

## SCRUTINY – 28 AUGUST 2014

### ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

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#### REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (COMMUNITY DIRECTION)

**WARDS AFFECTED: All wards**

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#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on work undertaken over the last 12 months, including ongoing initiatives, in order to fulfill the aims of the Action Plan of the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2009 – 2014

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the Scrutiny Commission:

- (i) Notes and endorses the economic regeneration work undertaken and outcomes achieved
- (ii) Endorses the ongoing programme of work

#### **3. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 The following highlights the main areas of work undertaken to fulfill the aims and objectives of the Economic Regeneration Strategy's Action Plan, mainly through the work of the Regeneration team in partnership, but also via other services within the Council and through working with external partners.

##### **3.2 Strategic Objective 1**

***Develop a targeted approach to supporting businesses, which have the potential to establish, expand and relocate within the borough:***

- In collaboration with North Warwickshire Borough Council work is progressing to submit a bid to the LEADER programme to benefit rural initiatives. LEADER (2015-2020), funded through the EU Rural Development Programme, is business focused and includes:
  - Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification
  - Support for increasing farm productivity
  - Support for rural tourism
  - Support for increasing forestry productivity
  - Provision of rural services
  - Support for cultural and heritage activity

Potentially there is £1.6 million available per Local Action Group area across the two boroughs. The Local Development Strategy will be submitted on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

- The Cross-border Employment & Skills Partnership has developed its three Task & Finish Groups, one to match skills to jobs, one to ensure work readiness and the other to look at physical accessibility to jobs and training. In terms of the latter initially a mapping exercise has been undertaken to establish what facilities currently exist within the cross-border area. In addition the partnership has linked with Leicester & Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) and Job Centre Plus (who are providing the funding) to research access to employment. The aim of this research project is to explore transport issues and potential site-specific solutions around the provision of employment vacancies and the location of job seekers within Leicestershire County; Leicester City; Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough and North Warwickshire Borough. Transport & Travel Research Ltd are undertaking the research and will report back in August 2014
- The Cross-border Delivery Partnership (comprising the Boroughs of Hinckley & Bosworth, North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth) has procured £7,000 towards the Local Government Association Economic Advisors Programme. The key principal behind the scheme is to provide local authorities with access to high quality advice and expertise in order that they can take forward their own plans for economic growth, operating in an advisory capacity to provide expertise, know how, contacts and mentoring
- Working in partnership in respect to buildings at 23 Wood Street in Hinckley to unlock the heritage potential of the buildings, The project is a partnership between the current site owners, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and The School of Ballet Theatre (Ballet Homes) and initially we are seeking financial support through Heritage Lottery funding. The project focuses on accommodating creative industry workspace within the mid-20th century building, using the printing business as anchor tenants for the project. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century building would make suitable accommodation for the ballet school including a dance floor, studio and classrooms. The cleared element of the site offers the opportunity for a new building to provide ballet school student accommodation.
- Working with MIRA and the A5 Strategy Partnership to promote A5 road improvements through the organisation of a cross-region business network event held at MIRA on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2013. Facilitation of meetings such as RGF Board meetings, Crescent Board meetings
- An 'Info2Grow' free business event supported by the Council; Stewart, Fletcher & Barratt; Hinckley Business Improvement District; Lloyds TSB; LDJ Solicitors and the Federation of Small Businesses was held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014. It was the first external event held in the DeMontfort suite at The Hub. Experienced business advisors provided advice and tips on running a successful business with information on finance, achieving goals, minimising business risk and business growth. Over forty people attended the event and feedback was very good and businesses were particularly impressed with the venue.
- A second 'Info2Grow' well attended business event was held again at the Hub on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014. The title of the event was 'Maximising Local Opportunities'. A presentation was delivered by council officers in respect to major developments in the borough and the opportunities for local businesses explained. A presentation was also given by Hinckley BID to outline its achievements and ongoing projects.
- The Economic Initiatives budget has paid a sponsorship towards the Hinckley BID Business Centre and contributed to the shop front grant improvement initiative

- Hinckley Business Improvement District, Business forums and associations have been supported throughout the year.
- In partnership, investigating sustainable means of transporting shoppers around Hinckley town centre
- Helped in the facilitation of Hinckley Business Association quarterly evening business events.

