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### **[A Message from the Chair](#)**

The current pandemic, along with EU Exit, has brought about substantive and systemic change which none of us could have predicted. Since March 2020, along with other partners and agencies, council economic development departments have been integral to the delivery of COVID-19 grant support to eligible businesses through numerous schemes. This support is continuing, but there is concern around business survival going forward, particularly once these support schemes are withdrawn and the support to furloughed staff through the Job Retention Scheme concludes at the end of September 2021.

Although the current pandemic and EU Exit have brought about many challenges, there are also some key opportunities, which will undoubtedly feature in many of the partnership recovery plans being hosted by local authorities.

The SLAED Executive has met on a fortnightly basis over the last few months where key discussions have focused on the refresh of the Strategic Plan and a review of the current SLAED

However, through the establishment of a Short Life Working Group work (comprising of the SLAED Executive chairs, Business Group chairs, representatives from the Business Gateway National Unit, COSLA and the Business Gateway Operational Network) an exercise has commenced on the Redesign of the Business Gateway service further to strategic direction from a special meeting of the National Business Gateway Board on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

That said throughout the first quarter of 2021 the SLAED Executive has contributed and responded to the following:

- The Union Connectivity Review Roundtable discussion with Sir Peter Hendy on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> January.
- SLEAD Indicators Report – published on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund response on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021
- Advanced Manufacturing Consultation response on 13<sup>th</sup> February
- Subsidy Control Consultation, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- Subsidy Control and COVID-19 Grants – formal letter from the SLAED Chair to the SLAED, SOLACE, COSLA, Scottish Government issues on subsidy control and COVID-19 grants, complete with specific asks.

Ishabel Bremner

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## SLAED Performance Group Update

The 2019/20 SLAED Indicators Report was published in February. Some of the key highlights from the report can be seen in the infographic below.

These indicators will act as an important benchmark when analysing the impact of Covid-19 on Local Authority economic activity. There isn't much in the way of good news associated with the pandemic but at least the timing of the lockdown restrictions fit well with our data collection points. This will allow more confidence in future analysis with the expectation that the virus and its associated control measures and behaviours will have a significant impact in changing data trends. It also puts a greater emphasis on the importance of reliable data collection for the current year so that Local Authorities can more clearly see the impact and use the information to help guide economic recovery.

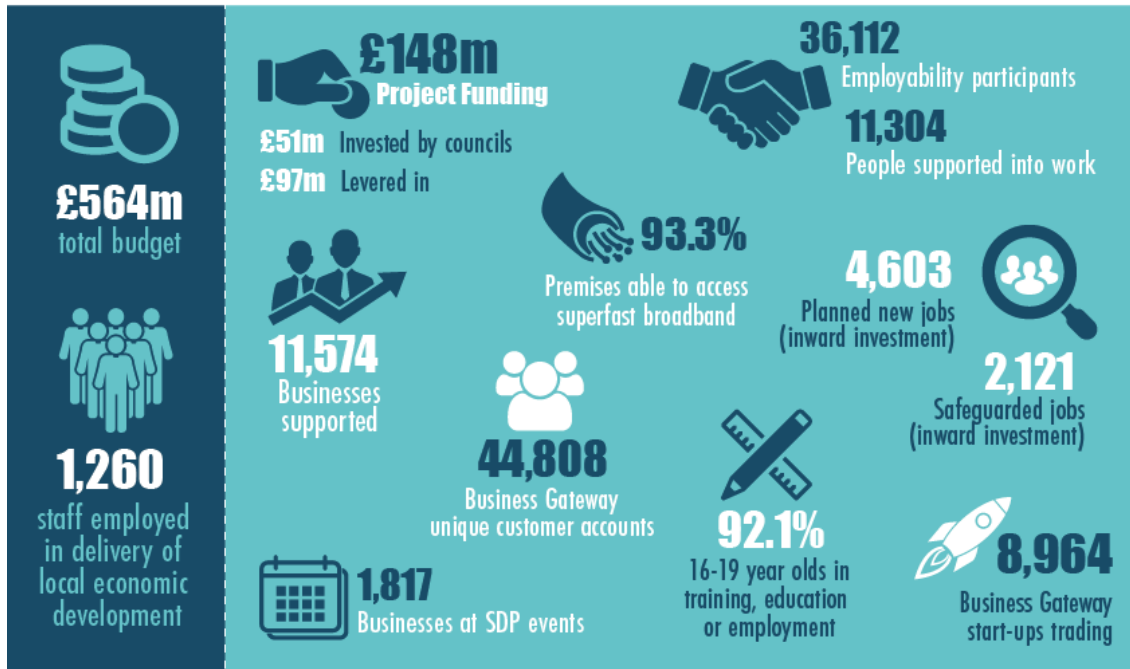
Work is underway to see how the data can be accessed more quickly to help guide policy and decision making, allowing issues to be dealt with earlier. Work continues to see how the indicators can improve and become more useful whilst still keeping the value in evaluating long term trends from the historical data that has been collected. Reflecting a change in attitudes towards economic growth and who benefits, new indicators continue to be evaluated by the group, for example, considering the use of health and happiness measures that attempt to capture the wider wellbeing of citizens.

