

Moray Business Resilience Meeting

Thursday 9 July 2020 (Skype call)

Action Points

Attendees:

Cllr Graham Leadbitter – Moray Council
Michael O'Donnell – Moray Council
Jim Grant – Moray Council
Sarah Medcraf – Moray Chamber of Commerce
Clare Lock - MBWC
Gill Neill – Elgin BID
Fraser Grieve – SWA
Jane Cumming – SCDI
Jan Bruce – SDS
Laurie Piper – Moray Speyside Tourism
Scott McKnockiter – HIE
Leona Williamson - DWP

Apologies:

Douglas Ross - MP
Stuart Black - HIE
Fiona Robb - HIE
Craig Robertson – Business Gateway
David Groundwater - FSB
Stephen Sheridan - SDS
Richard Lochhead – MSP

1. Jim Grant opened meeting
2. Public Sector Update
 - a. Over 2,000 applications now received and processed by Moray Council for non domestic rates. 18 have applied on Phase 3 of which 8 have been rejected
 - b. HIE have been working closely with Business Gateway to identify new businesses to bring into account management
 - c. Number of financial decisions made at national level have allowed Moray Council to review a possible extension to free parking charges
 - d. DWP aware of the vacancies in Moray. Focusing on training and re-training although hard for businesses to introduce trainees and new staff as proving difficult to bring furloughed staff back. Setting up virtual community hubs
 - e. Nationally PACE are concentrating on retail and hospitality, setting up digital help and for those not on line, referrals to local centres

- f. DWP Looking for funding to train/retrain into local market. Working with some sectors who have been more affected than others and struggling to recruit

3. Private Sector Update

- a. The recent announcement from the Chancellor into Phase 3 is positive. However, fears that furlough won't be extended for hospitality and creative industries. The reality of the impact on manufacturing, retail and tourism will not be known before January 2021 and the situation needs to be monitored
- b. Mitigation from 2m – 1m for social distancing is positive although getting T&Cs is crucial. Clarification required depending on type of business. What is the enforcement and expectation of viable business models?
- c. Moray Chamber have been in talks with the Cabinet Secretary on the infrastructure and poor connectivity. Improvements need to be made but heading in right direction
- d. Mapping out for international trade, B2B engagement and virtual marketplace but not sure of impact on Brexit for international trade. SWA offer of help with international trade team
- e. Mission to promote Scottish brands and how to protect geographical status
- f. News of re-introducing parking charges was a disappointment for town centre but hopeful that the review will alleviate pressures
- g. Chancellor announcement helpful to support hospitality
- h. Distilleries working on promotion to set up for re-opening bars and restaurants
- i. US tariff had already hit distilleries, cashmere and shortbread prior to Covid
- j. Moray Speyside Tourism filming a recovery campaign ready to launch in August
- k. Still a number in the hospitality sector not eligible for funding and are looking at other options
- l. Accommodation booking indications strong except for hotels who are in a difficult position

4. AOB

- a. School transport difficult to run at additional capacity to comply with social distancing
- b. Business survey link from Moray Council now live

Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 16nd July 2.00pm – 3.00pm