#### ***Summary of Outcomes Achieved***

- In partnership with North Warwickshire Borough Council established a robust LEADER bid that has the potential to enable a grant of £1.6million for rural projects across the two boroughs
- Enabled a research project to take place that is looking in detail at the problems that local people face with respect to journeys to work and which will establish solutions to problems identified
- When Heritage Lottery Fund released its Heritage Enterprise Fund a meeting was immediately set up to look at the potential for obtaining funding to unlock the enterprise potential of heritage buildings in Hinckley
- Worked with staff from the Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Clearing House to enable a business support and grant programme to be available to advanced manufacturing companies in Hinckley & Bosworth
- Continued strong partnership working to include the Cross Border Partnership, MIRA, the A5 Strategy Partnership, Hinckley BID
- Two 'info2Grow' business events held at the Hub and quarterly Hinckley Business Association events supported

### **3.3 Strategic Objective 2**

***Develop an effective portfolio of sites and premises to meet the demands of business:***

- Promotion of the Investor Prospectus sites via the website and brochures sent to events such as MIPIM and a new prospectus underway
- Facilitation of The Crescent (Bus Station site) meetings
- Dealing with commercial land and property enquiries.

#### ***Summary of Outcomes Achieved***

- A new image Investor Prospectus is almost completed and will be launched in the autumn
- The facilitation of productive quarterly Crescent meetings and the scheme is on schedule

### **3.4 Strategic Objective 3**

***To increase the vitality and viability of the network of centres across the borough:***

- Representing the council at a series of county wide Broadband meetings in order to ensure a better funding package to extend fibre broadband coverage within Hinckley & Bosworth.
- Promotion of rural initiatives by working in partnership with the County Council and attendance at the Rural Workshop on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013.
- Promotion of the Commercial Tailored Housing Solutions scheme designed specifically to bring empty properties over commercial units in Hinckley town centre back into use as residential units.

- Earl Shilton has been selected as one of four nation-wide pilots for place branding support as part of the Association of Town & City Management's Town Teams Programme and they will be reporting back at the end of the year .
- Involvement with the Barclays event 'I Buy Local' in Hinckley.

#### ***Summary of Outcomes Achieved***

- **The Council's contribution of £58,820 to extend fibre broadband coverage within the borough means that improved superfast broadband provision is currently being rolled out and started with Fenny Drayton in June 2014**
- **The Place Branding project in Earl Shilton is progressing well and will help to embed the new residents moving into the Sustainable Urban Extension into the community to the economic benefit of the town**

#### **3.5 Strategic Objective 4**

***To ensure the benefits of economic growth are shared by all communities across the borough:***

- Have worked with Construction Futures to draw up a document which will ensure local people are given the best opportunity in respect to construction jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships at the Crescent development. In addition work is being undertaken in respect to jobs that will arise from the Sainsbury's and Cineworld developments.
- Working in partnership to ensure local people will benefit from construction jobs at the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension.
- Two well received Jobs Fairs have been held in partnership with Leicestershire County Council, Job Centre Plus and North Warwickshire & Hinckley College, one at the George Ward Centre in Barwell on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and the other at Atkins on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
- Since Job Centre Plus moved into the Hub there have been more frequent meetings with its officers particularly in relation to the facilitation of the Jobs Fairs.

