Abstract: This Report outlines the highlights and achievements of the Economic Development Unit for the period 15 October – 25 November 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 2 September – 14 October 2004.

3 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS – 2 SEPTEMBER – 14 OCTOBER 2004

♦ AngusProperty.com - In the period between 11 September and 10 November 2004, a total of 199 property searches have been processed by www.AngusProperty.com. This has resulted in 218 detailed particulars for individual properties being examined.

➢ 85% of the Council’s industrial/commercial units are occupied (84 units occupied, 15 vacant). 84.45% of total possible rental income currently being achieved.

➢ Contact Centre - Reference is made to Article 10 of the Infrastructure Services Committee on 29 April 2004 (Report 519/04) which records that the Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Economic Development Manager in consultation with the Chief Executive and Director of Finance to appoint a consultant for a contract centre marketing campaign. Blue Square Design & Advertising of Dundee have been selected to implement the marketing and promotional campaign of Angus properties to the Contact Centre industry. This follows a rigorous assessment of proposals received from 5 consultants from which Blue Square emerged as clear winners in terms of the creativity, completeness and overall value for money of their proposals. This campaign is part of a £26,000 project part funded by Leader+. Blue Square has been appointed to deliver part of the marketing campaign totalling the contract value of £21,000. Other funding partners SET have contributed £8,000, Angus Council £8,000 and a Leader+ grant was secured totalling £10,000 towards the total project costs.

♦ Angus Angling Initiative (AAI) - An open meeting is to be held at the Angus Digital Media Centre, Brechin on 22 November 2004. The aim of the meeting is to explore commercial opportunities for both Angus angling and accommodation providers and the associated angling businesses. The findings of the Coordinator’s study will be reported and participants will be able to hear more about AAI Action Plan. The Fishing in Angus Web-site - to be named FishEsks (Fishing in Angus) - will also be launched.

♦ BIG Idea Workshops - The first of two "BIG Idea Workshops" was held on 28 October at Lochside Lodge, Lintrathen. Participants chose to investigate
commercial opportunities, arising from the annual Angus Glens Walking Festival, that would benefit their businesses. They are now developing an Action Plan to take their ideas forward.

♦ **Tayside Organic Network** - On 24 September, Angus Council commissioned Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) (Euan Hart) to carry out the Angus survey of organic farmers and gauge their interest in forming an organic farming network for Tayside. The Perth and Kinross survey was undertaken earlier this year. A meeting for those consulted during the two surveys is to be held once the Angus survey is completed.

♦ **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 24 projects have received grant funding with Angus Council providing match funding. This brings the total amount approved in Angus to date to £5,404,432.

♦ **Structural Funds Draft Regulations 2007-2013**
Consultation meeting held with ESEC and Scottish Executive.

a Big Lottery Fund - Angus Council response to Young People’s Fund consultation submitted.

b Scottish Rural Partnership Fund - Attendance at Scottish Executive Consultation meeting

c Angus Council Corporate Grant Aid - Review of Guidance and Application Forms ongoing

♦ **External Funding Liaison**: meetings have been held with/re: Saltire Leisure Centre, Muirhead Funding Group, Volunteer Centre Angus, Heartie Thrang, Edzell Gardening Group, Education, Leisure Services and Trading Standards, Arbroath and Area Partnership, Regenerate! North Arbroath, Rural Tayside Leader + LAG, ESEC Policy Board, Joint Objective 2 & 3 Conference on Horizontal Themes, Scottish Lottery Officers Group, ESEC Project Development Working Group.

❖ 20 additional queries dealt with via e-mail or telephone; 18 e-mail funding alert bulletins circulated.

♦ **Angus Funding News**: 2nd edition of monthly funding newsletter posted on Council Intranet and Internet and issued to 129 individuals/community groups, elected members and community councils.

♦ **China** - Provost Middleton welcomed an official trade delegation led by the Mayor of Yantai and seven senior officials from the Yantai Foreign Affairs Office and Yantai Municipal Governments to Angus on 14 - 16 October 2004. Building on the successful outcome of Angus Council’s recent trade mission to China in March, 2004, an educational agreement was drafted during the visit to facilitate mutual exchange visits between Angus educational establishments and Yantai schools. The prestigious delegation, who were also visiting seven other countries during two weeks, visited Glamis Castle, Angus College, Arbroath Abbey and an engineering company in Arbroath.
Tayscreen

- Much of the 120-minute ITV drama/documentary "Deceiving Hitler", broadcast on Sunday 24 October, was shot at the Barry Buddon army camp. TayScreen, part-funded by the Economic Development Unit, received a credit on-screen for assistance provided. (Item 24 refers).

- The Scottish Premiere of the film "Finding Neverland" about J M Barrie's inspiration and influences on writing Peter Pan was held at the Odeon Multiplex, Dundee on Tuesday 19 October 2004. Angus obtained "spin-off" publicity from this event associated with Scotland wide media coverage.

- A great deal of publicity about the Scottish Premiere was gained nationwide. Around 250 people attended the event, including the Provost of Angus and the Lord Provost of Dundee. Two of Barrie's living relatives, from Arbroath and Brechin, attended and Kirriemuir historian, Sandra Affleck gave a talk on Barrie before the film was shown. It was agreed with the National Trust for Scotland that Barrie's Birthplace would be specially opened the weekend after the Premiere, at a time of the year when it is normally closed. NTS staff were at the premiere, distributing flyers and with Peter Pan-related displays. There were 21 visitors on the Saturday (the average for a Saturday in September is 34) and 46 on the Sunday (the average for a Sunday in September is 23). The NTS report, "We also had great takings in admissions and sales, hugely up on the averages, and two couples who decided to take up membership with the NTS."

Angus Marketing Pilot – Update

- Further to Committee approval, the principal contract of the Angus Marketing Project, for the development and hosting of the Angus Web Portal, was awarded in July. A press release was recently issued to publicise the contract and work has progressed as follows:
  - An extensive project Scoping Phase has been completed
  - System Functional and Design Specifications have been developed and software development work has commenced
  - The Hosting infrastructure has been put in place

- Software development work is nearing completion and it is anticipated that the Portal Content Management System will be deployed in December. Thirteen Council staff have undergone training on the operation of the Content Management System, which will enable non-technical staff to create and publish web pages. Further to deployment of the system staff can begin to populate the Portal with content. The portal will be launched before the end of financial year 2004/2005, as part of an initial marketing campaign

- As reported to Committee and approved in item 9 of the minutes of the meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 4 March 2004, secondary contracts are required for services for both Content for the Portal and Marketing and these are also being progressed.

- Due to the urgency and specialist nature of the services required, contracts to supply and develop content have been awarded under Fin Regulations 16.1.3b(i) and (ii), as follows:
• Contract for Initial conceptual photography for the Angus Web Portal awarded to Sunsol (£4900)
• Contract for Initial copywriting for key Portal pages - tailored to Search Engine Optimisation requirements- awarded to Sunsol (£4500)
• Contract for Data Licensing from the Gazetteer for Scotland (£2900)

Procurement of marketing services to support the launch and initial marketing of the Angus Web Portal is shortly to be implemented in line with the tendering procedures approved by the Committee of 4 March 2004. A report outlining the marketing tender will be submitted to the Infrastructure Services Committee of 27 January 2004.

4 TRAINING

4.1 11 members of the Economic Development Unit staff have received training associated with the development of the Angus Portal. Senior staff within the unit participated in the responding to change seminar, in consultations on the Management Competency Framework and in training in ‘Managing Safely’.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

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

7 CONSULTATION

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

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 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

29 October 2004

A B Watson OBE
Chief Executive