

Macduff Development Partnership

Via Teams

28/03/2022 – 14:00 – 15:30

Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Cllr Ross Cassie	Aberdeenshire Council
Cllr Mark Findlater	Aberdeenshire Council
Jan Emery	Aberdeenshire Council
Christine Webster	Aberdeenshire Council
Christina Wright	Visit Aberdeenshire
Gary Hughes	Aberdeenshire Council
Debbie Robertson	Aberdeenshire Council
Simon Jessel	Aberdeenshire Council
Lynn MacKinnon	SBP Accountants
Emma Furneaux	Aberdeenshire Council
Tim Dring (Note)	Aberdeenshire Council

Apologies:

Angela Keith	Aberdeenshire Council
Jack Rigby	Aberdeenshire Council
Shona Watson	Citizen Advice Scotland
Edward Acton	Macduff Heritage Group
Stanley West	Macduff Heritage Group
John Watt	Macduff Shipyards
Pat Wain	Friends of Tarlair
Cllr Hamish Partridge	Aberdeenshire Council

1	Welcome & Introductions	RC
	<p>RC welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from JR and AK.</p> <p>RC advised he would be leaving at 2.15 and re-join once his audit meeting has completed.</p> <p>MF agreed to Chair the meeting during this time.</p>	
2	Banff & Macduff Business Forum Update on Phoenix Funds	LM
	<p>Phoenix Fund -</p> <p>LM - provided an update to the group on the various projects the Phoenix Fund had supported, namely development of a new website and app to highlight local events and boost the tourism offer, in addition to commissioning several mini murals. Also supported local 'Fiver Fest' to support the retail offering. The events project last August didn't go ahead due to covid restrictions. Overall, the projects were successful and delighted with the</p>	

	<p>results. Good working relationships formed across a number of organisations such as the Men's' Shed. Good feedback received on the art installations across the town and the other projects.</p> <p>Business Forum –</p> <p>LM - started up during Covid on Zoom. Became lead applicants on the funding, taking over from dissolved community council. Although achieved a lot, did not get the ability to meet regularly to take on projects. Many businesses that were part of the group, had to focus their efforts on their own businesses. At the moment, not got the ability to meet regularly so taking a short break and plan to review in autumn. Main problem is lack of volunteer time</p> <p>SR – commented that perhaps it would be a good idea to undertake a survey to the businesses to identify what help and support they are looking for.</p> <p>LM – noted that the time in which to achieve this is a challenge. Plan is to sit down and come together to identify what needs to happen and how the administration of the group is organised and managed.</p> <p>MF – thanked LM for all that had been achieved, in particular the murals across the town, really helping tourism and making the town look more appealing.</p> <p>DR – highlighted the work that had been achieved and asked what other support could have been offered by the Council?</p> <p>LM – stated that there were multiple emails, correspondence about various grants and other information and getting all of it pulled together was a challenge and time consuming. Time was precious as was securing volunteer time to process all the information.</p> <p>CW – noted from a Council you've done all needed to do through the Phoenix Fund and are pleased with the results and outcomes of that. Right decision to consolidate currently.</p> <p>MF – thanked LM again. LM noted there they are looking for another site for a second mural (images of murals attached)</p> <p>LM – would quite like a Banff space but still looking. Written to Macduff properties but no responses.</p>	
3	Digital & Connectivity	EF
	<p>EF introduced the Digital Engagement Team in absence of JR. Part of a team that are looking to support better broadband across the region. Main connectivity issues are in Aberdeenshire. Actively promoting R100 currently.</p> <p>2 different lines of work to ensure every resident had access to 100% broadband.</p> <p>The roll out of full fibre which will cover most properties through phases up to 2027. Properties on the roll out are eligible for the voucher interim scheme. Downside that the vouchers need to be used by the end of March 2022.</p> <p>There are several properties that won't be part of the roll out. These will be picked up as part of the main voucher scheme. EF shared her screen. MVS will receive £5k to subsidise the installation of a permanent solution.</p>	

