

SCHEDULE 1

ANGUS COUNCIL

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE – 26 MAY 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 10 March. This report covers the period from 25 February to 14 May 2020.

1. INVESTMENT – PROPERTY AND LAND

- 1.1 The occupancy rate for our commercial property portfolio in April 2020 was 93%. From April 2019 to April 2020 we received 129 enquiries, with demand for industrial units accounting for 53% of enquiries, office enquiries accounting for 22%, land enquiries accounting for 12% and retail enquiries accounting for 12%. Demand for industrial space has remained consistently high throughout this year and we have seen enquiries pick up from a seasonal slow-down in November and January, to an expected high level.
- 1.2 Businesses are predominately looking for properties in Brechin (21% of enquiries) and Montrose (20% of enquiries) and Forfar (19% of enquiries). However, we have seen enquiries pick up in Arbroath in 2020, so that they now account for a high level of enquiries (21% of enquiries). High levels of enquiries are expected in Brechin, Montrose and Forfar due to its proximity to the energy sector in Aberdeen and this has been a consistent trend recently. The recent high level of enquiries for Arbroath can be explained as by far the majority of our currently available properties are in Arbroath (57%), therefore the enquiries are reflecting our supply.
- 1.3 The majority of our enquiries come through the online property search platform Nova Loca (64%), which we have embedded within our Invest in Angus website. So along with enquiries from word of mouth (16%), 80% of our enquiries are generated from these alone.
- 1.4 In light of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown on 23 March enquiries have all but dried up albeit a number of new occupiers are still keen to take occupancy to our properties.

2. BUSINESS SUPPORT

2.1 Invest in Angus

From 25 February to 10 May, the Invest in Angus website received 3,313 visitor sessions which was a 45% increase on the same time in 2019 (2,284 visitor sessions in 2019). Those visiting the site viewed on average 2.5 pages per session, spending an average of 1 minutes 54 seconds on the site.

Top five webpages viewed	25 Feb – 10 May 2020	25 Feb – 10 May 2019	% Change
Homepage	2,254	1,651	36.52%
Covid-19	1,087	-	-
Covid-19 Funding	346	-	-
News	267	162	64.81%
Contact us	231	87	165.5%

On 23 March, the UK was put into lockdown due to Covid-19. A new page was launched on InvestinAngus.com on the same day to provide support to businesses, sign posting to various

organisations to provide advice and financial support. As the number of funding sources increased, it was decided to create a page specifically for this information. The table above shows the visitor numbers to these pages.

A page to support the appeal for PPE equipment was launched on 31 March and has been viewed 167 times. This call was also sent out via social media and through the industry networks.

Angus Council agreed at committee that Angus Council commercial tenants would be offered a rent holiday for three months. This page was shared only with tenants and has been viewed 187 times and 19 holiday applications submitted.

The Newly Self Employed Fund, the Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund and Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund were launched on 30 April and there was a corresponding spike in online traffic to the Covid-19 funding page on the website. All three funds have been promoted via the Business Angus social channels and through industry networks.

Digital communication and campaigns are mainly conducted through Business Angus Twitter and LinkedIn. Twitter has a current following of 2,299 people/business pages. The page attracted over 159,000 tweet impressions between 1 February and 10 May 2020. Business Angus LinkedIn page saw an increase of 75 followers during the same period. The page now has 564 followers.

2.4 Supplier Development Programme (SDP)

Angus Council held a Schools Transport Tender SDP workshop for local taxi firms, bus service providers on 12 March 2020 held in Brechin City Hall. 14 businesses attended to learn more about the contract and how to register onto Procurement Contract Scotland (PCS). This was a collaboration between Angus Council's economic development, procurement and roads and transport teams that promoted the benefits of public contracts for SMEs and showcased contract opportunities.

2.5 Business Gateway

The table below shows the Business Gateway delivery statistics by local authority area to the end of March 2020. All areas of delivery are ahead of profile, and the Growth Advisory Service/Pipeline, and Start up and existing business workshop targets have been exceeded. There were three businesses accepted to Account Management by Scottish Enterprise.

