

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28 JANUARY 2020

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 26 November. This report covers the period from 12 November 2019 to 13 January 2020.

1. INVESTMENT – PROPERTY AND LAND

- 1.1 The occupancy rate for our commercial property portfolio in November 2019 was 91%. From April to November 2019 we received a high level of enquiries (86), with demand for industrial units accounting for 52% of enquiries, office enquiries accounting for 23%, land enquiries accounting for 16% and retail enquiries accounting for 9%. Demand for industrial space has remained consistently high throughout this year.
- 1.2 Businesses are mainly looking for properties in Forfar (26% of enquiries) and Montrose (26% of enquiries), with Brechin (21% of enquiries) coming close behind.
- 1.3 In December we secured a new manufacturing business, bringing in an income of £6,600 per annum and securing 3 jobs.

2. BUSINESS SUPPORT**2.1 Business Angus**

In October, the Business Angus website received 1,046 visits. The top five webpages viewed were the homepage (928 page views), the land and property page (143pv), the news page (129pv), the events page (127pv) and the property for lease page (111pv).

In November, the Business Angus website received 1,034 visits. The top five webpages viewed were the homepage (847 page views), the events page (113pv), the news page (109pv), the land and property page (108pv) and the tourism page (105pv).

Digital communication and campaigns are mainly conducted through Business Angus Twitter and LinkedIn. Twitter has a current following of 2,217 people/businesses pages. The page attracted 44k tweet impressions during October and 39k during November.

2.2 Tay Cities Business Month

Angus Council, in collaboration with regional partners, will deliver Tay Cities Business Month in February 2020 with various events taking place throughout the month for businesses.

As part of the month, there is a plan to organise an information event at Montrose Port aimed at Angus businesses that want to be involved in the emerging Offshore Wind sector. Montrose Port has been selected as the Operations and Maintenance base by SSE Seagreen for its windfarm 27km off the Angus coast.

A Food and Drink Exhibition is in pre planning, hoping to showcase local producers to the hospitality industry and retailers and to promote business to business local food supply chains across Tay Country. This will be held on 19 February 2020. Scotland Food and Drink will support the event in kind (promotion).

Developing the Young Workforce will hold an event on 7 February at Forbes of Kingennie – a business breakfast for hospitality businesses to attend and learn how they can work with young people to meet their skills needs.

The Tay Cities Annual Meet the Buyer event has been scheduled for 18 February 2020 at the Invercarse Hotel. This will give SMEs the opportunity to talk informally about upcoming

contracts and find out about tendering criteria. Angus Council procurement and economic development teams will attend.

- 2.3 Economic Development attended Montrose Port's celebration of a multi-million pound investment in new berths on their North Quay on 27 November 2019. The Port is the Operations & Maintenance base for the Seagreen Offshore Wind Farm.

2.4 Business Gateway

The table below shows the Business Gateway delivery statistics by local authority area for September and October 2019.

Start-up delivery and workshops are ahead of profile, as are the Growth Advisory Service/Pipeline figures. Early stage growth is behind profile and is being closely monitored. This is mainly due to recruitment of new staff who are currently being trained, and the contractor is confident that the targets will be met. Existing Business Workshops are on profile. Procurement for Digital Boost services concluded at the end of April, delivery began in May and is ahead of profile.

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 September and October 2019

	Angus		Dundee		Perth & Kinross		Total	
	Sept	Oct	Sept	Oct	Sept	Oct	Sept	Oct
Business Start Ups ◇	106	123	139	186	145	169	390	478
Early Stage Growth *	10	14	21	29	8	9	39	52
Start Up Workshops	16	19	21	26	21	27	58	72
Existing Business Workshops	4	5	5	7	5	6	14	18
GAS / GP Referrals #	3/2	8/ 4	14/10	19/ 11	19/6	22/6	54	70
Digital Boost Events	2	4	5	6	3	4	10	14

◇ 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.