	<p>Some clusters can work together to amalgamate the voucher scheme. 70 properties in Banff and Macduff that are eligible. Ask that residents are signposted into the DET Team digitalengagement@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Teams focus is now to promote the MVS scheme. EF asked for support in promotional activity, come to meetings, work with community councils so on and so forth.</p> <p>MF – Interesting to note that through the pandemic broadband has been more important for people and businesses. Understand the need to get broadband going.</p> <p>MF – confirmed he would be happy to share on social media.</p> <p>EF – putting main promotional activity through Aberdeenshire Council website.</p> <p>SR – question on partnership working and linking in with partners. Christine on the call from VA, working alongside, Elevator also re new businesses coming through there re the vouchers.</p> <p>EF – confirmed they are happy to attend a variety of meetings in driving up demand stimulation and the voucher schemes and for anyone who needs help, advice and support to get in touch using digitalengagement@aberdeenshire.gov.uk This can be shared also to anyone enquiring about any of the broadband schemes available from the Scottish Government.</p> <p>SJ – noted in Huntly they’ve now got access to ultrafast broadband using the voucher scheme and it’s working well for local businesses.</p> <p>MF – from Mormond Hill there is a line of site operation that works from there. Are there any joint schemes to pick up the ‘black spots’? The GB fund is a UK fund.</p> <p>EF – scope is more about accessibility, other things going on in the background, they can signpost to relevant departments, organisations etc.</p> <p>JE – ran digital seminars in 2017, at that time, there is an enormous local appetite from local business to leisure and education areas. Know that SR is going to be looking at wider digital issues. Have access to a database from the event to reinterrogate the information and refresh our memories about what was achieved. From a Community Resilience perspective, we need to be improving things if we possibly can.</p> <p>All – everyone thanked EF for the update and agreed to publicise the email address provided to support residents and businesses.</p>	
4	Friends of Tarlair (FoT) - Update	SR/JE
	<p><u>Regrettably PW was unable to attend so this update was provided to the group by SR and JE</u></p> <p>JE – provided an update on the Friends of Tarlair and Asset Transfer process. June Burnett is the main contact on all things FoT. The Asset Transfer process has not been a straightforward process, lots of challenges along the way. The group have been persistent and risen to the challenges which has been excellent. More recently, Economic Development colleagues, have secured additional funding to support this project. Important to note that support is required due to the size and scale of this project so, however there is a lot of strong local community support for this project also.</p> <p>Studio Octopi have been on site, and they have started their preparatory work.</p>	

	<p>From an Asset Transfer process, which was successful, the lease is now being looked at by Jim Mackie. In summary great progress is being made.</p> <p>SR – noted that the community are behind the project, will boost tourism, events, and has great potential for the future.</p> <p>MF – noted a good relationship and enhance the area. Mass of public support for what is happening there. Main thing is to make the main pool is safe. Congratulate people involved in getting the grant.</p> <p>CW – the work that has gone on to date has been about the pavilion not necessarily the pools. Important to recognise this is initially about the pavilion but in time, will look in the future to review /include the pool. Lots of the social media posts seem to be highlighting the work is being undertaken on the pool (incorrectly). Need to be mindful of the comms that are going out about the work to date. JB will continue to support FoT with their business plan to make it sustainable and income generating. Good connections with the aquarium. Active work being completed into levelling up with the external funding team for the Macduff Marine Aquarium. Macduff will really start to become a place to be. Focus next meeting into the levelling up application.</p> <p>RC – agreed the projects are great.</p> <p>MF – clarity about the safety of the water, have to make sure the water is safe beside it. The water must be safe.</p> <p>JE – point to remind everyone on the paths and walkways around the pools need to be accessed with great care. It's very easy to be injured as the floor is uneven. The area around the pavilion is crucially important for the visit experience.</p> <p>SR – from a financial perspective, the programme is on track. Has had its challenges with increased development costs due to Covid, however, things remain on track. At the moment, they've completed the first stage of the design. Hoping to commence RIAS 4A/B early May.</p> <p><u>Update received from PW, email circulated by SR on 29/03/2022.10:47. (content copied below)</u></p> <p><i>-Planning application is in, and results are back on the 3rd of May.</i></p> <p><i>-Our final funding application must be in for April 1st for Place Based Fund (this Friday), for results mid to late April.</i></p> <p><i>-If this is successful, we will have reached our goal and all plans can go ahead including signed the 99-year lease.</i></p> <p><i>-The build renovation, and workshop new build should be completed in 9 months or potentially less, starting this summer when through tender and building standards.</i></p> <p><i>-Thus, a very nerve-wracking time. One to get the form in on time, and two having no say in a positive outcome.</i></p>	
5	Harbour Update	SJ
	Introduction of a nightshift watchman has proved successful and having someone on duty 24 – 7 has been well received. Has been also good for local business. Also, ice plant has been	

