REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Abstract: This Report outlines the highlights and achievements of the Economic Development Unit for the period 8 June 2004 – 2 September 2004.

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this Report.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report outlines the Highlights and Achievements of the Economic Development Unit for the period 8 June 2004 – 2 September 2004.

3 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS – 8 JUNE 2004 – 2 SEPTEMBER 2004

♦ Property – 84% of the Council's industrial/commercial units are occupied (83 units occupied, 16 vacant). 84.44% of total possible rental income is currently being achieved.

♦ AngusProperty.com - In the period between 15 May and 31 July 2004, AngusProperty.com has processed a total of 285 property searches, resulting in particulars for individual properties being examined 290 times. A recent detailed analysis of site usage reported that during the financial year 2003-4, (which coincides with the creation of the site in April) the number of daily visits to the site initially rose from 1 per day in April to 23 per day in March 2004 and this level has been consistently maintained.

♦ Angus Ahead Campaign - Forfar Food Fest - The very first Forfar Food Fest held on 30 and 31 July was a success bringing in almost 6,000 visitors to the town. Organised by Angus Ahead, the area marketing campaign set up to promote Angus locally, nationally and internationally, and the Towns Promotion Programme, Forfar Food Fest was a partnership of producers, retailers and restaurateurs working together to raise awareness of the high quality food on our own doorstep.

This was a 2-day festival - the first at Glamis Castle when Angus played host to over 250 cattle breeders from all over the world celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society with a Taste of Angus Showcase. The second day, A Celebration of Food, took place at The Myre, Forfar with local produce on sale at the Angus Farmers Market, tasting to tempt any palate and the culinary skills of some brave councillors on show as they duelled it out with the help of two local chefs in a "Cook Along a Councillor Contest". There was also a Kiddies Korner organised by two community councils, cookery demonstrations, wine tasting, fudge making, a live broadcast from Radio Tay and the launch of the new Pride of Angus sausage devised by award winning butcher James Pirie of Newtyle to mark the occasion.
A branding campaign was devised involving window stickers, carrier bags, produce stickers and recipe cards to ensure a quality feel to the event and these were distributed to all the partners and participants. Statistics are currently being compiled to gauge the economic benefit to the town through increased income for retailers and stallholders.

♦ **Angus Ahead Campaign - The Hairst** - Assistance has again been given to this Angus Summer Arts Festival, run by the Cultural Services section of the Leisure Services Department under the aegis of the Angus Ahead Campaign. In the region of £10,000.00, was spent on publicity materials and advertising and a considerable amount of Public Relations work was done, generating much valuable publicity.

♦ **Angus Ahead Campaign - Tayscreen** – Tayscreen succeeded in attracting Tiger Aspect Productions to the area. On 26, 27, 28 July Tiger Aspect Productions used Barry Buddon Training Ranges for a location shoot for their programme “Deceiving Hitler,” about various methods used to mislead the Germans as to the whereabouts of valuable military assets during the last war. Around forty film crew members stayed in various hotels in Angus (Carnoustie Links, Carnoustie Golf, Old Manor, Carlogie House, Loch Lorian and Kinloch Arms.) It is estimated that the company spent around £50,000 between hotels, locations and specialist company involvement in Angus. Some local crew were also hired for props and set design. The event gained publicity from the regional press and radio.

♦ **In addition – Tayscreens is currently assisting - A Place in the Sun**
The production company ‘Freeform’, London for Channel 4 is to feature Angus in the popular television programme series “A Place in the Sun” which is broadcast nationally. Preparation is underway and a crew of 8 will start shooting from 19 August through to 9 September. The programme is to feature a golf club professional based in Bristol who wants to re-locate to the Angus coast and will seek to feature around 6 properties in the £200,000 price range. They will also help the golf pro to find work in his field and will provide good promotional exposure to Angus by highlighting; scenery, locations leisure and recreation activities. The programme also hopes to feature interesting people to be interviewed about life in Angus, the experience of moving here etc – not necessary golf related. There may be an opportunity for promotional activities and local press coverage on the back of this.