2.5 Rural Roadshow

In November, Angus Council worked with Business Gateway and the Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce to deliver a 10-day programme of workshops and 1:1 drop in sessions for businesses across Angus. The event was launched via a Women in Business Networking Event where 100 attendees heard presentations from 3 local female entrepreneurs.

A further 8 events took place, including a networking business breakfast at The Rookery in Carnoustie, which focused on Redcastle Gin, and was attended by 32 people. In total, 174 people/businesses engaged in the Angus Rural Roadshow. The Business Angus team will continue to work with Business Gateway to identify how best to understand the needs of rural businesses in Angus.

2.6 **Supplier Development Programme (SDP)**

Economic Development has renewed the contract with SDP for 2020 SDP is a good resource for buyer engagement and there is a proposal for Wind Farms to be trade association members.

Planning is underway to develop ways to utilise this service to maximise the benefit to businesses who do not currently submit tenders and widen opportunities to smaller businesses locally. Collaboration between Angus Council's economic development and procurement teams is developing strategic links to help offer the best opportunities to prospective new suppliers in Angus. It has been agreed that our focus should be on locally delivered (regional) events with the new Tay Cities Business Month in February 2020 being the focus for generic Meet The Buyer activity. To that end we will attend the next regional Economic Development Forum with SPD and look to agree that as a Tayside approach.

Total procurement outlay figures for 2018/19 show 37% of the Council's £106.7 million spend went to Angus based suppliers, compared to the Scottish average of 27%. This ranked Angus Council sixth in the national league table. To build on this Angus Council are planning an engagement event for the upcoming School Transport conveyancing contract in the Brechin and Montrose areas. The aim is to grow the pool of taxi operators in these areas who are interested but do not normally bid for tenders. In conjunction with the SDP Angus Council are holding a series of Introduction to Tender Workshops from 3 March 2020 to engage smaller businesses.

3. **GOLF SECTOR**

3.1 In October, the Carnoustie Country (CC) website received 1,161 visitors.

63.09% of online visitors to the Carnoustie Country website were from the UK and 11.94% from USA. The Carnoustie Country overseas target markets are Sweden (0.32%% online visitors) and Germany (0.92% online visitors).

During this period, the top pages viewed by online visitors were the homepage (392pv), the packages page (372pv), the courses page (345pv), Scotsraig golf course page (196pv) and the Champions Links Trail page (145pv).

The total reach on Carnoustie Country Facebook for October was 121,076 people.

In November, the Carnoustie Country (CC) website received 577 visitors.

55.36% of online visitors to the Carnoustie Country website were from the UK and 18.24% from USA. The Carnoustie Country overseas target markets are Sweden (0.32%% online visitors) and Germany (0.92% online visitors).

During this period, the top pages viewed by online visitors were the homepage (313pv), the courses page (196pv), the packages page (193pv), the Carnoustie Country Dream Ticket page (70pv) and the Carnoustie Golf Hotel page (48pv).

The total reach on Carnoustie Country Facebook for November was 110,697 people.

An online advent calendar was published on the Carnoustie Country Facebook from 1 to 18 December, with a prize each day donated by a Golf Carnoustie Country Industry Group member. This campaign reached over 350,000 people throughout the 18 days and gave 17 businesses the opportunity for wider promotion.

3.2 The Golf Carnoustie Country Leadership group held their first annual review meeting on 19th December. This marks the end of their first full year delivering the industry business plan which is supported by Angus Council. Key actions/outcomes from the meeting:

- One to One meetings took place between members of the Leadership group (supported by economic development) and all 24 members during the first 2 weeks of December. These meetings were used to gauge industry satisfaction and to inform future planning. An industry report will be prepared and presented at the next full group meeting in March.
- Data capture is one of the key themes within the industry business plan. A report on visitor revenue and visitor origin will be included within the final report. These figures will be used for benchmarking.