None of us know how the economy will behave and there is little doubt that some of the longer term trends around digital development, town centres and home working have been accelerated

The full SLAED Indicators Report is available [here](#)



## Economic Development Inputs, Outputs and Outcomes, 2019/20



## Angus on the Go - Electric Vehicle Low Carbon Hub

Angus on the Go is a strategic approach to low carbon developments linking in with the Active Travel Strategy and improving accessibility and connectivity to Electric Vehicles (EV) charging hubs on the A90 between Aberdeen and Dundee. The EV Hub is situated at Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar.

The project aims to encourage active and sustainable travel amongst local people, businesses and visitors while raising awareness of and access to low carbon technologies, supporting behaviour change, improved air quality, personal health and economic regeneration.

The hub is now open and has four rapid chargers which allow 80% charging within 30 minutes, three fast chargers charging within a two to three-hour period and two slow chargers that will fully charge within seven hours.

Transport Scotland has been awarded funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2014-2020 Programme to deliver a Low Carbon and Transport (LCTT) Programme. Angus Council was awarded funding in round 2 for

Council has provided £144,000 in match funding.

The Scottish Government is the Managing Authority for the European Structural Funds 2014–20 Programme. For further information visit our webpages or follow @scotgovESIF. “

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/service/low-carbon-travel-and-transport-challenge-fund/>

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/european-structural-funds/>

<https://www.investinangus.com/>

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## Pathway Apprenticeships – Social Services Children & Young People



The Pathway Apprenticeships programme has been developed by Skills Development Scotland in response to COVID-19 and is aimed to support young people to gain an industry recognised qualification and to develop their knowledge, skills, and experience in a sector with future opportunities.

The Pathway Apprenticeships allows individuals who have reached their statutory school leaving date and are under the age of 18, and not in receipt of benefit, with the exception of the Kickstart programme, to gain an industry recognised, endorsed route to an apprenticeship and sustainable employment. Upon successful completion, the individuals will be awarded an SQA customised award at SCQF Level 6.

Fife Council Pathway Apprenticeships in Children and Young People commenced on the 8th February 2021. The Apprentices are currently completing the Pathway Apprenticeship Virtually online and are currently working their way through their induction and getting started with their qualification and first virtual work placement.

**Assessor / Fife Council Assessment Centre quote:** “We are at the start of a new Apprenticeship Pathway, everyone is getting to know each other, as well as getting used to the new online learning. Already I can see that our Apprentices are going to do well and I am excited to be part of the journey to help everyone reach their full potential and chosen career path”.

