

Moray Business Resilience Meeting
Thursday 10 September 2020 (Skype call)

Action Points

Attendees:

Craig Robertson – Business Gateway
David Groundwater - FSB
Donna Harper - MBWC
Gemma Cruickshank – Elgin BID
Graham Leadbitter – Moray Council
Fraser Grieve – SWA
Jim Grant – Moray Council
Laurie Piper – Visit Moray Speyside
Leona Williamson – DWP
Lewis Featch – on behalf of Richard Lochhead
Sarah Medcraf – Moray Chamber of Commerce
Scott McKnockiter – HIE
Stephen Sheridan – SDS
Stuart Black - HIE

Apologies:

Douglas Ross - MP
Fiona Robb - HIE
Jane Cumming – SCDI
Jane Munro - DWP
Michael O'Donnell – Moray Council
Nina Crocombe - SDS
Richard Lochhead - MSP

1. Stuart Black opened meeting
2. Public Sector Update
 - a. Moray Council are focusing on the shortlist options on the recovery plan. Funding and staffing to be brought together from various resources. Reporting back to MEP at the end of September
 - b. First Minister's announcement has delayed Phase 4 opening which is disappointing news
 - c. Business Gateway are working on recovery plan and supporting businesses
 - d. Guidance on the Digital Boost programme should be available by end of September, knowing who to target
 - e. Sessions for administering Kickstart programme will be available to LAs on 17th September. These will be offered by COSLA. Further details for intermediaries of the programme are available to sign up to individually.

- f. Hotel Recovery fund expression of interest closed 9th September. All applications will be appraised in due course and update will follow in a few weeks. Just over 200 expressions of interest received from hotel businesses in Scotland with c25% from the HIE region
- g. Digital Enablement Grant went live today which will support businesses to have E-Commerce functionality. HIE will be working closely with Business Gateway to identify potential clients.
- h. SDS working with several partners on the £60M SG funding with an extra £25M allocated for Transition Training Fund (TTF). Details to follow
- i. Workshops have been set up with Moray Council and school/college leavers to align support. There are immediate and mid-term opportunities in food and drink, health and social care, tourism and possibly digital. Working together to inform and share information. Youth guarantee dovetails with Kickstart programme. Implementation plans to follow on how the cash will be distributed
- j. Moray Council have launched the draft Climate Change Strategy under the new consultations area of the website

3. Private Sector Update

- a. Moray Chamber have volunteered to act as intermediary for the Kickstart programme and work with others such as FSB who may be administering the system so as not cause confusion.
- b. The Scottish Towns Partnership review will give the opportunity to feed into local recovery and the recent event with Jason Leitch went well with lots of questions from local businesses to assist in recovery
- c. Reports of businesses struggling to access bank accounts especially for lending purposes with delays of up to 14 weeks. FSB and MBWC to reach out to members to question whether they are experiencing banking difficulties
- d. FSB have been receiving lots of enquiries into the Internal Market Bill in relation to Brexit
- e. Elgin BID have applied for the BID Resilience Fund and await the outcome to see if they are successful
- f. Christmas lights switch on has now been cancelled to avoid crowds
- g. Businesses are now updating guidance on restrictions and safe working is embedded although long term planning is challenging
- h. Highland Business Women's Club and Moray Business Women's Club are collaborating on future activities
- i. Difficult to police the hospitality industry with the rule of 6 and ensuring that groups of customers are sticking to the rules
- j. Request for rates review to be brought forward from 2023 to 2021 from chambers
- k. Self-catering bookings are still very strong with an increased confidence for out of season occupancy
- l. Month long tourism media campaign collaborating with rest of Highlands to aid recovery
- m. Moray Speyside Tourism working with the distilleries to make sure there are still places for people to visit out of season
- n. Check and Protect app very successful, over 2,000 individuals signed up and 68 businesses registered. SG Track and Trace app also launched.

Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 17th September 2.00pm – 3.00pm