♦ **Angus Ahead Campaign - Angus Ambassadors** - The first Angus Ambassadors Reception was held in the Town & County Hall on 24 June, when official ‘Angus Ambassador’ status was bestowed on five individuals and three organisations who were a shining example of those with a pride in their county prepared to go out into the world and represent the strengths and characteristics of the people of Angus. Provost Bill Middleton, as chair of the Angus Ahead Champions, presented the recipients with framed certificates and Angus Ahead pin badges at a formal reception for 70 people.

♦ **Angus Ahead Campaign - Ambassadors Fund** - A fund has been established to award up to £250 per month to individuals or organisations who are seen to actively promote Angus locally, nationally or internationally. The Angus Ahead Ambassadors Fund will initially be funded through contributions from the Champions and Angus Ahead but it is hoped to attract further support from other
businesses in the county. A working group has been established, chaired by Angus Ahead Champion Barbara Lovegrove of Blackadders and including four other Champions and the Editors of the two local newspaper groups.

♦ **Angus Ahead Campaign - Festival & Events Group** - As part of its campaign to more effectively promote Angus locally, nationally and internationally, the Angus Ahead Champions have set up the Angus Ahead Festival and Events Group. The main aim of this new group is to ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to key events across the whole of Angus in 2005. This should allow for more effective marketing opportunities to attract more visitors into the area, and hopefully avoid duplication with other events held in neighbouring areas. The intention is to produce a more detailed Calendar of Events for 2005 that will be published both online in the new [www.angusahead.com](http://www.angusahead.com) website as a fully interactive and searchable database, and offline in a paper brochure. Angus Ahead Champion David Adams of Glamis Castle is chair of the group and membership includes other representatives from the Angus Ahead Champions Committee, Local Area Partnerships and Angus Council Cultural Services.

♦ **Pictavia** – Visitor figures for June were 984 and for July 952, compared with 639 and 645 respectively last year. This represents a 54% increase in the June figure and a 44% increase in the July figure, over last year’s. In co-operation with the Pictish Arts Society, an exhibition of Pictish-inspired felt wall-hangings by artist Alison Johnston has been mounted in the display/education area at Pictavia. The exhibition opened on Friday 30 July, gaining considerable coverage in the regional media, and runs until the end of October. A minibus tour visiting a number of sites and museums where Pictish stones may be found has been arranged for Saturday 21 August and advertised in the “Brechin Advertiser.” If this is successful, other tours may be arranged in the future. The Pictavia Support Assistant (Seasonal) will accompany the tour. Pictavia has been awarded the status of a "4 Star" Visitor Attraction by VisitScotland. This reflects very well on the efforts of Angus Council and Angus & Dundee Tourist Board staff. The Grading Information Report comments: "Pictavia has achieved a comfortable 4 Star award." It also complements the smart appearance of staff and the excellent standard of cleanliness."

♦ **European Structural Funds 2000-2006** - A total of 59 projects have been submitted by Angus Council since January 2000 (the first rounds of applications for ESF and ERDF projects were opened for submission in September 2000 and February 2001 respectively). The total amount approved to date amounts to £3,307,332. A further 22 projects have received grant funding with Angus Council providing match funding. This brings the total amount approved in Angus to date to £5,264,469.

➢ **External Funding Liaison** - meetings have been held with/re: Community Education; Caledonian Railway and Montrose Air Station Museum; Roads Department; AAVO; Saltire Leisure Centre; Community Planning; Regenerate! North Arbroath; Arbroath Pageant Society; Angus Sitter Service; Edzell Scotland in Bloom Committee; Life Programme Information Day; Big Lottery Consultation Day; North Sea Commission General Assembly; Direct Grants Global Grants Consultation, Charity Law Reform Consultation; Lloyds TSB Evaluation Service Consultation; ESEC Project Development, Structural Funds and Governance Working Groups; Rural
Tayside and Cairngorms Leader + Local Action Groups; Scottish Lottery Officers Group Big Lottery Consultation.

♦ **East of Scotland Objective 2 Programme 2000-2006**

- An application has been approved for the Community Enterprise Workspace Pilot at Dens Road, Arbroath.

