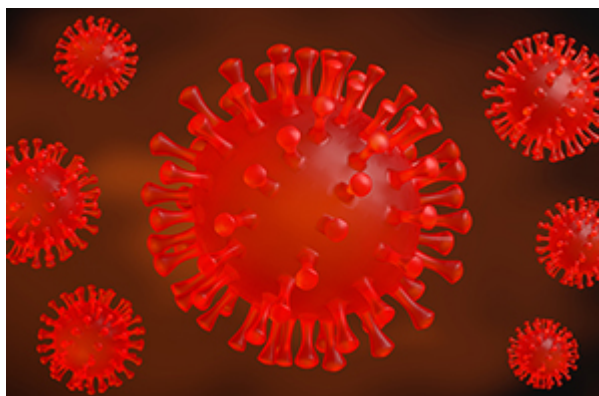


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### **A Word from the Chair...**

The publication of our May newsletter comes at a time when economic development staff throughout the 32 local authorities have been working non-stop to get support out to businesses and individuals. I can't overstate the critical role that colleagues have undertaken in response to the economic impact working at pace with diligence and enthusiasm. I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank all of you and a special thanks to my colleagues on the SLAED Executive and within the SLAED groups who have helped to drive forward the essential role of local government in providing much needed help.

As we move from the response phase and commence the restart and recovery phases we cannot underestimate the impact on our local economies and communities which will vary in nature and scale across the country. More than ever we will require an evidence led, place based approach to recovery and effective collaboration with partners and stakeholders will be crucial at local, regional and national level.

Please continue to get involved in the SLAED meetings and activities as we collectively drive forward innovative responses to build a more inclusive, sustainable and wellbeing economy.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Dr Andrew McGuire of the Improvement Service for his significant contribution to the work of SLAED over a number of years and his substantial support will be hugely missed as he has opted for early retirement and left the Improvement Service on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – I am sure you all join with me and wish Andy a long, healthy and happy retirement.

Pamela Smith  
SLAED Chair

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# solace

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## SCOTLAND

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### **Sandra Black, Chief Executive at Renfrewshire Council and SOLACE Portfolio lead for Economic Development**

Colleagues,

A number of weeks of lockdown has now passed and we continue to develop and implement range of measures to mitigate the economic impacts of Covid-19 as best we can. As SOLACE lead for economic development I have witnessed at first hand the incredible effort that has gone in to design and develop at speed programmes of support often working to very challenging deadlines and within difficult circumstances.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone for the work you are doing, much of the activity you are involved in doesn't always get the recognition it deserves but it is absolutely clear the essential role local economic development plays in the response effort.

The incredible collective work from SLAED in supporting SOLACE and working with COSLA in weekly teleconferences has got us to a good position to start the process of recovery and to that end SOLACE supported by SLAED are feeding into regular Economic Strategic Partnership discussions with Scottish Government to help shape the national framework for the Economic Recovery Action Plan. I know you are continuing to work tirelessly on your local recovery action plans and collectively we will continue to push for the best outcomes for our local communities in the weeks and months to ahead.

Sandra Black  
Portfolio Lead – Economic Development

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## COSLA Update

Like all of us, COSLA have had to adapt to meet the challenges Covid and social distancing have created for sectors across Local Government, including economic development. One of the first challenges was to establish interim governance arrangements to allow us to continue working through the crisis. After a successful trial run in April, COSLA Leaders now meet fortnightly via Microsoft teams, allowing us to hold a decision making forum to inform our steps as we navigate our way through the crisis, and plot a route to recovery. We have increased the frequency of these meetings from monthly to fortnightly to allow us to respond in a more agile way to fast moving issues as they arise, overcoming obstacles in areas including waste, transport, planning, economic recovery and of course health and wellbeing.

Unfortunately, these solutions meant that the first virtual Leaders meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup> clashed with our Environment and Economy Board meeting, which had to be cancelled. We are now looking forward to holding our first virtual Board meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June. Economic recovery features heavily on the agenda and we hope to explore with our Members ways in which we can move into the recovery phase without losing sight of our long term ambition of a just transition to an inclusive, sustainable economy.