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 to March 2020

	Angus	Dundee	Perth & Kinross	Total
Business Start Ups ◇	180	278	262	720
Early Stage Growth *	25	50	25	100
Start Up Workshops	34	42	41	117
Existing Business Workshops	7	10	12	29
GAS / GP Referrals #	9 GAS 4 GP	33 GAS 14 GP	34 GAS 8 GP	102

Digital Boost Events	8	9	8	25
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◇ *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 From 25 February to 10 May 2020, the Carnoustie Country (CC) website received 1,206 visitor sessions, which was a 65% decrease on the same period in 2019. This significant drop in visits was due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. Carnoustie Country social media is currently focused on engaging its audience in golf related news, golf trivia fun and sharing images of the courses to remind and inspire people to play golf in Carnoustie Country, when the time is right.

Carnoustie Country Facebook has reached 342,686 people during this period.

3.2 Carnoustie Country exhibited at the Danish Golf Show from 21-23 February. This is a large consumer travel show attended by 61,000 visitors and which also provides business engagement opportunities. Two local spirit producers – Glencaddam and Gin Bothy were promoted on stand and tastings offered to encourage visitors onto the stand. Two Danish drinks distribution companies MacY and Juuls have requested Gin Bothy samples with potential to export to Danish markets.

3.3 Dutch tour operator Pin High has confirmed a booking for 50 golfers to Carnoustie Country in September subject to the Covid-19 situation. The itinerary includes 3 rounds of golf at Carnoustie Country courses and 4 nights accommodation. Gin/whisky tastings and sight seeing options are also being explored. This is a new business relationship and a direct outcome of Carnoustie Country's attendance at the International Golf Travel Market in Marrakesh in October.

3.4 The Golf Carnoustie Country Industry Group had 22 members signed up to attend a Digital workshop on 12 March. This was cancelled due to Covid-19. A full Industry group meeting planned for 17 March was also cancelled for the same reason.

3.5 The Carnoustie Country Classic golf tournament, due to take place from 26-30 April 2020, was postponed to April 2021. All players were notified and offered the option to move their booking to either 2021 or 2022, or book an alternative package to the same value.

4. TOURISM

4.1 Visit Angus has appointed a developer to create an Angus tourism trail. Visit Angus will be working with community groups to develop sub town trails to enhance the visitor experience. Visit Angus marketing industry group has met and agreed the top 10 Angus stops which will feature on the app. This app will highlight what there is to see and do in each town and signpost visitors to visitangus.com for more information. There will be fun interactive elements and elements which are geo-fenced so that visitors have to visit a location to unlock information or experience.

Visit Angus is creating short drone film clips. So far, one film clip of Balmashanner War Memorial has been released on Facebook and has reached 13,642 organically.

At the beginning of the year, a series of #MyAngus Quick fire Question films were completed. These aim to raise the profile of the visitor attractions and to hear from the industry experts. Prior to lockdown, Arbroath Signal Tower film was shared on Facebook and reached 6,795 and Murton Farm reached 9,575. New films will be released later in the year when Angus is able to welcome visitors back. The videos will be shared on Facebook and YouTube.

From 25 February to 10 May 2020, the Visit Angus website received 23,934 visitor sessions, decrease of -40% compared to the same period in 2019. There has been a significant drop in online visits due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Top five webpages viewed	25 Feb – 10 May 2020	25 Feb – 10 May 2019	% Change
Webcams	2,941	7,394	-60.2%
My Angus	2,685	-	-
Homepage	2,050	3,445	-
Events Directory	841	4,485	-81.3%
Walking and Hiking	828	1,205	-31.3%

The table above shows that during this period, there has been an 81% drop in online visits compared to the same period in 2019. This is predominantly due to Covid-19, events being cancelled and lockdown.

There has been a significant decrease in page views for the webcam page due to the removal of the Arbroath Signal Tower webcam. This was because the webcam needs to be replaced.

The total reach on Visit Angus Facebook for 25 February – 10 May was 366,180 people. The focus of Visit Angus social media during this period has been on reminiscing about Angus, sharing stunning images of Angus, asking people to share their memories and join the conversation.