**Apprentice quote:** “The Pathway Apprenticeships are going great

*Young People framework despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic”.*

**Employability quote:** *“Fife Council is delighted to offer this opportunity to deliver a Skills Development Scotland funded Pathway Apprenticeship programme and we would like to wish all our new apprentices the best of luck now and in their future careers”.*

More information available [here](#)



## SLAED Tourism Group Update

The SLAED Tourism Sub-group is a proactive group Of Economic Development Officers with a remit for Tourism which continues to meet on a regular basis engaging with key agencies such as Visit Scotland, Scottish Government, Scottish Tourism Alliance, Scottish Enterprise, Business Gateway and many more.

Since November we have had the following guest speakers join us on our calls

- Aileen Lamb – Manager – Tourism & Creative Economy Scottish Enterprise
- Marc Crothall – Chief Executive of the STA
- Richard Macdonald – GTS
- Jonathan Ferrier – Senior Tourism Policy Advisor, Scottish Government

These calls have ensured that the group continues to keep up to date with the latest developments in what is a very fast moving environment. Our next call will see Vick Miller Director of Marketing Visit Scotland joining our call.

In the last few months The Tourism Group have had representation on the following calls:

- STA Destination Member Forum
- STA Member Council Call
- Cruiseforth Seminar
- John Muir Way Working Group

The group have continued to work collectively throughout the pandemic ensure a consistent approach to grants etc. A key function of the group is to share knowledge, encourage best practice, as well as to feed in at national level to discussions on rebuilding Scotland’s tourism industry this includes:

contributing to the [STERG National Action Plan](#) and inputting into Scenario Planning currently being worked on.

- Representation on the [Scottish Government Tourism Taskforce](#) chaired by Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing created to drive forward the recovery of Scotland's vital tourism sector and who have now published their [recommendations for recovery](#).
- Representation on the STA Destination Forum



## **SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL UNVEILS PLAN FOR 10 YEAR TRANSFORMATION**

South Ayrshire Council has published its new Strategic Economic Plan outlining how it will transform business and communities in the area by 2030. Entitled 'Vision 2030', the strategy reflects on the impact of COVID-19 on business in South Ayrshire, as well as plans for rebuilding a robust local economy in the aftermath of the global pandemic.

Developed by the Economy and Regeneration service, in collaboration with local and regional partners, the plan conveys the Council's vision that by 2030 "South Ayrshire will be the place where businesses thrive and people enjoy an outstanding quality of life."

Vision 2030 centres on the connection between business, people and place, and is underpinned by three strategic drivers: Creating vibrant communities through inclusive growth (Great Places); Driving innovation/creativity for success and skills for great careers (Strong Business); and Focusing on productivity-led growth and creating a global presence (Good Growth)

The publishing of the Strategic Economic Plan: Vision 2030 comes soon after the official signing of the Ayrshire Growth Deal, which includes £80 million of investment in South Ayrshire for a UK Space Centre of Excellence at Prestwick Airport. Aerospace and space is recognised in Vision 2030 as a priority cluster for South Ayrshire, along with Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, with the digital economy, visitor economy and agritech/marine identified as key sectors.

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## **North Lanarkshire's Town Visions**



locations that meet the needs of local people. The visions include ideas for housing, local services, retail opportunities, business development and leisure and green space.

Our vision is to use town centres for a variety of purposes, not just shopping. With more people living within town centres, they become busier during the day and evening, so we plan to encourage the conversion of existing unused building into housing as well as building new homes. Each vision is designed around the individual character, heritage and facilities of our existing town centres.

The Town Visions are part of the council's overall plan The Place, The Vision which sets out its ambitions for the area's businesses and its people, boosting the local economy and creating jobs. It aims to invest £3.5billion over the next 10 years, which, along with private sector inward investment, will create around 12,000 jobs and generate an additional £1billion for the local economy.

A six-week consultation exercise will begin on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> of February through to the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2021 with an interactive virtual room and a survey for each town centre.

More information can be found at [northlanarkshire.gov.uk/town-visions](https://northlanarkshire.gov.uk/town-visions)

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## North Ayrshire Council launch £500,000 Green Jobs Fund

A new innovative £500,000 fund has been set up to support economic recovery and tackle climate change as part of the Council's Green New Deal.

