

# Moray Growth Deal - Business Engagement Information

## What is the Moray Growth Deal?

A mechanism for accelerating economic growth by pulling in significant government investment, similar to City Deals that you will have heard about in the press particularly with regard to our neighbours in Inverness and Aberdeen, but with an emphasis on economic growth across a region rather than focussed on a city.

By investing this funding in infrastructure, skills and innovation our economic performance will be significantly improved. It is also about greater autonomy and decision making powers for the region to help us deliver public services more effectively and to tackle inequality and deprivation.

## Why are we developing the Moray Growth Deal?

Work commenced in the summer of 2016 looking at the economic projections for the Moray region and comparing key indicators to Scotland as a whole, and to our comparator local authority areas. This information identified the need for a transformational intervention to provide a step-change in the economic growth across the region.

You will see from the map below, which was produced by the Scottish Government in March this year that almost all areas of Scotland are in the process of negotiating deals.



*The Scottish Parliament Financial Scrutiny Unit Briefing - City Region Deals - 15 March 2017*

Put simply; if we do not pursue a deal for Moray we may put ourselves at a disadvantage economically and struggle to address the issues already identified.

## **What are the key issues for Moray?**

Discussion with officials from both governments has identified that in order for a deal to be successful it is important to identify the key issues that are specific to an area and address those issues in the proposed programme.

The key issues identified where Moray compares badly to other regions are:

- Moray has a low number of 16-29 year olds in proportion to the growing older population.
- The gender pay gap between men and women working full-time in Moray is the third highest difference in Scotland at 11.6%, and employment rates for women are lower than regional and national rates.

Of course there are many other issues which the deal would seek to address including; business start-up and growth rates, lower average earnings due to a lack of higher paid professional jobs, and access and connectivity issues.

## **How has the deal progressed so far?**

As previously mentioned work commenced in the Summer of 2016 when we sought assistance from the Scottish Futures Trust in identifying an inclusive process for developing a deal.

Initial work focussed on the key objectives and development of a vision for the deal, which some of you will have been involved in.

In the early part of 2017 a series of workshops were held with key stakeholders and industry experts to gather suggested interventions which would have a significant economic impact for the region.

Following this the suggestions were developed into potential projects and more research undertaken to develop the ideas.

These ideas have now been honed into a shortlist of potential projects, which are now being discussed at a political level in order to obtain an agreement in principle to develop detailed business cases.

## **What projects are being considered?**

As the final agreement on the content of the deal is still being negotiated we are not in a position to publicise the current shortlist. However, there are some key themes which have emerged that we are confident will appear in the final deal in one form or another. These themes are:

- Skills development
- Support for rural accessibility
- Support for local businesses
- Support for tourism
- Affordable housing and other options
- Infrastructure including Elgin Transport Strategy
- Digital connectivity

## Who is involved?

Although Moray Council is taking a lead role in the development of the deal, the process is meant to be inclusive and collaborative. We are working with partners in a number of public sector bodies and are engaging with the business community whenever possible.

A governance structure is in place and a programme board has been established to manage the development. Please see below a table detailing the membership of the programme board and their email contact details if you wish to feedback to them individually.

Name	Organisation	email
Rhona Gunn (SRO)	Moray Council	Rhona.Gunn@moray.gov.uk
Jim Grant	Moray Council	Jim.Grant@moray.gov.uk
Gordon Sutherland	Moray Council	Gordon.Sutherland@moray.gov.uk
David Patterson	Moray College, UHI	David.Patterson.Moray@uhi.ac.uk
Rachel Hunter	HIE	Rachel.Hunter@hient.co.uk
Steven Hutcheon	HIE	Steven.Hutcheon@hient.co.uk
Fraser Grieve	Scottish Council for Development & Industry	fraser.grieve@scdi.org.uk
Seonag Campbell	Skills Development Scotland	seonag.campbell@sds.co.uk
Jill Armitt	Developing Young Workforce	jill.armitt@walkers-shortbread.co.uk
Sarah Holmes	Moray Business Women	pencilmeinshop@gmail.com

## What do we want from the business community?

The short answer is **support**. In order to agree a deal with the UK and Scottish Governments we need to be able to demonstrate that the private sector is behind the deal also.

We are at present in the middle of an engagement period to canvass views on the vision for the deal and the issues we are seeking to address. There is an online survey available on the My Moray website at <http://www.mymoray.co.uk/> to capture feedback, but if you don't wish to complete the survey you may contact any one of the programme board also.

There is also a page on the website specifically for businesses to pledge support for the deal at <http://www.mymoray.co.uk/the-businesses/> .

Please let us know if you think there is any significant economic issue that you feel is not included.