

## **Moray Business Resilience Meeting**

**Thursday 14 May 2020 (Skype call)**

### **Action Points**

#### Attendees:

Cllr Graham Leadbitter – Moray Council  
Michael O'Donnell – Moray Council  
Jim Grant – Moray Council  
Doug Mackenzie – on behalf of Douglas Ross  
Laura Mitchell – on behalf of Richard Lochhead  
Stephen Sheridan – SDS  
Sarah Medcraf – Moray Chamber of Commerce  
Donna Harper - MBWC  
Stuart Black - HIE  
Fiona Robb - HIE  
Craig Robertson – Business Gateway  
Gill Neill – Elgin BID  
David Groundwater - FSB  
Jane Cumming – SCDI  
Fraser Grieve – SWA

#### Apologies:

Douglas Ross - MP  
Richard Lochhead – MSP  
Laurie Piper – Moray Speyside Tourism  
Scott McKnockiter – HIE

1. Stuart Black opened meeting and thanked everyone for their time, round table introductions followed
2. Actions from previous meeting.
  - a. 1418 grant applications received by Moray Council of which 1220 have been approved to the value of £13.58M. 83 applications received in second phase of grants with 43 approved so far.
  - b. 124 rejections mainly due to further guidance criteria. One in four applications for £25k grant have been rejected and one in ten applications for £10k grant have been rejected
3. Public Sector Update
  - a. Applications for Hardship Fund for newly self employed being processed and paid out. Approximately 20% rejected as do not meet criteria
  - b. Applications for charities going live on Moray Council website Friday
  - c. Companies now looking into diversification and new products
  - d. Planning for getting back to work including assessing workspace, access, payment methods, etc

- e. Issues for town centres returning to normal with access and movement along streets and pavements to ensure enough social distancing
  - f. Employers giving confidence to workers to be able to return to work safely
  - g. Scottish Investment Bank want to look at the bigger picture for recovery, considering the circular economy and digital connectivity. Smaller SMEs not being heard and encouraged to raise with committee members
  - h. An Economic Impact Assessment report to be published by Moray Council with the options on moving forward. Feedback welcomed
  - i. Warning that NDR bills being issued over next few days as calendarised. If businesses are experiencing hardship, they are to contact Moray Council who will be sympathetic towards circumstances and not chase payments
  - j. SDS monitoring trends and expectations of redundancies coming through for a proactive response
4. Private Sector Update
- a. Support for businesses who have been rejected and looking for other sources of funding
  - b. England starting to return to work with guidance from Public Health England. Scotland in different stage and can learn lessons from rest of the country
  - c. Companies that originally applied for CBILS have not had any response, therefore have applied for Bounce Back as an alternative, been declined and having to go through CBILS application process again
  - d. Banks reporting high volumes of loan applications
  - e. Discussions whether furlough scheme is fit for purpose, consideration for part time furlough, a targeted scheme, a further extension or bringing it forward might be beneficial
  - f. Businesses wanting to get ahead of the game to open, fitting screens, providing stand-alone hand sanitising stations etc but not sure if it is enough. Are they wasting money before guidelines have been produced?
  - g. More guidance required for the tourism industry and larger companies sharing best practice with regards to checking temperatures
  - h. Support being provided for carrying out risk assessments
  - i. Concerns from self-catering establishments providing accommodation for key workers and if they are following correct guidance
  - j. Oil industry considering redundancies due to falling activity in the industry
  - k. Testing is underutilised
5. AOB
- a. Free marketing available for local businesses via Moray Chamber of Commerce website
  - b. HIE in ongoing discussions with SG for supporting local communities. Reaching out to anchor organisations to identify long term support required
  - c. Issues with furlough payments not coming through and self-employed not receiving grants has had big impact on foodbanks

**Date and time of next meeting**

**Thursday 21<sup>th</sup> May 2.00pm – 3.00pm**