While recovery is on the agenda for the upcoming Board meeting, the more immediate economic work has focussed on business support. To date this has meant more than £740 million issued to sixty-four thousand applicants in non-domestic rates based grants alone. This work will be vital in ensuring that businesses survive the initial shock of the crisis and are well positioned to restart when it is safe to do so as we make our way through the phases of recovery.

This is just a snapshot of all the work COSLA has undertaken in responding to the Covid crisis and we will continue to work with our colleagues in SLAED, Scottish Government and other key stakeholders to deliver flexible, place based solutions for Local Authorities and their individual circumstances. More information can be found at <https://www.cosla.gov.uk/covid-19-information-for-councils>.

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## North Ayrshire Council launches Scotland's first Community Wealth Building Strategy

North Ayrshire Council has become the first in Scotland to adopt a radical economic model to plot a way forward now and post COVID-19. The Community Wealth Building strategy was launched on the 14 May as the Council set out their road map to build back a better and fairer local economy.

Launching the Strategy Council Leader Joe Cullinane said: "As we emerge from COVID-19 we need to build an economy that is strong, resilient and fair.

"That is why we have launched a new Community Wealth Building strategy – the first of its kind in Scotland – to put forward a new economic model to support our recovery. Community Wealth Building is about working in partnership with communities and businesses to build a strong local economy which supports fair work, encourages local spend and uses the land and property we own for the common good so that wealth stays local.

"The current approach to the economy has left behind certain places and people and we must ensure that we have a recovery that is inclusive and tackles current inequalities. We also need to create an economy that is more resilient and sustainable, and ensure North Ayrshire is ready to deal with future challenges, including the Climate Emergency."

Further information can be found [HERE](#) or by contacting Julie McLachlan, Senior Manager – Economic Policy, [juliemclachlan@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:juliemclachlan@north-ayrshire.gov.uk).



## Annual Conference – "Local Government's Contribution to an Inclusive and Sustainable Economy"

The SLAED Annual Conference was held at COSLA on 13th March 2020. Speakers included:

- Sandra Black, SOLACE Portfolio Lead for Economic Development
- Professor Graeme Roy, Director of the Fraser of Allander Institute
- Will Hutton, Principal of Hertford College, University of Oxford

Videos of the presentations can be viewed [HERE](#).

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## SLAED Indicators Framework 2019/20

The SLAED Indicators Framework is a valuable source of information for Councils and stakeholders in demonstrating economic development service delivery and **the** performance of local economies. It also demonstrates the significant contribution made by Councils to local economic development, which is important in making the case for support to Councils in delivering meaningful economic outcomes.



The Framework contains a number of indicators that are also now included in the [Local Government Benchmarking Framework](#), which is a high-level tool designed to support Chief Executives, senior management teams and elected members to measure and compare data as a catalyst for improving services, targeting resources to areas of greatest impact and enhancing public accountability.

Significant pressures on council economic development services to respond to the COVID-19 crisis will present challenges in supplying the data for 2019/20. The data collected will also cover the period immediately prior to the impact of the crisis coming into effect. However, it will continue to build on the seven years of existing trend data and act as a baseline for future iterations which will provide a fuller picture of impact and the essential role that councils have played in response and recovery.

In addition to the main SLAED Indicators Report for 2019/20, a 'COVID-19 Supplement' will also be produced which will collate a combination of quantitative and qualitative information around the impact of and response to the crisis. For further information contact [Hannah Young](#), Improvement Service.



Changes in the labour market brought about by the COVID-19 response will have unprecedented impact on our communities this will be most severely felt by those on the lowest incomes and in the most precarious, least secure jobs. In addition the anticipated significant increase in the number of people becoming unemployed or displaced in the labour market will also disproportionately affect young people, women, those with disabilities, low skilled and 50 years+. As a result social and economic inequalities amongst groups and communities will increase.

Local Government and Scottish Government have been working in partnership to help those already disadvantaged and economically excluded to progress towards, enter and sustain Fair Work. It is essential in these challenging and unprecedented times that we continue to prioritise our services and resources to those who need them most.

SLAED Employability leads have been working collaboratively with key stakeholders through Local Employability Partnerships and Nationally through the Covid-19 Employability Operational Response Group to ensure individuals are able to easily access the support that they need at the time they need it.