The money will support the creation of local fair and green jobs whilst supporting businesses to becoming 'greener' through reducing carbon emissions and developing new innovative processes and technologies.

The commitment is part of the Council's ambitious target of having net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019.

The proposal for a Green Jobs Fund is part of the Council's bold Economic Recovery and Renewal Approach which was agreed by Cabinet in September 2020 and set out a range of actions to build back better, fairer and greener through a



**NORTH AYRSHIRE**  
COUNCIL

It is hoped that the Fund will help support businesses and community organisations to adopt new innovative practices and models including circular economy approaches and renewable energy, reduce business energy costs, upskill and reskill business and their employees, as well as securing further investment into the area at a time when it is needed most. The Green Jobs Fund will use a Community Wealth Building approach to improve the resilience of the local business base and create local supply chain opportunities.



## How Invest supported people into NHS Jobs

Invest in Renfrewshire works closely with NHS to help support people into local jobs. One client, Jacqueline McFadden, has described her experience of this.

“I received lots of amazing support from Invest in one week, including preparing for interviews, also had a mock interview, and making a zen profile. I was applying to the NHS thus I was able to join the presentation by two ladies from NHS in how they conduct their interviews, very insightful and beneficial given that I had two interviews with the NHS at the end of the week. I enjoyed doing my zen profile, that was a super exercise to do that highlighted my best qualities.

I learned that everything counts, not just my work experience but my life experience too. And I got a sense to appreciate and value everything I had done, work and non-work related. From that new appreciation of myself, I was able to naturally speak about myself in the interview, and I let go of what the outcome would be, (not worrying whether I would get the job or not) which allowed the space for me just to be myself and shine. Appreciating and thanking everyone at Invest in providing amazing support that is presented in a light and engaging way.”

Jacqueline was offered a job with NHS and is just waiting on her start date. She is absolutely delighted and very proud of herself.

[www.investinrenfrewshire.com](http://www.investinrenfrewshire.com)



## SEALD EU Funding Group Update



Two new funds launched by the UK Government with relevance to Scottish local authorities.

**UK COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND** – The purpose of this one off fund is to pilot programmes and new approaches ahead of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This is a UK wide fund of £220m.

The scope of the funding is for investment in skills, local businesses, communities and places and supporting people into employment.

The fund is open to all parts of the United Kingdom with 100 priority places being identified including 13 Scottish Local Authorities. Each of the priority areas will receive £20k towards the coordination/local assessment of bids.

**UK LEVELLING UP FUND** – The fund is intended support investment in places where it can make the biggest difference to everyday life, including ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and coastal communities.

The fund will run for 4 years with a budget of £4.2bn of which at least 9% will go to Scotland. The funding is intended for Transport, Regeneration / Town Centre and Cultural investment.

Local authorities can submit one bid for every MP whose constituency lies wholly within their boundary MPs should be consulted. LAs can submit one bid for every MP whose constituency lies wholly within their boundary. LAs can only have one successful bid for each of their allocated number of bids over the lifecycle of the Fund. There must be a minimum 10% local contribution towards total costs expected.

The deadline for both funds first allocation is 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fund-extended-to-help-level-up-every-corner-of-united-kingdom>

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## Supplier Development Programme Looks to the Future

### Meet the Buyer

There are three upcoming events to note with the Supplier Development Programme: Ayrshire Meet the Buyer will take place on 28 April, Meet the Buyer 2021 will take place on 8 June, and Meet the Buyer North 2021 will take place on 7 September. All three events will take place virtually. Exhibitions are available to public sector organisations and suppliers of all sizes can register to attend on the SDP website.

### Net Zero Survey

The Scottish Government has committed Scotland to becoming a Net Zero society by 2045. The Supplier Development Programme requests that suppliers in Scotland take a short survey to help us understand where Scottish SMEs and supported businesses are positioned with regard to Net Zero targets, to proactively prepare and support suppliers for expected sharp changes to future procurement practices related to Net Zero.

