

Item: 20

Policy and Resources Committee: 20 April 2021.

Economic Recovery Steering Group.

ASPIRE Orkney – Progress Update.

Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

1. Purpose of Report

To provide an update in relation to ASPIRE Orkney's activity in the period March to April 2021.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, on 25 November 2020, the Council resolved that the detail of the ASPIRE Orkney programme be subject to further consideration, in the context of the Council's corporate plan, by the Policy and Resources Committee, with effect from January 2021, and thereafter as a standing item for the Policy and Resources Committee.

2.2.

That a progress update in relation to ASPIRE Orkney's activity was presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 23 February 2021.

2.3.

That, since 23 February 2021, the Economic Recovery Steering Group has met on one occasion, on 25 March 2021, where Malcolm Roughhead, Chief Executive Officer, Visit Scotland, gave a verbal presentation on tourism recovery activity.

2.4.

That the main activity undertaken during March and April 2021 has been the recruitment process associated with the programme management resources, with interviews due to take place on 21 April 2021.

3. Background

3.1.

On 25 November 2020, when considering the proposed allocation of funding towards establishment of dedicated programme management resources to support the ongoing work of the Economic Recovery Group, the Council resolved inter alia that the detail of the ASPIRE Orkney programme be subject to further consideration, in the context of the Council's corporate plan, by the Policy and Resources Committee, with effect from January 2021, and thereafter as a standing item for the Policy and Resources Committee.

3.2.

An update on the activity associated with the Economic Recovery Steering Group was presented to the Policy and Resources Committee, at its special meeting held on 23 February 2021. The Committee subsequently recommended that a Members' Seminar be arranged, as soon as practicable after establishment of the dedicated programme management resources, to review the ASPIRE programme with a particular focus on any activity which might have a direct bearing on Council policies and programmes.

4. Progress Update

4.1.

Since the meeting of the Committee on 23 February 2021, there has been one meeting of the Economic Recovery Steering Group, held on 25 March 2021. This meeting included a verbal presentation from Malcolm Roughhead, Chief Executive Officer, Visit Scotland, addressing the work that Visit Scotland has been undertaking during the pandemic and the next steps for the recovery of the tourism industry in Scotland.

4.2.

Beyond this, the main activity undertaken during March and April 2021 has been the recruitment process associated with the programme management resources. This work has been led by the business representatives who will appoint a programme manager through a delivery vehicle which has been agreed to support the work of the Economic Recovery Steering Group - ASPIRE Ltd. Interviews are due to take place on 21 April 2021, with the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure attending the interviews to act as a public sector representative for the recruitment process.

4.3.

It is intended that an early action for the new programme manager will be to be introduced to Elected Members at the Seminar, referred to at section 3.2 above.

5. Corporate Governance

This report relates to the Council's response to the economic challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts to support the Orkney Economy through the pandemic are considered in line with the Council Plan priorities.

6. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Aspects

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Contact Officers

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