Local Employability leads are meeting weekly to collaborate on enhanced, re-purposed and new support programmes to enable people to continue to access support safely helping to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and to help people prepare for recovery and employment in the new norm.

Further information can be accessed [HERE](#). Contact Pamela Smith, Employability Partnership Manager and Chair of SLAED [pamela.smith@improvementservice.org.uk](mailto:pamela.smith@improvementservice.org.uk).

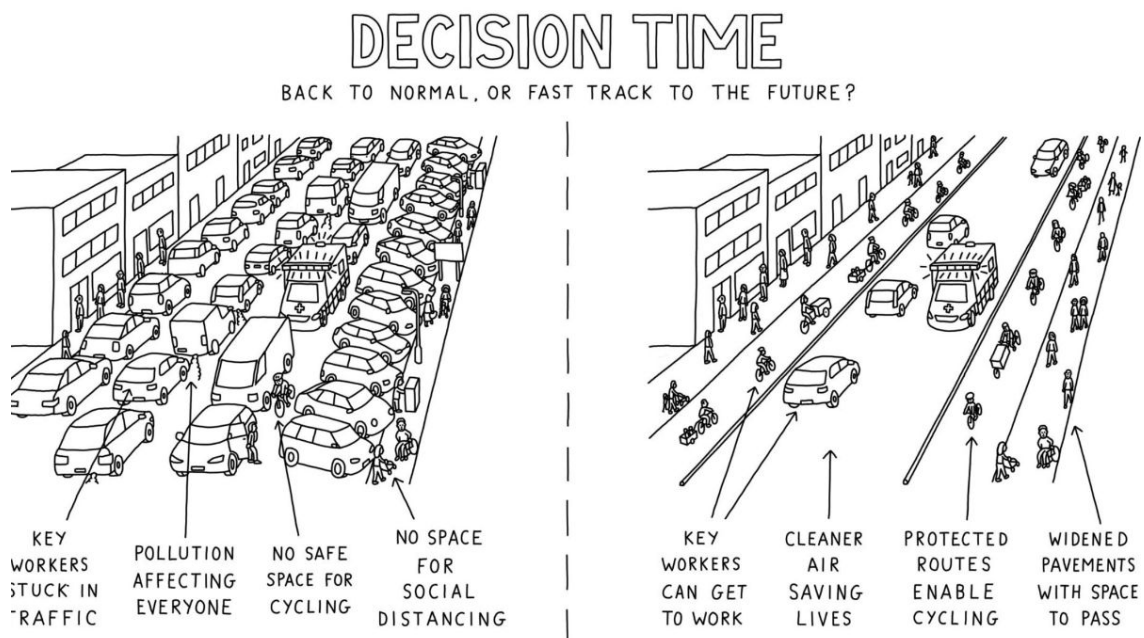


## SLAED - Improvement Service Partnership Working

For a number of years the Improvement Service has worked closely in partnership with SLAED. The relationship was initially formed back in 2011, via the joint work carried out to produce the **Economic Development Improvement Guide**. Shortly, after that, the Improvement Service supported SLAED in publishing the first iteration of the **SLAED Indicators Framework**. *(Seven consecutive annual Indicator reports have now been published via the SLAED Performance Group with IS support. This data has helped articulate the major contribution made by councils to Scotland's economic development system and economy)*. Not long after that, the IS successfully bid to undertake the **SLAED Secretariat** contract, and other major SLAED-IS collaborations include the **Economic Outcomes Programme** *(also in partnership with SOLACE and others)*, the **Regional Economy** work *(also in partnership with COSLA and SOLACE)* and the new **SLAED Strategic Plan**. In 2019, the IS and SLAED made a successful joint proposal to the Scottish Government to host the role of **Employability Partnership** Manager and this work presents a major opportunity to establish a very different way of re-designing employability and related support across Scotland.

Clearly, a major focus now is on the responses and planning relating to the economic fallout arising from **Covid-19** and the IS has committed to continued working with SLAED, SOLACE and COSLA on this issue.

produced by the Local Government partners themselves, the Accounts Commission agreed to remove Local Authority Economic Development from its 20/21 workplan, on the basis of the extensive joint work already undertaken to articulate the issues and drive improvement.



