

Moray Business Resilience Meeting

Thursday 2 April 2020 (Skype call)

Action Points

Attendees:

Cllr Graham Leadbitter – Moray Council
Jim Grant – Moray Council
Michael O'Donnell – Moray Council
Richard Lochhead - MSP
Douglas Ross - MP
Jane Cumming - SCDI
Sarah Medcraf – Moray Chamber of Commerce
Laurie Piper – Moray Speyside Tourism
Donna Harper – MBWC on behalf of Clare Lock
Stuart Black - HIE
Fiona Robb - HIE
Scott McKnockiter - HIE
Craig Robertson – Business Gateway
David Groundwater - FSB

Apologies:

Gill Neill – Elgin BID
Laurie Piper – Speyside Tourism

1. Stuart Black opened meeting and thanked everyone for their time, round table introductions followed
2. Actions from previous meeting.
 - a. Close to 1,000 grant applications now received by Moray Council. Payments will start w/b 6th April.
 - b. FAQs on Moray Council website now more prominent on the grant application page
 - c. Updated version of application form to include self-catering businesses
3. Local Business Updates
 - a. Financial packages from UK Govt and SG have been welcomed by businesses but need further details of how it will work
 - b. Clarification required on 1 grant: 1 ratepayer applications
 - c. Some bank delays are causing financial burden. Push to open up communication channels, phone lines restricted, technical issues and 1:1 relationships fallen through preventing speedy access to loans
 - d. Will there be some flexibility from LG on those self-employed who fall above the £51k rateable value as we need to find a way to assist all local businesses? Companies should

be looked at on a case by case basis. By 10th April most applications are hoped to be received and then MC can see the impact of those falling through the gaps

- d. Pressure on businesses who pay their staff weekly. Suggest businesses speak to staff about alleviating the pressure, eg. waiting for monthly payment. Loans are quick to access to pay staff immediately and businesses will receive Job Retention Scheme payments at the end of April backdated to 1st March
 - e. MEP will act as a recovery group to support in the longer term
 - f. Accommodation for keyworkers can be coordinated by Laurie if required
 - g. Details of £500M Hardship Fund allocation to be updated by Moray Council
 - h. Tourism industry about to start season who have undergone renovation projects should still have building control applications processed. Photos and videos of inspection points can be submitted. Temporary licence will be issued
 - i. Employees between employment are falling through the net. Universal Credit might be only option if not entitled to furlough. Previous employers can re-instate if employed at 29th February and can claim for these employers. Need to ensure that businesses are aware of and following rules of furlough. Moray Chamber have issued newsletter to all local business relating to furlough. Uptake on FSB webinars close to 10,000 on furlough and businesses engaging
 - j. Concern about businesses not being able to cover ongoing employment costs despite 80% covered by Govt
 - k. Certain number of natural redundancies ie. retirements but there will be some casualties that require support
 - l. Some non-essential businesses still not closing despite legislation for non-essential work to stop. Staff feel forced to continue working but have asked to be furloughed. Intelligence to Moray Council to enforce Environmental Health
 - m. [Scottish Assessors website](#) source to access Rates Reference numbers for applications
4. Public Sector Update
 - a. Webinars going well nationally. Business are now understanding, positive and complying
 - b. HMRC developed new scheme from scratch and processing as quickly as they can getting ready to push button
 - c. BG assisting businesses to complete paperwork for bank applications
 5. Frequency of meetings to continue twice a week Monday and Thursdays at 2.00pm
 6. AOB
 - a. Any key workers who have not yet registered or arranged for childcare to contact education@moray.co.uk
 - b. Digital Development Loan available through www.techforce19.uk. Further details provided separately
 - c. Third Sector Resilience Fund has already distributed £1.3M to feed out to local communities for on the ground funding. All corners of Moray have been covered
 - d. [Grampian Assistance Hub](#) is useful resource to promote to local businesses

Date and time of next meeting

Monday 6th April 2.00pm – 3.00pm