- Members requested more networking events and more skills workshops, specifically around digital marketing. A digital business breakfast has since been planned for late January and a minimum of 2 social media skills workshops will be delivered before April. Economic Development is meeting with Business Gateway to discuss workshops.
- Businesses wanted improved communication and more opportunity to input into marketing campaign activity. This is being actioned in the updated plans.

3.3 Following attendance at the International Golf Travel Market in October, Holland's largest golf tour operator, Pin High, visited Carnoustie Country in November with the aim of developing stay and play breaks for Dutch golfers to Carnoustie Country. Pin High is now actively promoting packages staying at 2 Carnoustie Country hotels – in Montrose and Dundee - and playing a number of local courses. A local transport provider is also being used. Holland is an important golf market for Carnoustie Country, as well as the rest of Scotland. Carnoustie Country recently hosted a media familiarisation trip for 2 Dutch golf writers as part of our regional golf marketing activity. Visit Scotland covered costs of transport flights and transfers.

Regional golf activity – sustainability is a major concern affecting a number of the 8 regional golf development groups across Scotland. At a meeting of the Scottish Golf Tourism Development Group on 28th November, Gail McLeod from the Scottish Government Events team requested a report on outcomes of the collaborative national golf marketing activity so the collective impact could be assessed. The report is due in March/April. Scottish. A number of different funding options are being explored.

4. TOURISM

4.1 In October, the Visit Angus website received 16,768 visitor sessions. 89% 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, events, the homepage, a blog titled 'Angus Myths and Legends' and a photography competition entry page were the most popular pages on the site during October.

1,723 referrals to the website came from Facebook, with a further 723 referrals from visitscotland.com.

The total reach on Visit Angus Facebook for October was 117,508 people.

4.2 In November, the Visit Angus website received 16,636 visitor sessions. 90% 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, events, the homepage and various Christmas events were the most popular pages on the site during November.

759 referrals to the website came from Facebook, with a further 311 referrals from visitscotland.com.

The total reach on Visit Angus Facebook for November was 128,961 people.

4.3 A Visit Angus consumer newsletter is sent each month to almost 1,300 people including information about must-see experiences in Angus. The average open rate for this is 49% which is well above the industry average.

4.4 An online advent calendar was published on the Visit Angus facebook from 1 to 24 December with a different prize each day donated by local businesses including accommodation, food and drink and visitor attractions. The calendar reached over 187,000 people and gave 21 local businesses the opportunity to promote to a wider audience.

4.5 A programme of industry familiarisation drop-in sessions was organised between September 2019 and March 2020, aligned to the tourism framework action plan. The purpose of these sessions is for businesses to find out more about what is on offer for visitors to the area, so they can pass this knowledge on to visitors. There has been very limited engagement with this, and the sessions will be discontinued after December.

5. FOOD AND DRINK

5.1 Angus Food & Drink Network Proposal

The Food and Drink working group held a workshop on 13 January 2020. Ceri Ritchie from Connect Local outlined the 4 pillars of activity. This targeted suppliers, producers, retailers, hospitality outlets and industry supporters and initiated discussion in smaller workshop groups to gauge what the appetite was and establish the issues with a view to setting objectives. An interim steering committee with representatives from each of the four groups will be charged with establishing the Network with a view to having an entity and elected board as part of the tourism industry leadership group – the Angus Tourism Cooperative.