## Space for People is also Space for our post Covid-19 Economy

The challenge our local economies are now faced with is how we allow people to leave their homes and provide custom to local businesses while still feeling safe in their social distancing. If we do not meet this challenge we risk them returning home to safe online ordering. The impact on local services, retailers and High Streets will be an overriding negative as lockdown releases and distancing requirements exacerbate the pressure on space.

A recent Webinar ran by the Improvement Service Place Programme lead, Irene Beautyman, highlighted how the, now £30 million, funding available to Councils can also help local economies. The Spaces for People fund is an important resource to create more space for safe distancing while queuing as well to give cafes, restaurants and bars the outdoor space to trade when we reach that stage. While the fund is understandably being administered by Sustrans, as a re-allocation of some of their budget, this means it is frequently being viewed purely as a fund to promote temporary active travel. The result is a confused state of affairs and an unequal take up of this important opportunity across Scotland. This is particularly disappointing given Public Health Scotland have clearly stated that this is a public health issue as restrictions are eased.

Scotland's Towns Partnership have stressed that this funding is about creating the safe space for local businesses and town centres to attract back customers who feel safe while moving around and queuing. Reallocation of road space is needed now for them to be able to start functioning immediately when restrictions ease. They are urging councils to work with their own economic development staff, with STP and with their local BIDS to apply for the funding now. Sustrans Director, Karen MacGregor, is fully supportive of this need to support our economy through these reallocations.

The promotion of equal uptake across all of Scotland would be supported by broader recognition that the

For more information contact [irene.beautyman@improvementservice.org.uk](mailto:irene.beautyman@improvementservice.org.uk).

## Scottish Government and Supplier Development Programme Launch Survey on Supplier Relief

With the support of the Scottish Government, the Supplier Development Programme has launched a survey on the effects of Supplier Relief. Suppliers in Scotland, especially small, medium and micro sized businesses, can [fill in a short survey](#) to share their experience of supplier relief with public sector buyers during the Coronavirus crisis so far.

Responses will be collated into a report which will be shared with the Scottish Government and local authorities throughout Scotland.

The current outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) is unprecedented and will have a significant impact on businesses of all sizes. Many suppliers will struggle to meet their contractual obligations which could put their financial viability and put their ability to retain staff and their supply chains at risk. In response to this, the Scottish Government issued several new [Scottish Procurement Policy Notes \(SPPN\) regarding the Coronavirus](#) to support buyers and suppliers.

The Supplier Development Programme aims to gather the views of suppliers across Scotland that have requested supplier relief from public sector procurement under SPPNs issued by the Scottish Government.

The survey will close on Friday, 22 May 2020.

Further information can be found [HERE](#) or via [Gillian.Cameron@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:Gillian.Cameron@southlanarkshire.gov.uk).



## VisitScotland Approach to Destination Marketing

VisitScotland has paused proactive paid for marketing activity and all messaging highlights stay home and stay safe at the same time providing inspirational and engaging content.

Although there is no timescale for when visitors will be able to travel to Scotland again, activity has been broken down into different phases. A film *Absence Makes The Heart Grow Fonder* to encourage people to share their love and memories of Scotland has been created and widely viewed.



phases and messaging to re-inforce the key points and keep Scotland front of mind. Detailed research and analysis is being undertaken and the results disseminated to industry.

A Tourism Destination & Sector Support Fund launched this month (until 22 May) to provide financial help to those who have lost income from membership subscriptions from tourism businesses because of the coronavirus lockdown. It is open to all groups that have a membership base made up of entirely or predominantly tourism businesses and will award up to 50% of membership income that is under threat due to coronavirus. Over £400,000 is available to applicants and interested groups.

Further information can be found [HERE](#) or by contacting [ecarmichael@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:ecarmichael@eastlothian.gov.uk).



## STERG Action Plan

STERG (Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group) has produced a phased plan to combat current issues and look at how the industry could effectively recover once the lockdown is eased.

To respond most effectively, all work on Scotland Outlook 2030, the new national tourism strategy and the supporting action plan is temporarily on hold.

The four key areas within the plan are:

**Respond:** delivering a package of measures to support businesses, most in need communities, stay home and social distancing guidance.

