019, 56% of online visitors to the Carnoustie Country website were from the UK and 17% from USA. The Carnoustie Country overseas target markets are Sweden (0.87% online visitors) and Germany (11.86% online visitors).

During this period, the top pages viewed by online visitors were the CC Classic draws pages (12.12%), the CC Classic event page (11.55%) and the homepage (6.03%).

The total reach on Carnoustie Country Facebook for May was over 96,000 people.

From 1 to 31 May 2019, 64% of online visitors were from the UK and 13% from USA. The Carnoustie Country overseas target markets are Sweden (0.97% online visitors) and Germany (6.30% online visitors).

During this period, the top pages viewed by online visitors were the CC Classic results pages (14.45%), the homepage (9.39%) and the CC Classic event page (9.15%).

4. TOURISM

4.1 From 1 – 30 April 2019, 76% of UK visitors to the Visit Angus website were from Scotland and typically from within a 90 minute drive of Angus, which is the local target audience for the campaign. Webcams still remain one of the most popular pages on the site with 2,665 visitor sessions in April. Throughout April the event section was the second most popular area on the website with 2,243 visitor sessions on the events landing page.

The total reach on Visit Angus Facebook for the months of April was just over 173,000 people and there were 80 new likes on the page during this time.

1,339 referrals to the website came from Facebook in April, with a further 757 referrals from visitscotland.com.

A Visit Angus consumer e-newsletter was sent to 1089 people on 4 April 2019 which included information about 'unmissable experiences' in Angus. The open rate for this was 57% which is the average for this e-newsletter but well above the industry average open rate.

From 1 – 31 May 2019, 76% of UK visitors to the website were from Scotland and typically from within a 90 minute drive of Angus, which is the local target audience for the campaign. Webcams still remain one of the most popular pages on the site with 2,796 visitor sessions in May. Throughout May the event section was the second most popular area on the website with 1,964 visitor sessions on the events landing page.

The total reach on Visit Angus Facebook for the months of May was just over 119,000 people and there were 50 new likes on the page during this time.

777 referrals to the website came from Facebook in May, with a further 690 referrals from visitscotland.com.

A Visit Angus consumer e-newsletter was sent to 1116 people on 1 May 2019 which included information about places to visit in Angus. The open rate for this was 52% which is the average for this e-newsletter but well above the industry average open rate.

5. SKILLS

5.1 Employability Fund

The Employability Fund contract is split into Stage 3 and Stage 4 programmes and our contract numbers have increased four-fold compared with last year's targets. The Skills team continue to do well in delivering opportunities to young people in Stage 3 and all age groups over 18 in Stage 4.

The contracts for 2019/2020 have been announced.

Stage 3 – we have a contract to deliver 18 placements with the breakdown being 16 trainees aged 16/17 years and 2 aged 18 + years. We currently have six candidates registered with a further 2 pending. The team are actively working with employers, other training providers and SDS to identify suitable work experience placements to support the delivery of the Certificate of Work Readiness modules as part of the 10 – 12 week training programme.

A visit from the SQA External Verifier in March provided excellent feedback on Skills Team service delivery of Certificate of Work Readiness: The materials provided to candidates at Induction and throughout the learning process are of a very good standard. Visits to candidates in their workplace are well organised and recorded, making effective use of the score card to monitor and review progress.

Stage 4 – the new contract is for 20 places all for ages 18+ years. We are already co-ordinating with all partners for clients to fill these places. We currently have 6 clients registered with staff attending surgeries at the local Job Centres to support anyone who is unemployed and meets the funding criteria for additional training to help them overcome barriers to get them back to work.

5.2 Modern Apprentices

The Skills Team are continuing to do well in the delivery of Modern Apprenticeships and have received a contract for 2019/2020 with 8 Level 3 vacancies and 2 Level 2 vacancies. Two Apprentices have started within Angus Council and a further 3 are at the interview stage with external organisations. We are actively engaging with employers and Skills Development Scotland to promote the MA programme to fill the remaining places.

We received very positive feedback from our recent SDS Quality Assurance Audit in June relating to service delivery of the Employability Fund and Modern Apprentice training programmes.

The Skills Team were Graded 2, Very Good: training provider has fully demonstrated meeting the standards at a high level with major strengths and a few areas of enhancement to demonstrate ongoing continuous improvement.

6. Angus LEADER Programme (Hosted By Angus Council)

Four awards have been approved since the last report – Kilry Ecopods £19,446; Newton Farm £10,000; ADHD Support Hub £30,000; LEADER Legacy Project £9,023.

All funding was committed ahead of the deadline of 31 December 2019 at the Local Action Group meeting on 18 June 2019. We have also applied to the Scottish Government for further funding for cooperation activities which other areas are leading - a total request of £28,760.

The programme has now exceeded the Scottish Government targets of £275,018 for each of the farm diversification and enterprise allocations and the 5% target of £137,509 for cooperation.

A party of young people from Smaland, Sweden are currently in Angus on the return leg of the work exchange project hosted at work places in rural Angus.

Angus LEADER representatives attended the rural development working group of the Scottish Parliament to report their discussion of the future of the LEADER programme. We also accepted an invitation to give evidence about the LEADER programme to the Finance and Constitution Committee of the Scottish Parliament.

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