REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Abstract: This Report outlines the highlights and achievements of the Economic Development Unit for the period 22 January 2004 – 4 March 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 22 January 2004 – 4 March 2004.

3 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 22 JANUARY 2004 – 4 MARCH 2004

- Property - 87% of the Council's industrial/commercial units are occupied (86 units occupied, 13 vacant). 87.95% of total possible rental income is currently being achieved.

- AngusProperty.com – From 22 January – 23 February, AngusProperty.com has processed a total of 71 property searches, with particulars for individual properties being viewed 63 times.

- Annual Business Survey Highlights - the Economic Development Unit are currently undertaking the Annual Business Survey. This will go out to over 2,600 businesses in Angus and will form the basis of the 2004 Angus Business Directory. In addition to the survey questionnaires, all businesses also received information on Fair Trade, a summary of the Angus Economic Development Strategy, and an update on the department’s property website, AngusProperty.com.

- European Structural Funds 2000-2006 - A total of 50 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 is £3,104,434. A further 18 projects have received grant funding with Angus Council providing match funding. This brings the total amount approved in Angus to date to £4,833,455.

- East of Scotland Objective 2 Programme 2000-2006
  - One application has been submitted for Round 9 deadline on 6 February 2004 – “Community Enterprise Workspace Pilot”.
  - The draft revised Arbroath Community Economic Development Plan is currently out for consultation and comment. This will be finalised for the second meeting of the Advisory Group on 2 April or at latest for the Programme Management Committee meeting on 30 April 2004.
A request has been made for additional funding to extend the Angus Glens Ranger Service project to the end of 2005. This was approved at the Programme Management Committee on 23 January 2004.

♦ **Rural Tayside Leader + Programme** – An application has been approved for Media Access Phase 1 project.

♦ **Tayside/Fife PESCA Programme** – An “On-the-Spot” Control Inspection visit was held on 17 February for the Arbroath Harbour Slipway Upgrading project.

♦ **Direct Grants** – A promotional event was held on 26 January 2004 at the Meffan, Forfar. 68 people attended from 55 organisations across Angus. Very good feedback was received and 27 of the 41 who returned an evaluation sheet said they would be encouraged to submit an application.

♦ **External Funding** - liaison meetings were held with a number of groups including the Café Project – Street Football, Normandy Veterans, Citizens Advice Bureau, Kirriemuir Town House Committee, Indoor Football Pitch proposal and the Community Planning team to discuss potential funding sources.

In addition the External Funding Manager and staff have attended meetings of the Scottish Lottery Officers Group – Benchmarking Group, Scottish Objective 3 Programme new Claims Process Seminar, Community Fund New Application Process training session, and ESEC Policy Board (Angus Council host).

♦ **External Funding applications** – the following projects have been approved where the External Funding Section have assisted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tots Time – Westmuir</td>
<td>£2,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clae Braes – Friockheim</td>
<td>Up to £12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Survey – Auchterhouse</td>
<td>£1,011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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♦ **Angus Ahead** - Angus Ahead is the area marketing campaign set up to promote the county locally, nationally and internationally. Activities being supported include the following:

- Angus Heartland Celebrations 28 July – 1 August. This celebrates the 125th anniversary of the establishment of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society in Newtyle by farmer Hugh Watson.
- Angus Council submitted four entries for the 2003 COSLA Excellence Awards. They were the Community Planning Measurement Framework from Policy & Performance; the Jaguar F1 Challenge Project from Economic Development; Angus Dialogue Youth from Community Education and Energy Regeneration for Landfill Gas from Environment & Consumer Protection
- Arbroath man Brian Wallace is taking part in the year long Round the World Challenge Boat Race from September.
- Carnoustie Girls Football Team is to represent Scotland in Gothia, Sweden in the World Youth Cup in July.
- Angus Sports Awards 2003 are taking place on 16 March in the Reid Hall, Forfar. Radio Tay will broadcast the event and the nomination process closed on 20 February.
Angus Ahead is sponsoring Scottish Enterprise Tayside’s Business Awards 2004 in Dundee on 26 March. The Business (RR Spink & Sons LTD) and International (Glamis Castle) winners of the Ambassador Awards have been shortlisted as two of the Angus finalists.