**Reset:** Sectoral guidance to encourage workplace plans for the re-start.

**Restart:** Kick-starting the economy safely.

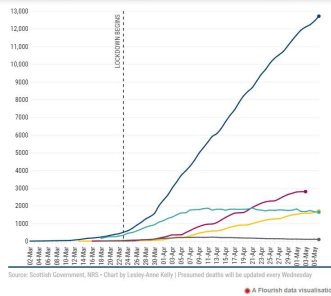
**Recovery:** Economic recovery is likely to take longer than originally anticipated. What emerges is likely to be a different economy characterised by new business models, markets and behaviours.

The year-long plan takes a phased approach and the group is currently collaborating to deliver the first two phases. The plan will continue to evolve in line with the scientific evidence and government advice on the reopening of the tourism industry.

Phase 2 is about engaging with the industry, supporting them and coordinating next moves to encourage workplace planning for a safe restart.

Stages 3 & 4 focus will be post lockdown and outline marketing activity, how we respond to the responsible and community tourism agenda and how to continue supporting the ambitions of Scotland Outlook 2030 and our vision to be the world leader in 21<sup>st</sup> century tourism.

Further information and be found [HERE](#) or by contacting [ecarmichael@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:ecarmichael@eastlothian.gov.uk).



We have all become familiar over the past 7 weeks of the data used to track the spread of Covid-19 across the UK and across the world. Whilst for many of us it has been a depressing experience to see the graphs from the UK Cabinet Office briefing room at 5pm on the BBC for data editor at The Courier and Press and Journal Lesley-Anne Kelly @L\_A\_Kelly it has been a source of fascination. Lesley-Anne – a self-confessed ‘data geek’ has taken the Scottish Government and NRS data as soon as they are published and produced her own charts and stories for the papers circulation areas.

Very recently these – alongside those of journalists from the Economist, Times/Sunday Times, FT and Daily Telegraph - have been praised by the Press Gazette for ‘Coronavirus Journalism Excellence’ First published on 18 March, the datasets have been regularly updated as official figures have been released. One reader, James Peters, wrote in to the newspaper to praise the work. He said: “As a chartered engineer with both the mathematical and statistical knowledge to produce my own analysis of the data, which I currently do, I find the charts and maps to be excellent and, in my lowly opinion, provide the best overview of the state of play in Scotland.”

And for those that don’t see the link between Covid-19 health data and economic data - we know that this health crisis will have a more devastating impact on the world economy than the 2007/8 financial crisis and probably similar to the Great Depression of the 1930’s. If we had been tracking and acting on the health data from the start of the outbreak in December 2019 in Wuhan then much of this catastrophic impact on the economy could have been avoided.

Further information can be found [HERE](#).

## SEMEFAB in Fight Against COVID-19



Glenrothes-based semi-conductor manufacturer, Semefab, is making a vital contribution to the UK and global fight against Coronavirus (COVID-19). The firm has been inundated with enquiries and orders and is currently working to supply more than 12 million semiconductors for use in COVID-19 related applications in the medical and healthcare sectors over the next 3 months. Orders have been received from companies in the UK, USA and China.

Allan James, Managing Director at Semefab, which is headquartered in Eastfield Industrial Estate, said that end user equipment manufacturing firms in those sectors were struggling to cope with global demand. However, Semefab’s existing relationships with in-country businesses

Allan said: “We’ve built up an excellent international reputation as a cost-effective supplier of high-performance silicon products... It’s good to know that some of those devices will return to the UK inside medical and healthcare equipment being used in the UK’s fight against COVID-19.”

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



## RAYTHEON UK JOINS COVID-19 EFFORT

Raytheon UK, which has a base at Queensway Industrial Estate in Glenrothes, is part of a project being led by Babcock International Group (Babcock), to design and produce 10,000 ventilators to ensure the NHS has the support and equipment it needs to tackle COVID-19. As well as working on a brand new prototype, a team of Babcock engineers and specialists has set up a supply chain solution from scratch. The team has worked night and day to set up the supply chain, and has enlisted a number of manufacturers to help with assembly and production. As part of this effort, Raytheon UK, along with Plexus, will support the production of ventilators from their Glenrothes, Livingston and Kelso manufacturing facilities.