♦ **Scottish Objective 3 Programme 2000 – 2006**

- Applications have been approved for Making Connections and Angus Rural Committee Pilot (Education).

♦ **Rural Tayside LEADER + Programme 2000-2006** - Applications have been approved for:

  - Forfar Food Fest (£ 8,082)
  - Brechin Contact Centre Initiative Phase II (£10,000)
  - Media Access Fund Phase II (£23,500)
  - Montrose Harbour Study (£20,000)
  - Brechin Employability Study (£ 2,500)
  - Angus Glens Field and Visitor Centre Study (£10,000)
  - Forfar Community Environmental Path Network (£20,494)
  - **Total** £94,576

♦ **Angus Funding News** – the 1st edition of Angus Funding News, a four-page e-bulletin of external funding opportunities for council staff, voluntary and community groups has been produced and is appended to this report. It is intended that the bulletin will be produced on a monthly basis.

♦ **External Funding Events** – A Joint Open Day between the Cairngorms and Rural Tayside Leader + groups was held at Angus Digital Media Centre. Initial meetings have been held to make preparations for the National Lottery 10th Anniversary celebrations in Angus, on 6 November 2004.

♦ **Angus Portal** - C(2) Software of Dundee, in collaboration with Sunsol of Inverkeillor, have been awarded the contract to implement the Angus Portal website, www.angusahead.com, and rapid progress is now being made on its development. A series of scoping meetings has been held with the Contractors and interested Council departments to finalise the operational requirements for the site and to allow a functional specification to be compiled. The project is on target for completion and launch in November 2004.

♦ **Carnoustie Country Classic** - Representatives of the four golf links management committees involved in the Carnoustie Country Classic (Carnoustie, Montrose, Panmure and Monifieth) have agreed to support self-financing proposals for the expansion and development of the 2005 tournament. There will be a programme of evening and social activities, events for non-golfing partners, and accommodation included in the package prices. Marketing of the event has started and an encouraging number of enquiries and bookings has already been received.
♦ **Carnoustie Country** – The Economic Development Manager gave a presentation to members of the Carnoustie Business Association on the benefits to local hoteliers of jointly promoting products e.g. The Dream Ticket and Golf Pass. This has resulted in a wider promotion to the local business community, jointly with the CBA to promote the advantages and benefits for local businesses.

♦ **Angus Digital Media Centre** - ADMC was visited by Prince Philip as part of the Royal Visit to Angus in July. Following a short presentation by the Marketing & Special Projects Manager he spent over 35 minutes touring the centre and talking to students and school children about their projects. Excellent press coverage of the visit was provided via the Brechin Advertiser.

ADMC has secured a £500,000 contract from the Scottish Executive under the Future Learning and Training (FLAT) programme to support a 4-year Moving Image Education pilot project. This is the largest FLAT contract issued to date by the Scottish Executive. The initiative is a first in Scotland and the UK and is supported by Scottish Screen and the British Film Institute. The pilot will be based on Brechin High School and cluster primary schools which will have specialist equipment installed as part of the contract. A project coordinator to be based at ADMC has already been appointed and the initiative was launched on the 25th August by the Minister of Education, Mr Peter Peacock. If the pilot proves successful the Scottish Executive will seek to roll out the initiative across Scotland.

♦ **Business Gateway Angus** – The Business Gateway Marketing Officer has been working on the following initiatives:

- Business Breakfast with deputy first minister Jim Wallace - his views on broadband coverage were particularly relevant.
- Business Breakfast - BGA held a Business Breakfast at Angus College in partnership with the college and the Chamber of Commerce. Feedback suggests this was very successful.
- Apodo Launch – a new system of learning and development aimed at encouraging entrepreneurial thinking in schools.
- Press - Press coverage of the cheque presentation from money raised at Angus Business Week to Caring for Kids and the Maggie’s Centre.

♦ **CoSLA Awards of Excellence** - The EDU in partnership with the education department has received a bronze award from the CoSLA awards of excellence programme. This award is for the Jaguar F1 in schools project, which received recognition for its innovative use of technology.