The five-question survey should take less than a minute to complete. Responses will close on Friday, 9 April 2021. Thank you in advance for taking part.

More information can be found by visiting [www.sdpscotland.co.uk](http://www.sdpscotland.co.uk).

You can follow SDP on social media on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube



**CESSCON DECOM SECURES MAJOR CONTRACT AS IT LAUNCHES FIFE FACILITY WITH CREATION OF UP TO 50 JOBS**

awarded Scotland's largest decommissioning contract to date, with the creation of up to 50 jobs.

The facility, which has been in the making for the last couple of years, was awarded its first contract in December (2020) for the onshore decommissioning, dismantlement, and recycling of Spirit Energy's Morecambe Bay DP3 and DP4 facilities in the East Irish Sea, by Allseas. The contract involves the processing of over 23,000 tonnes of material at CessCon Decom's facility in Methil.

CessCon Decom secured this contract as a direct result of a competitive tender and will commence work immediately. The first structures are planned to arrive at the Energy Park Fife facility in early 2021.

InvestFife – Fife Council's Economic Development Team – has been working with Scottish Enterprise and CessCon Decom, which has included a £7m investment programme to expand the site to allow access for larger structures to be dismantled. It's very much been a team approach, with help and support from Fife Council's planning team, investment secured from a range of sources, as well as InvestFife helping to source the right workforce, and to ensure the correct supply chains are set up, to benefit local businesses and communities.

For more information visit -

<https://www.cesscon.com/>

[www.investfife.co.uk](http://www.investfife.co.uk)

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## **ADVANCING MANUFACTURING PROJECTS TO OFFER INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY TO SMEs**

Two advancing manufacturing aerospace projects to support SMEs in the west of Scotland have officially launched, following investment from the Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund (AMCF).

The Aerospace Digital Visualisation Suite (ADVS) and Supply Chain AeroSpace (SCA) aim to create transformational change in the aerospace and space sectors through opportunity and innovation. Both projects have been established following a successful bid to the AMCF by



Engineering Alliance, securing £2 million investment in ERDF and match funding from SAC.

The ADVS is based at the Aeronautical Engineering Training Centre at Ayrshire College's Ayr Campus. It offers SMEs access to innovative Extended Reality (XR) technology, helping them develop skills and improve productivity, allowing them to enter or expand their presence in the aerospace sector.

The SCA project supports SMEs to improve their productivity and competitiveness through the introduction of innovative manufacturing technologies via the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS). It also works with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and Tier One suppliers to identify supply chain opportunities for SMEs to join the aerospace and space sectors, or grow their contribution.

The services of both projects are available to eligible SMEs at no charge.

For more information on the ADVS and SCA, including details on how to get involved with either project, please visit [www.am-aerospace.co.uk](http://www.am-aerospace.co.uk)

**Economic Development Response FOR Business**

From mountain to sea

**Employability**

- 327 clients on Back to Work programme
- 100 clients supported into education training, self/employment
- 103 Kickstart placements registered

**KICKSTART SCHEME**

**Funding Streams**

**Grant Name**

- Business Grant
- Retail, Hospitality & Leisure
- Tenant Occupier
- Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund
- Business Hardship Fund
- Contingency Fund
- Strategic Framework Business Fund
- Discretionary Business Fund

**Total Scottish Government Funding Awards by Aberdeenshire Council as at 12/03/21**

**£60,386,791.96**

Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

With the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions will shortly be nearing their first anniversary. The Aberdeenshire Council Economic Development team thought it a suitable time to provide our Councillors, the Senior Leadership Team and the wider public with a brief, snapshot view of some of the hard work that has been undertaken by the service.