The Scottish Government has welcomed this collaboration, and the role they are playing in accelerating ventilator capacity for the NHS across the UK. Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation, Ivan McKee MSP, said: “I am very proud that Scottish based companies like Plexus and Raytheon UK are playing their part in this crucial supply chain... the speed with which Plexus and Raytheon UK, as part of the Babcock supply chain, have responded to push forward sizeable production is commendable. They and their staff are working round the clock and are a credit to Scottish manufacturing.”

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

## Business Response Hub supporting Aberdeen businesses through COVID-19

Aberdeen City Council is working to lessen the negative impact of COVID-19 as far as practicably possible. Amongst other support measures rapidly put in place, we recognised from the outset the need for a dedicated team to support businesses. Staff from across the City Growth service mustered to create a Business Response Hub, established in March, which provides a: telephone hotline; on-line grant application process; webpage dedicated to



Our dedicated team provides a range of support, which includes answering non-grant related questions from businesses, self-employed citizens, charities and social enterprises, and politicians. Officers meet daily (virtually of course!) and work collaboratively across council services to ensure our local economy can weather the Covid storm. This approach has resulted in millions of pounds worth of grants being paid, and quick resolutions to enquiries. The hub has not only proven the importance of being adaptable and what can be achieved through partnership working with both internal and external stakeholders, but also brought together a range of expertise to ensure that organisations and individuals seeking support get a full and tailored package of advice and signposting options, as well as the standard grant application support.

Further information can be found [HERE](#) or by contacting Julie Richards-Wood, Programme Manager, [jrichardswood@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:jrichardswood@aberdeencity.gov.uk).

## COVID-19 Jobs Support

### COVID-19 Jobs

A quick response local job portal has been created by Hanlon Software Solutions, to help those in Edinburgh, East Lothian, West Lothian, Midlothian, Fife and the Scottish Borders whose employment status has been affected as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Managed by Capital City Partnership on behalf of the Edinburgh South East Scotland City Region Deal, a dedicated employer engagement team are sourcing and promoting live vacancies on [www.c19jobs.org](http://www.c19jobs.org).

Opportunities are across key recruiting sectors including health and social care, customer service, logistics, agriculture plus many more.

Promoted via local media streams, the site has had over 8,500 individual users with 650 registering for tailored job alerts. Full holistic employability support is available by referral to contracted employability provision within each area and a dedicated support and information page can be found highlighting links to business, employee and jobseeker support through local and national agencies. The site also links directly to NHS recruitment portals and information for those looking to volunteer within the 6 local authority areas.

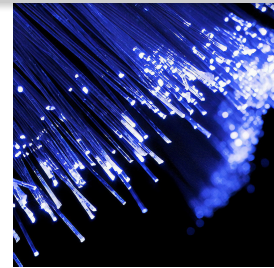
Hanlon has made this offer available free of charge and customisable to other local authorities and regions. To date, 20 have expressed an interest.

For more information please contact [c19jobs@capitalcitypartnership.org](mailto:c19jobs@capitalcitypartnership.org)

If your local authority is interested in using this service contact

[Sandra.Inrig@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.Inrig@glasgow.gov.uk)

## £10.5m Full Fibre network from SSE Enterprise Telecoms to power economic growth across Aberdeenshire



SSE Enterprise Telecoms has been awarded a £10.5m full fibre project by Aberdeenshire Council. Part of the Aberdeen City Region Deal project, the 18-month project will provide gigabit dark fibre out to public sector locations such as schools and NHS sites in a number of towns in a belt around Aberdeen City. Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian will benefit directly as the users of the fibre to deliver services and improve efficiency. The end-to-end full fibre network will initially connect 189 public sector sites across the region.

Chair of the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee, and leader of Aberdeenshire Council Jim Gifford said: “The digital elements of our City Region Deal are among the most important, in terms of helping businesses and communities see a demonstrable change thanks to the Deal. The ACRD remains about being progressive, delivering tangible benefits and laying out a road map for the future to ensure the ongoing stability of our region. We can all agree that in the current circumstances that is almost more important than ever.