	<p>successful generating 7 tonnes of ice to fisherman every day. Caveat, had to issue a contract to do a slight redesign for operational and safety reasons due to be completed over next 3 weeks. Currently servicing 35 vessels in harbour area, not all local, external boats coming in to use the service.</p> <p>Deepening the harbour, the study has been completed and the results know. Without a government cash injection from government unlikely to go ahead. Max tonnage of boats are being able to be serviced in Macduff. Sediment been removed, just been dredged, completed end of October.</p> <p>The fish market project is about to wrap up next month. Want to reopen the fish market. Currently do not hold the appropriate designation of fish landing port, private entities can move them on but what we want to do is have a fully functional fish market. Aim is to have an E-Auction and not a 'shout' auction. Anyone in UK, Europe can purchase the product. Going to be concentrating on gaining status of fish landing port and E-market established. To do this significant investment is needed. Capacity of fish chill store being doubled, which is going in next week. Under pinning all of this is the stability of the pier that it will sit on. Recent years subsidence has been identified and a local organisation has been appointment to review and repair the underpinnings of the pier.</p> <p>Survey being concluded on the slip way rails. Slight wear and tear, results of this survey are due in the week. Initial results possibly indicate a rebuild of concrete on one side. This needs to be repaired as a matter of priority.</p> <p>Good news for this year and future, linked to UK Seafood Fund looking for investment across 3 additional projects. If successful, will be major news for Macduff harbour. Received support of MSP David Duguid.</p> <p>RC – asked if the ice plant will be completed and whether it would need sign off from the HSE?</p> <p>SJ – re the ice plant. Has the remit to get it fixed asap. Plan is to speak to HSE and close out the improvement notices issued. Fully automating the ice plant safety systems which were manual before. Not a huge overall or complete rebuild. The HSE don't need to inspect it. Re the dredging questions, not doing it this year, took 5 days to complete to dredge the basins, normally do every 2-3 years. Dependant on number of storms and currents. Re Chill capacity, mentioned it's doubling. Exact numbers not known but SJ will send them to RC</p> <p>MF – commented that fishermen have been really supporting of this and there is positivity about the E Fish Market. Also, good support and feedback from hotels and local restaurants. The electrification of the harbour is important. MF thanked SJ for the update and for taking on board what the Councillors have said on this subject</p> <p>JE and SJ discussed the E-Fish Market and the importance of marketing it's availability once established. SJ noted it's likely a professional PR organisation will be appointed to deliver this marketing activity. JE noted that Derek McDonald has a wealth of contacts in the fishing industry.</p>	
6	Regeneration Update – Project and Financial Paper	SR/CW

	<p>Summary provided on the Macduff budget position from a Regeneration Reserves perspective. Proposal to set up a new meeting to go through the budget in detail and add into the next meeting.</p> <p>SJ – noted £431k available. Some of the major projects, if we are unsuccessful from the UK Seafood Fund, would like to think some funds could be utilised for electrification of the north pier.</p> <p>SR – asked when the UK Seafood Fund opens. SJ confirmed they will open this week for a window of 5 weeks. Then it closes for 3 years.</p> <p>CW – think alignment with the regional plan worth a discussion. CW advised the group would be updated on the reserves, recognising the harbour development requires investment.</p> <p>RC – agreed it would be good to establish a separate meeting to go through the budget in finer detail.</p>	
7	Community Wealth Building Discussion	SR/All
	<p>SR - provided an update on Procurement Project. Been looking at best practice across other Councils noting some of the good work that has been carried out by North Ayrshire Council. Identified that businesses were struggling to identify procurement opportunities, seemed to be a lot of barriers and hurdles. £100k has been set aside from the Business Gateway contract to recruit a procurement officer to not only work internally but to support local businesses in applying for Council contracts. The idea being to keep the business in the local economy, always ensuring applications for contracts are treated fairly and consistently and in line with procurement policy. Currently working with HR undertaking, a due diligence exercise on the role.</p> <p>RC - noted it sounds interesting if it can be progressed. What has the procurement service said?</p> <p>SR – responded confirming the procurement team were supporting and building a good close working relationship.</p> <p>GH – commented that securing local suppliers was one of the procurement team objectives.</p> <p>RC – asked what the finance benefits were to the communities? SR confirmed she will check and come back to RC with additional information.</p>	
8	Roundtable – News & Announcements	All
	<p>JE – along with Clare Bancroft, currently working with Banff academy and CLD almost finalising an action plan which needs to continue and looking for new opportunities and ways to engage with businesses and business owners.</p> <p>MF – one import new things, Banff and Macduff Men’s Shed. Could they come along and share their news at future meetings?</p> <p>SJ – minor positive point, signed up to the long-term unemployed (LTU) scheme and created a new role at Macduff slipway. Will be discussing with HR the post as not managed to find anyone (perhaps due to the word engineer being used in the advert, may need to amend)</p>	

	<p>RC – noted there are many unemployed people out there re his work with the CAB. CAB saw increase in footfall due to UC reductions. There is a market there for that sort of work going forward. However, if it's not attracting need to widen it out to support others in the community.</p> <p>SR – Agreed to connect SJ with the employability team – Angie Millet</p>	
9	AOB	All
	RC – no AOB and meeting closed	

APPROVED