It has been an extremely challenging year for everyone and there is still a long way to go. However, the work carried out by Economic Development has no doubt saved many businesses and the numbers in the attached documents show the scale of the coordinated response, as we continue to navigate the road ahead. Three 'Response For Business' infographics were produced to highlight the work that has been done

The full set of infographics can be found [here](#)

## Just: Ask, Listen, Talk

Fife Council Supported Employment Service consulted with small to medium local businesses to learn more about their view of Mental Health in the Workplace. This led to the production of the Just Ask Listen Talk toolkit.

This toolkit helps employers to support people at work or off sick and struggling due to poor mental health and outlines the building blocks of how to create and sustain a mentally healthy workplace.

JALT Toolkit is particularly useful for SMEs who may not have HR or Occupational Resources to support them. JALT takes away legal jargon and provides practical step by step guidance to help the employer have sensitive conversations about mental health in the workplace. Information is provided about organisation in Fife who can improve employer's responses and the actions they take to ensure mental health at work remains an on-going effort of every business success plan.

**Employers Quote:** *This is exactly what we would utilise to signpost and support our staff more effectively. We've seen the difference of having open communication with staff about mental health- it's made us more approachable and able to resolve issues regarding mental health.*

**Employers Quote:** *We know for a fact staff have cited other physical reasons for absences because they feel unable to talk openly about the real reason- poor mental health. It would be a positive step to be able to promote a mentally*



*conversation and promoting good mental health practices frequently amongst staff would probably encourage employees to feel more able to approach us when they aren't feeling great.*



## **Aberdeen moves into recovery phase with the completion of Socio-Economic Rescue Plan**

Driven by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen's Socio-Economic Rescue Plan, launched in June 2020, is a city-wide response to the economic impacts of Covid-19. The Rescue Plan, which will end on 31st March 2021, has been split into the themes of Economy, People, and Place, consisting of 75 actions, many of which have been completed or mainstreamed as business as usual. Others have been incorporated into the Local Outcome Improvement Plan as the city transitions from rescue to recovery phase. The Plan, which sought to address not only the economic impacts of the pandemic, but also the oil and gas downturn, also included a Business Charter to set out how the Council would work with city organisations.

Under the Economy, People and Place strands, the Plan saw delivery of a phenomenal amount of work, innovation and impressive results, all achieved through partnership working across the public, private and third sectors.

Actions included development of an 'Aberdeen Gift Card' which can be used in retail and hospitality venues throughout the city; providing support to local businesses through a Tourism Recovery Programme and Business Gateway Recovery Programme; the creation of AbzWorks, a one-stop-employability shop and jobs portal; a benefits take-up campaign to encourage people to access money they are entitled to; and the delivery of the Spaces for People project to allow people to safely move around the city during the pandemic.

Progress was overseen by an Implementation Group with representatives from across public, private and third sectors, who reflected at the final meeting on the progress made, strength of the partnership and the support and dedication of the local authority to develop and see the Plan

<https://news.aberdeencity.gov.uk/socio-economic-rescue-plan-launched-for-city/>

<https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/covid-19-rescue/>

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## SLAED Business Group Update

The chairs of the Business Group have been heavily involved in a Short Life Working Group which has been established to look at the redesign of the Business Gateway National Unit (BGNU). This is part of a collaborative approach to the strategic re-design of the Business Gateway service in Scotland with the group also including the SLAED Executive chairs and representatives from BGNU, COSLA and the Business Gateway Operational Network.



The purpose of the group is to take forward redesign of the Business Gateway service, ensuring a fit-for-purpose, agile service that will support the country through a period of economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic

In the current economic climate and ongoing austerity challenges, it is essential that local authority business support is positioned to ensure that it achieves maximum impact with its limited resources. The successful delivery of services over the next 3-5 years is vital to achieving local and national government objectives.

The group has presented some initial recommendations to a special meeting the Business Gateway board. These were in part informed by an exercise the group carried out to canvas views of all local authorities across Scotland on five key areas.

- delivery of the service;
- customer needs;
- governance;
- targets and monitoring; and
- integration of the Business Gateway Service with wider economic development activities.