“My thanks to the teams who have worked in partnership with SSE Enterprise Telecoms, the NHS and the other Deal partners to sign and agree this important milestone.”

Further information can be found [HERE](#) or by contacting [Matt Lockley](#), Economic Development Service Manager.



## Computech Support Services – NOLB Perth and Kinross Council

The Skills and Employment Initiatives (S&EI) Team have been working with Computech Support Services throughout the 2019/20 period delivering our No One Left Behind Incentive. We have supported the IT business by creating new posts to local young people. One young person is working as an IMAC Engineer and is currently two months away from completing his apprenticeship term. Computech Support Services provides vital IT support to the NHS throughout various local authorities in Scotland. Given the current pressures on all aspects of the NHS, Terry, Computech Support Services Director, reached out to us to assist in filling a critical post immediately. The S&EI Team have advertised the vacancy across various social media channels, case loading from existing clients and communicated across the local partnership to get quality candidates at short notice. The Build Engineer role will support their services throughout the COVID-19 crisis and beyond by building and installing PC's

business.

Skills and Employment Initiatives Team Generic email:  
[TheHub@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:TheHub@pkc.gov.uk).

## Bits 'n' Bobbins supports the NHS

I started my business Bits 'n' Bobbins in January 2019 with wonderful assistance from Inverclyde Council and Business Gateway. I specialise in bridal and occasion wear alterations based in Greenock.

Business was progressing well over 2019 and following the quiet period from December to February I was looking forward to a profitable 2020 but sadly COVID 19 landed on us all. With weddings and functions cancelled my income went to zero almost overnight.

With nothing to do I decided to apply my skills to assist the NHS by making scrubs and button headbands for local medical staff. I asked for donations of material and some local businesses and the general public assisted. I have so far made 24 scrubs with matching scrub laundry bags and 70 button headbands, whilst making no income whatsoever I am happy in the knowledge that I am helping the NHS at least in a small way.

What is incredible is that I have now been inundated with requests to make non-surgical face masks in plain and bright colours and so far I have over 200 orders. By adapting my skills I am finally making an income again.

More details can be found [HERE](#), or by contacting Yvonne Paterson: 07790 205004 / [yvonne@bitsnobbins.co.uk](mailto:yvonne@bitsnobbins.co.uk).



## Western Isles Education Attainment Apprentices: Insight into roles during COVID-19

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has a Team of 14 Education Attainment apprentices. The programme is funded through the Scottish Attainment Challenge Pupil Equity Fund. and is used locally to help schools support families that may be challenged by poverty, and support learners to improve attainment, participation and engagement. The apprentices have been working hard within

families.

Work to support pupils in schools has moved online using virtual learning platforms like Microsoft Teams and Vscene. Feedback from those who are supported by the apprentices has been extremely positive. They are providing pupils with help to complete their schoolwork and providing extra support for the families of these pupils who may also need it during these challenging times. The apprentices help to distribute laptops to those who do not have access to the technology needed to engage with their teachers and fellow students. They attend regular support meetings with teaching staff to ensure they are kept up-to-date with changes to procedure, policy and to ensure they have everything they need to support the pupils and their families.

For further information contact [Dolina Smith](#), Apprenticeship Manager, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.



## Seaweed Farming Feasibility Study for Argyll and Bute and potentials for future work

Argyll and Bute Council commissioned the Scottish Association for Marine Science to produce a report on the Feasibility of Seaweed Farming in its coastal waters, this was published in December 2019. This year the Seaweed Farming Feasibility Study (SFFS) report was presented by Argyll and Bute Council Officers at the ALGET2 meeting in Bergen, Norway and at the Scottish Seaweed Industry Association Conference in Oban. The report generated a wide interest within communities, the industry and potential investors. Many contacts which were made at both events have been followed up for potential seaweed farming and research opportunities. One such result of this, the Economic Growth Team developed an initiative for studying bio-remediation properties following a call from a consultant who became aware of the SFFS report and expressed an interest in exploring the ability of seaweed to adsorb pharmaceutical waste. The project will aim to research the ability of seaweed to adsorb pharmaceutical compounds that are polluting our aquatic environment, as traditional wastewater treatments need improving. This innovative approach, if developed into a new sustainable technology, could be effectively applied to protect our environment.



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