A Visit Angus consumer newsletter is sent each month to over 1,500 people, including information about must-see experiences in Angus. The average open rate for this is 49% which is well above the industry average.

A tourism business newsletter is sent each month to 145 tourism businesses in Angus, including information about events taking place, sector related news and funding opportunities. The average open rate for this is 23% which is well above the industry average.

- 4.2 From 20 to 26 March, a brand new event for people living in Angus was scheduled to take place called 'My Angus'. Businesses and community groups were invited to participate in the programme with a special offer or event aimed at encouraging residents to discover what is on their doorstep, and 42 events were scheduled to take place during the week. This event was postponed and a new date will be scheduled in due course.
- 4.3 The Arbroath 2020 celebrations due to take place this year have been postponed to 2021, for the 700+1 anniversary.
- 4.3 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the delivery organisations of the Tay Cities Tourism Conference - Angus, Dundee City, Fife and Perth & Kinross Councils in partnership with VisitScotland and Scottish Enterprise - decided to postpone the event on 26 March at the Perth Concert Hall. There was an excellent programme planned with a strong panel of speakers and it is hoped that the conference can be rescheduled at a date later in the year.
- 4.4 Angus Council was due to attend VisitScotland Expo, in partnership with Dundee City, Fife and Perth & Kinross Councils on 1 and 2 April at P&J Live in Aberdeen. This is a major international event, with over 2,000 attendees from around 30 countries. This event was cancelled.
- 4.5 A review of the Angus Tourism Framework Year 1 action plan has been undertaken in collaboration with industry. The framework was launched in April 2019 and a number of working groups were established to deliver against the priority themes identified – Industry Leadership & Collaboration; Product & Experience Development; Data & Insights; Pride of Place and

Marketing. In light of the current circumstances, the focus of the framework will be adapted and a short term action plan will be developed in collaboration with industry to identify the priorities to the support the recovery of the tourism sector in Angus.

5. FOOD AND DRINK

- 5.1 The Angus Food and Drink Network held their second working group meeting on 3 March 2020 at Forbes of Kingennie. . They have now officially launched under the name 'Appetite for Angus' (A4A) and created their social media channels on Facebook (630 followers), Twitter (127 followers), Instagram (114). There is also a LinkedIn Industry Group which encourages all interested parties to join. Their initial focus is on local and regional working to inform, celebrate and promote Angus food and drink products and experiences. An evaluation was given on the first Food & Drink Expo held in February. A survey was sent out in February 2020 to capture information from businesses and start production of an online directory. A series of webinars from Scotland's Rural College covering essential skills is being promoted through A4A and Economic Development are supporting locally delivered Food and drink specific workshop planning throughout 2020.through Connect Local.
- 5.2 A new Food & Drink newsletter is currently being developed in response to the feedback from events received specifically targeting businesses from manufacturing and processors, drinks and distilleries, primary and secondary producers and hospitality services that will connect different industries and create a strong narrative for Angus food culture. This enewsletter will generate food and drink sector feedback reporting, to inform the Tay Cities Regional Economic Strategy. The Strategy aims to sustain higher value food and drink businesses. The economic development team will work closely with A4A to produce a quarterly enewsletter that will provide;
- Research and reports to identify opportunities;
 - Information and advice on Trade and Investment;
 - Collaborations and partnerships;
 - Licensing and Environmental Health;
 - A quarterly barometer of the Angus and Tay Cities economy; and
 - Local industry news and information.
- 5.3 A new group has formed in the response to Covid-19 crisis. The Tay Cities Food and Drink Sector Development Group is a collaboration of local authority Economic Development Sector Officers from Angus Council, Perth & Kinross Council, Fife Council and Dundee City Council looking to find commonality of immediate issues facing businesses and sharing of information and knowledge. The first online meeting was held on 7 April and was joined by private sector industry groups from each respective area and the national body, Scotland Food and Drink. A follow on meeting on 6 May 2020 discussed local programmes and business activities to learn best practise and opportunities for partnership working. Local issues raised through lockdown phase were highlighted to Scotland Food and Drink to incorporate into the national recovery plan proposals to Government.
- 5.4 Angus Council are supporting Appetite for Angus to implement of a local platform Neighbourhood Food that will set up an online Angus Farmers Market allowing access to fresh local food (Farm to Fork) and shortening supply chains. Angus Council Environmental Health, Planning, Licensing and Legal contributed advice and guidance. This will benefit agricultural producers to sell products directly through a tried and tested model and bring products to a larger market.
- 5.5 The Angus Food Growing Strategy is under current development involving several Angus Council services, Economic Development, Communities, Property and Parks in response to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This mapping of food sustainability across the Council has significant impacts on health and diet, environmental impact (Pollinator Strategy 2017-2027), reduction in food waste and packaging, encouraging new enterprises, social benefits in food growing programmes and impact of education on nutrition, rural provenance and transferable life skills.

6. ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING

- 6.1 Tayside Engineering Network (TEN) have set up a weekly online chat call for engineers in live interaction supporting those working from home, furloughed or needing support in a friendly community. Announcements and information from Economic Development/Scottish Government was communicated to TEN members on Covid-19 grants, loans and guidance for Trade and Health and Safety.
- 6.2 Economic Development aided a Call to Action for PPE, hand sanitiser and wipes by reaching out to local manufacturing businesses to ensure the uninterrupted services of key workers.

SKILLS

- 7.1 The Skills Team deliver 3 Scottish Government contracts, Employability Fund Stages 3 and 4 and Modern Apprenticeships in Business and Administration. We also support the unemployed through our Personal Development Fund. In 2019/20 we have assisted 80 people into positive destinations, bringing in an income to date of £73,724. We have been awarded a Modern Apprenticeship contract for 2020.
- 7.2 Implementation and the co-design of projects has started on how to spend £340,000 funding from Scottish Government to make the greatest impact in Angus. This is part of a 3 year Scottish and Local Government's ambition to reduce child poverty through the delivery of activities via the Parental Employability Support Fund. This gives Angus Council the opportunity to deliver a flexible, responsive and user-led model of employability support for people both in and out of employment. This support will help people to access or progress in employment bettering their and their families' circumstances, ultimately reducing child poverty rates. Some of the work will be focussed on recruitment into the new provision for Early Years education in Angus.
- 7.3 The In Work Training Allowance through funding from No One Left Behind in 2019/20 has assisted 14 businesses to offer sustained employment to people under 29 residing in Angus who have one or more barriers to employment. The Skills Team continue to increase our key worker, person centred approach to assist those looking for employment in Angus and have extended this provision to incorporate those up to the age of 60 and looking to work with those employers willing to pay the Living Wage. We have also begun work to take a few unemployed people in Angus who are furthest away from the job market and work with them to support and guide into employment.

8. Angus LEADER Programme (Hosted By Angus Council)

A project fund of £2,126,586 is now fully committed by Angus LEADER Local Action Group (LAG)

The LAG will 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. Completion arrangements for the programme are now complicated by Covid-19 and lockdown, with more projects likely to run out of completion time the longer that lockdown continues. Angus LEADER is currently engaging with the national programme to identify risks and agree mitigations.

9. OFFSHORE WIND

Montrose Port Authority tender opportunities for the Seagreen project were promoted to Angus businesses. 14 companies bid for the Pontoons tender and 8 companies bid for Communications Masts tender. A significant proportion of these are local.

The number of businesses registered as Forth and Tay Cluster offshore wind supply chain companies have increased by around 40% to 143 companies, 31 of which are Angus businesses. This increase was a result of promotion of the Cluster and its offshore wind supply chain companies and their capabilities at A Meet Your Neighbour Business Breakfast for

offshore wind held on 27 February 2020 in Montrose and also four EDF NnG Meet the Buyer events held in March 2020. This supply chain development work is led by Angus Council on behalf of the cluster

The second Angus offshore wind e-newsletter was distributed in April 2020 featuring business support, tender opportunities, webinars, and links to the supply chain capability survey and directory. <https://www.forthandtayoffshore.co.uk/>

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