

Moray Business Resilience Meeting

Monday 20th April 2020 (Skype call)

Action Points

Attendees:

Cllr Graham Leadbitter – Moray Council
Jim Grant – Moray Council
Michael O'Donnell – Moray Council
Douglas Ross - MP
Sarah Medcraf – Moray Chamber of Commerce
Clare Lock – MBWC
Gregory Spenser – FSB on behalf of David Groundwater
Stuart Black - HIE
Fiona Robb - HIE
Scott McKnockiter - HIE
Craig Robertson – Business Gateway
Gill Neill – Elgin BID
Laurie Piper – Moray Speyside Tourism
David Groundwater - FSB
Jane Cumming – SCDI
Fraser Grieve – SWA
Stephen Sheridan – SDS
Laura Mitchell – on behalf of Richard Lochhead

Apologies:

Richard Lochhead - MSP

1. Stuart Black opened meeting and thanked everyone for their time, round table introductions followed
2. Actions from previous meeting.
 - a. As at Friday 17th April, Moray Council announced 997 grant applications had been processed, 587 had been paid and an additional 27 ready for payment. A further 268 applications had other issues that require further scrutiny, including bank statements being omitted. 10 day turnaround still achievable
 - b. Rejection letters starting to go out for those who have been unsuccessful in securing funding eg. if they do not fit the eligibility criteria for rateable value. Moray Council keeping a record of the reasons for rejection. Organisations will be given contact details for BG to assist with additional support options
 - c. Possibility of an appeal panel being set up to respond
3. Local Business Updates

- a. A delay in official guidance means self-catering businesses are still waiting for grants to come through. To date only 49 applications have been received from self-catering organisations but process now in place and grants can start to be paid. Communication to be sent to industry
 - b. The HMRC Job Retention Scheme went live today and so far feedback is positive. System is simple to use and commend great work done by HMRC. 5,000 support staff deployed to take calls/web chat
 - c. Businesses still require guidance on additional funding options as reluctant to take CBILS and unsure if they can repay. Last resort for funding. Advice to speak with banks and have paperwork ready. Update on the figures for uptake of CBILS in Scotland to follow
 - d. BID Resilience Funding correspondence will be going up on Elgin BID website
 - e. Elgin BID formally cancelling the food and drink festival planned for August. However, they are focusing on the launch of a reopening after COVID-19 situation
 - f. Press release from Moray Council announcing additional resourcing (details sent separately)
 - g. Additional resourcing announced for self employed. Lessons learned with capacity issues and resources
 - h. Concerns around rates relief and Small Business Loan scheme that highlights gaps in funding
 - i. Supply chains still in operation and planning for long term events looking at global landscape
 - j. Support required for smaller/newer businesses eg. distilleries who have just started out and waiting for produce to mature. Further funding to be announced but details still not available from SG on eligibility criteria and how it will be allocated
 - k. SDS are re-skilling staff to provide PACE advice and undergoing an intensive training scheme
 - l. Some competitors south of the border up and running and beginning to trade internationally
4. Public Sector Update
 - a. Some businesses still have not furloughed staff as they are unsure what to do
 - b. Further funding to be announced
5. AOB
 - a. Third Sector Resilience Fund and Supporting Communities Fund applications have been received, approved and starting to be paid out
 - b. First Minister to talk about an exit strategy later in the week

Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 23th April 2.00pm – 3.00pm