Angus Ahead has produced a summary leaflet of the Angus Economic Development Strategy and mailed it out to 2,600 businesses with reply postcard to generate interest in key actions for growth.

Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce & Industry Construction Week 9 – 14 Feb. Angus Ahead sponsorship of evening seminar on A92 dualling on 9 February at Carnoustie Hotel.

Tartan Week 3 April – 10 April 2004. Angus Ahead has devised a weeklong programme in partnership with local community and business organisations.

Calendar of Events – an action from Champions Committee to produce a printed key events diary to be mailed to all accommodation providers in Tayside. This will be live in March.

 Expo 2004, Aberdeen – Angus Ahead/Pictavia will exhibit during the 2 day tourism exhibition on 21 – 22 April 2004.

Eastern Cairngorms Access Project – Initial discussions have taken place on incorporating Angus Ahead branding into signage and marketing material.

♦ North Sea Commission - The Marketing Manager attended a meeting of the North Sea Commission - Renewable Energy Sub-Group in Göteborg, Sweden, on 4 - 5 February. This provided valuable information on developments in renewable energy in other countries round the North Sea which will be useful in formulating a strategy for Angus.

♦ Angus Towns Promotion – A presentation was given to Montrose Community Council on Thursday 5 February regarding Angus Towns Promotion. Also, an evening of presentations for local businesses was arranged on behalf of the Forfar Business Initiative, on Monday 9th February at the Meffan, Forfar.

Meetings have also been held with the Arbroath Business Association who are planning to hold the "Angus Seafront Spectacular" at Arbroath on 3 July 2004 featuring a display by the Red Arrows Aerobatic team and fly over display by a Tornado F3. A separate report has been prepared for this agenda.

♦ Pictavia Winter Lecture – 29 people attended the lecture which took place on Friday 20 February at Pictavia. The speaker, Mark Hall, talked about, "Place, Purpose and Patronage: Early Medieval Sculptures in Strathearn and Strathmore".

♦ Montrose Harbour – Discussions are ongoing with the Harbour Executive and Board members regarding the need for investigation into market development opportunities. A report on this is likely to be brought to the next Committee meeting.

♦ Dundee & Angus Oil Venture Group – A special meeting of the Management Group was attended by the Development & External Funding Manager on 10 February 2004. An item relating to this meeting is included on the Committee agenda.
Angus Economic Development Partnership – A meeting of the partnership took place on 26 February. Presentations were given by Andy Robb of Scotland Business in the Community, Angus, on the formation and activity of this group and by Steve Carter of Scottish Enterprise Tayside updating the Partnership on the work of Tayside Economic Forum and the inter-relationships between the Forum and the Partnership.

Community Planning Seminars – Officers from the Economic Development Unit attended and contributed to the seminars held for Kirriemuir and the Glens and Brechin and Area during February.

Caledonian Railway Study – Interim Report – The interim findings of the study by external consultants look promising for the future development of this unique attraction. The outcomes are now being fed into a Final Report which will include findings and marketing strategies and a Business Plan. The study is jointly funded by Angus Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and the Leader+ Programme.

Media Access Angus (in conjunction with Angus Digital Media Centre) – This proposal is being developed to assist the voluntary sector, community groups and charities located within the Leader+ area of Angus, to access new media training and skills to promote the various groups’ activities. An awareness campaign would be followed by a one year pilot project of engagement and training at no direct cost to the Groups (more detail is presented in a separate Report to this Committee).

Transport Conference, Carnoustie – An international transport conference was hosted by Angus Transport Forum in Carnoustie on 19 February. This event was attended by officers from the Economic Development Unit.

Carnoustie Country – Preparations are underway to market the Dream Ticket, Carnoustie Classic Competition and a new Carnoustie Golf pass for the new season commencing 1 April 2004.

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 and are in agreement with the recommendation made in 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

9 February 2004

A B Watson OBE
Chief Executive