The working group is continuing to meet regularly to develop these initial ideas with strategic direction from the Business Gateway Board.

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## Dundee's 2020 pivot away from events

In February of 2020 the Events Team in City Promotions Dundee were well on their way to welcoming the biggest event in the city's recent history – 70,000 people due to arrive to enjoy Radio One's Big Weekend. Sadly, come March that was all laid to one side, as COVID-19 and its implications struck.

Fast forward to 2021 and the Events Team are as busy as ever, contributing to local and national recovery planning, using their skills to set up Mass Vaccination Centres and finding new ways to meet their objectives.

Those objectives include ensuring that Dundee is an attractive place to live, work, study and invest; so what can the events team do, while events are unable to take place?

The team quickly devised a series of city centre animations across the summer of 2020. Working with six local artists, they took over vacant retail windows to create Dundee Windows. These window artworks brightened up the empty units, creating selfie friendly, interactive displays for the public to enjoy. Another project saw the battered and out of date poster sites across the city taken over with crowdsourced artworks from the public, submitted through the WeDundee website. They had asked the question, 'What's been surprising about your Dundee during lockdown?' The responses were varied and colourful, and again brought life to neglected and prominent sites. Lastly, the team took over an entire street, and working with a team of local volunteers painted a bright and colourful pavement design along the length of Castle Street. These three interventions supported the city centre recovery plans and the reopening of the city centre at that time, and provided a welcome to people returning to our public realm.

As Christmas approached, the team again looked at how to fulfil their objectives without gatherings. The #DundeeKindness campaign included an exhibition featuring 18 local people, organisations and businesses who had gone out of their way to help others. The exhibition took place online and in the heart of City Square over St Andrew's weekend to tie in with Fair Saturday and Scottish Governments #WeAreOneScotland. The public also celebrated their own stories using the hashtag #DundeeKindness.

A festive version of Dundee Windows partnered with UNESCO City of Design Dundee and V&A Dundee to commission six designers to create tree installations in vacant shop windows. Loosely based on the theme 'Christmas Tree' the artworks prevented the vacant units from



Lastly the Dundee Christmas Card created a touch of festive cheer and added to the city centre offering in the run up to Christmas. A pop up, life sized Christmas card designed by local artist Suzanne Scott, sat proudly in City Square and online for the public to interact with and get those all-important selfies.

As the year turned the team were integral to the planning and set up of the vaccination roll out in Dundee, scoping venues, developing layout plans and supporting our Resilience team and NHS Tayside colleagues. With over 100,000 vaccinations complete in the region, the work is well on its way.

All in all, 2020 was a busy year, with a positive move to durational installations which people can enjoy in their own time, rather than the time limited be-there-or-miss-it activities the city usually enjoys. We all hope that 2021 will get us to a place where we can allow people to gather together once again to share the experiences that bring all of us together as communities and as friends.



## Employability Fund- Taylor's Journey

Taylor came to the Employability Fund from High School as a 2019 school leaver. He did not enjoy school and wanted to leave as soon as he could. He was very unsure about what career path he wanted to go down. Taylor struggles with **ADHD** and **dyslexia**. After taking part in a Construction Programme with Fife Council, Taylor soon realised he was good at working with his hands and on practical tasks.

Taylor applied himself and had almost completed his Individual Training Plan when the Covid-19 pandemic struck! Immediately he felt that all his hard work was for nothing. However, he continued to engage and asked to explore every opportunity possible. With Taylor's dedication and can-do attitude, working remotely, he successfully went on to pass his CSCS test when lock down restrictions eased. Taylor and I continued to work remotely doing job searches. He applied for an apprenticeship with **Bell Group** as a painter and decorator and was successful.

*Taylor added, "I am grateful for the support and help I received from everyone, especially Malcolm and the instructors at Fife Council Midfield Training Centre. I am looking forward to starting my apprenticeship with Bell Group."*

Malcolm Ironside, Taylor's Employability Officer



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