- 5.2 Arbroath Market held food and drink stalls at the community centre on 22 December with over 20 stallholders from Angus and surrounding area. This is organised by a community group with an aim to bring more people into Arbroath town centre as part of food tourism, increase the footfall on the High Street and enable local people to access quality local food and drink. With the assistance given from economic development in obtaining the Regional Food Fund via Connect Local, they obtained 6 new stalls and 2 gazebos giving a further 8 pitches and the installation of all-weather electric points. This collaboration brings volunteers, stallholders and Angus Council together to allow local produce to reach local people. They plan to tie in with the Arbroath 2020 celebrations for the 700th anniversary of the 'Declaration of Arbroath' by siting these stalls at the Abbey.
- 5.3 A community group called 'Sustainable Kirriemuir' held an Environmental Hustings event in Kirriemuir on 9 December 2019 with over 60 attendees. They are looking at specific areas of work that include local food growing projects involving schools and experienced growers to start in Spring 2020. They are forming working groups of small holders and farmers to work on land use which economic development and new industry group are working together to support. They are connecting with local producers to see how more local food can be delivered to local people. A Hot House Session is planned in March 2020 in to take these actions forward.
- 5.4 7Scotland Food and Drink held a meeting with economic development officers from Angus Council, Perth & Kinross Council, Fife Council and Dundee City Council on 16 December 2019. Discussions were centred on how to maximise support for food and drink manufacturing across Tayside that will have the greatest impact. Follow up planning for 2020 and beyond will be announced in the next report.

6. SKILLS

- 6.1 The Skills Team have 4 contracts, Employability Fund Stage 3 and 4, Modern Apprenticeships and In Work training Allowances and to date have assisted 38 people into positive destinations.
- 6.2 We took part in a PACE event alongside Skills Development Scotland and DWP in Carnoustie to offer advice and support to those being made redundant at Morrison's Packaging. Those who asked for support on the day have either found employment elsewhere or are currently undertaking some form of retraining with us.
- 6.3 Proposals have been submitted for consideration with 2 localities looking at Participatory budgeting to fund Employment Academies in March to meet needs of Angus clients and businesses.
- 6.4 The In work training allowance has assisted 8 businesses to offer sustained employment to people under 29 residing in Angus who have one or more barriers to employment. The Team continue to increase our key worker, person centred approach work to assist those looking for employment in Angus.
- 6.5 A major milestone was celebrated as the first construction apprentices completed their Modern Apprenticeships through the Shared Apprenticeship Scheme. This is a partnership between Dundee and Angus College and Angus Council with support from CITB and SDS. It is the first of its kind in Scotland aimed at the Construction industry. All of the apprentices have gone on to full time employment, many accepting offers from the businesses that they had previously trained with such as Pert Bruce, Andrew Shepherd Construction, and Robertson Construction.

7. Angus LEADER Programme (Hosted By Angus Council)

- 7.1 A project fund of £2,126,586 is now fully committed by Angus LEADER LAG. A further application to the Scottish Government for a reallocation of £26,315 was unsuccessful, with a high number of other bids using up the re-allocation fund before ours could be considered. No further re-allocations by Scottish Government will now be possible.

- 7.2 The LAG will currently spend the remainder of the programme monitoring live projects, processing claims, gathering evidence of programme targets and contributing to developing arrangements for post BREXIT rural development.
- 7.3 Our vice-Chair Gill Lawrie was sole UK LAG representative at EU LEADER conference 2/3 December in Brussels. This excellent event produced good EU contacts for follow-up work with our existing Angus projects, and will help Angus to develop arrangements for rural development post 2020.
- 7.4 We hosted three delegates from Linne Smaland LEADER in Sweden in connection with our existing transnational project for 18-25 yrs old, which reviewed important changes to the planned activity for 2020. Follow up work is also now underway on new project ideas for Sweden, learning from Angus LEADER's own projects in community resilience and in Flourishing Destinations (community-led tourism).

8. OFFSHORE WIND

- 8.1 The series of four Business breakfast events that took place in September were successful, total attendee numbers were 160. Feedback indicated more niche bespoke and networking events would be useful to help businesses collaborate with other companies within their supply chain.

Supported by Economic Development three Meet the Buyer events took place in November 2019 in Inverness, Aberdeen and Dundee for the Seagreen project. The events offered one-to-one slots with principle contractors in environmental, turbines, offshore structures and foundations, transportation and installation, ports and related services, onshore substations, offshore cables, and operations & Maintenance. Following these events, many Angus businesses were interested in becoming active members of the Forth & Tay Offshore cluster – a partnership of local authorities and offshore wind developers..

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