

## **Moray Business Resilience Meeting**

**Thursday 21 May 2020 (Skype call)**

### **Action Points**

#### Attendees:

Cllr Graham Leadbitter – Moray Council  
Michael O'Donnell – Moray Council  
Jim Grant – Moray Council  
Douglas Ross - MP  
Richard Lochhead – MSP  
Laurie Piper – Moray Speyside Tourism  
Sarah Medcraf – Moray Chamber of Commerce  
Clare Lock - 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:

Scott McKnockiter – HIE  
Stephen Sheridan – SDS

1. Stuart Black opened meeting and thanked everyone for their time, round table introductions followed
2. Actions from previous meeting.
  - a. 1521 grant applications received by Moray Council of which 1255 have been approved to the value of £13.845M
  - b. 131 rejections
  - c. Moray Cabinet published report on 6<sup>th</sup> May now further verbal updates added in fast moving situation to include: dependence on banks to continue lending to keep the economy going; updated unemployment figures; and household income negatively impacted
3. Public Sector Update
  - a. Creative Tourism and Hospitality Hardship funding: 77 applications received for Moray area amounting to £1.12M
  - b. Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Funding (PERF): 838 applications for the whole of Highlands and Islands region with 89 applications received for Moray. C£600k approved however few approvals paid out at level of request to be able to spread the fund fairly.

Variety of industries reflecting the economy in Moray have been awarded grants based on a scoring criteria including geographical weighting and economic recovery

- c. Reports of many individuals not being able to access the online funding system or problems submitting applications and therefore missing out on grants
  - d. HIE able to overturn some applications that may have originally been rejected by applying local knowledge
  - e. Applicants for both funds will be notified by UMi. Appeals process for rejection of grants can be found at <https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/contact-us>
  - f. Persistent categories of businesses are still not eligible for anything and this is being raised with LA, SG and UKG
  - g. Moray Economic Partnership (MEP) to meet next week to discuss local economic impact, the actions and interventions required going forward to pull together a robust action plan following the First Minister's announcement on a phased return.
  - h. Sectors could be ranked on a traffic light system for their impact on the economy
  - i. Guidance for reopening will follow on a sector by sector basis
  - j. Environmental Health department have been visiting local businesses that are open to check systems are in place and guidelines being followed. If any issues, a warning is given and business will be revisited at a later date
  - k. Universal Credits are causing issues with eligibility for Self-Employed Hardship grants and this has been noted at ministerial level
4. Private Sector Update
- a. The leaders of the business members community will play an important part going forward and the benefits of member organisation are a two-way process, having been invaluable to support businesses and feeding information back through
  - b. Awaiting details on part time furlough and if the option will be available prior to 1<sup>st</sup> August
  - c. Will there be a self-employment scheme to match those on furlough?
  - d. Positive feedback with Bounce Back loans being successful and being paid out within 48 hours
  - e. Productivity hubs, to share knowledge and ideas, have been successful in the borders and will be extended to the highlands
  - f. Some self-catering establishments have been reported to Environmental Health for operating, however, they are open for key workers only and meeting guidelines
5. AOB
- a. Positive press coverage for Supporting Communities funds. HIE now gathering intelligence for next phase of funding criteria

**Date and time of next meeting**

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2.00pm – 3.00pm**