♦ **Determined to Succeed** - 2,500 businesses across Angus will now have received their invitations to seven of the cluster events planned across Angus in September. The initiative aims to bring enterprise and education closer together by offering secondary and primary pupils across Angus a taste of the world of work and is a partnership project lead by Angus Council, Careers Scotland, Scottish Business in the Community and the Chamber of Commerce.
♦ Brechin Employability Study - Funded by Leader+ consultants have now been appointed to undertake a study in the Brechin area to look at the needs of those removed from the labour market and to identify an action plan to address their needs.

♦ Brechin Contact Centre Initiative Phase 2 - Following the success of the original initiative in developing a database of individuals interested in contact centre employment, Leader+ funding has been secured to enable phase 2 of the project to proceed. This phase will concentrate on bringing ‘people and property’ together in a series of events and special promotional techniques. The areas’ inward investment potential will receive promotion as a result, ensuring that those who are currently on the database are offered as many opportunities for contact centre employment as possible.

♦ Arbroath Seafront Spectacular – This event was held on Saturday 3 July, with the main attractions of The Red Arrows, an RAF Tornado display and a Mini stunt driving display. Despite the bad weather the event attracted approximately 10,000 visitors. The Economic Development Unit supported this event financially, with a grant of £10,000 and through the provision of advice and expertise.

♦ Viking Raid – This event took place on Saturday 7 August in Arbroath and consisted of two main attractions, the Viking encampment during the day at Beacon Green and the torchlight procession and burning of the longship at Victoria Park in the evening. The event went well and received excellent press coverage. The event was supported by the Economic Development Unit through a grant of £1,200 for marketing. The design and production of event flyers, posters, radio ads and a press ad were all undertaken by the Economic Development Unit.

♦ Arbroath SeaFest 2004 - The Arbroath Seafest was held on Sat 14 and Sun 15 August with a wider range of attractions than ever. Angus Council supported the event through a grant of £5,000. This year the event attracted approximately 25,000 visitors and was run by the consultancy firm Trigger Events on behalf of the Arbroath SeaFest Company.

♦ African Drum Village - The African Drum Village was held at the Kirktown of Glenisla over the weekend 4 - 9 August 2004. Early indications show that some 200 people attended the event, 150 of whom came from outside Scotland. The majority of visitors to Angus were from elsewhere in Scotland and from England but they also came from such countries as Wales, Ireland, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland. There was BBC coverage of the event and trade in Glenisla was lively, with the hotel taking bookings for next year.

♦ Angus Glens Walking Festival (AGWF) 2004 - The second Angus Glens Walking Festival was held over a four-day period from Thursday 3 June until Sunday 6 June 2004. Once again, it achieved its prime objective of raising the profile of the Angus Glens as a holiday destination by attracting visitors and local walkers into the area. Anecdotal feedback throughout the Festival was again positive. The ADTB have reported that over the period of the festival there were 392 individual walkers, 61% as day visitors and 39% of whom stayed overnight. The estimated revenue from the event to the local economy from the visitors i.e. not including input associated with event organization, using standard multipliers
is £40,940 (£37,200 for AGWF 2003) which equates to sustaining just over one full-time job for a year. This sum does not take account of the goodwill towards Angus that the event created and the fact of return visits. The Blairgowrie and East Perthshire Walking Festival, to be held from 30 September to 3 October 2004, will include two walks in Angus.

♦ The Retreat, Glen Esk - Planning permission has been granted and the building warrant is now in place. Once the contractor has been chosen, a date can be set to start work (forecast for September 2004) for completion for Spring 2005.

♦ Montrose Harbour Study – The consultancy study for the Harbour (Article 8 of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 28 April 2004 refers) has been advertised seeking expressions of interest from consultants.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation made in this report.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Directors of Law and Administration and Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The summary of key highlights and achievements given in this report outlines the wide-ranging workload of the Economic Development Unit undertaken with the support of various other departments and external agencies.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

DV/MM/MM

4 August 2004

A B Watson OBE
Chief Executive