#### ***Summary of Outcomes Achieved***

**In respect to the Barwell Jobs Fair:**

- **168 people attended the event**
- **34 stands including MIRA, Kingly Care Partnership, and Westminster Homecare, offering a range of career opportunities in addition to the National Apprenticeship Service, Skills for Enterprise and other agencies offering training.**
- **A number of volunteering opportunities were available**
- **A Job Club whereby individuals could obtain support in seeking jobs online, putting together a CV and other guidance**
- **Business seminars in respect to apprenticeships and mentoring, transport (Wheels to Work) and broadband solutions, Regional Growth Funding and the Better Business for All programme.**

**In respect to the Atkins Jobs Fair:**

- **340 people attended**
- **40 exhibitors including businesses and training providers.**

- Promoted over 1000 jobs, 163 training places, 507 apprenticeships and 378 volunteering opportunities mainly in the Construction and Engineering Sector
- 42 attendees were employed and seeking a new job or skills, 30 attendees were interested in volunteering and 38 were looking for skills.
- Already 2 people who attended this event have been taken on as apprentices at Caterpillar and 3 others are to attend assessment in one after their 'A levels'. In addition Cineworld have compiled a list of people who are interested in work at its site and many people received information from DPD.

### 3.6 Strategic Objective 5

*To raise the level of skills and knowledge within the borough's business and resident populations:*

- LLEP received £100K from government to produce a Skills Plan for MIRA Enterprise Zone which also looked at the skills of the wider area. Consultants HOST produced the plan which was completed in April 2013. Work is ongoing to fulfill the actions outlined in this document.
- Working with North Warwickshire & Hinckley College and other providers in the promotion of apprenticeships and traineeships
- Attendance at the County Council Employment & Skills Board and the National Skills Show at the NEC

#### **Summary of Outcomes Achieved**

- The new MIRA Training Centre supported
- The Twycross Zoo Life Science Academy project is now on a priority list for further review by LLEP

### 3.7 Strategic Objective 6

*To widely promote the economic, social and environmental opportunities and assets available in the borough:*

- In October 2013 a Local Economic Plan for Hinckley & Bosworth was submitted to LLEP to inform and feed into its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2014-2020, which was submitted to government in March 2014
- A proforma of projects was submitted to LLEP in respect to its SEP Capital Infrastructure Projects for consideration for its 2015/16 and ongoing annual projects' programme
- Arranged a visit to the borough by a Shanghai delegation

#### **Summary of Outcomes Achieved**

- The Local Economic Plan for Hinckley & Bosworth is in place and will be used to pursue funding through LLEP especially via its Strategic Economic Plan and its EU Strategic Investment Plan

## **4 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

- 4.1 Much of the work outlined above is ongoing but new work and work to be highlighted includes:

- The update of the Hinckley Investor Prospectus to be finalised and re-launched and to establish new links and relationships with potential developers and inward investors.
- The Economic Regeneration Strategy 2015 – 2020 to be finalised by the end of December 2014.
- Pursuing funding opportunities for regeneration projects particularly through LLEP's national and European funding opportunities and ongoing work with Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Enterprise scheme, a programme for bringing back derelict historic industrial buildings into economic use.
- A Masterplan for the 'Cultural Quarter' including sites at the junction of Hollycroft, Trinity Lane and Upper and Lower Bond Street
- Cross Border Delivery Partnership work and in particular the results of the Economic Advisors Programme to be assessed once they are finalised in June
- The work of the Cross Border Employment & Skills Partnership's Task and Finish groups to be accelerated especially in terms of the Local Apprentice Training Agency, the work of the 'Access to Employment' study to be assessed and carried forward once the study is completed in summer 2014 and in particular potential links with MIRA's sustainable transport solutions established
- The content and style of an online business directory is being explored.
- Working in partnership another jobs fair is to be held on 25 September 2014 at Hinckley Leisure Centre, particularly referencing jobs from current development sites.
- Two business seminars in September through working with Hinckley Business Association (23<sup>rd</sup>) focusing on regeneration and the InfotoGrow partnership (10<sup>th</sup>).to focus on funding regimes.

#### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [ SE ]

None arising directly from this report. However any future individual initiatives as stated in paragraph 4 of this report (future work programme) may have financial implications and these will need to be reported at the appropriate time in line with the Council's financial regulations

#### 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS ( EH )

None raised directly by this report as it is just for noting, however the legal implications for individual projects will be considered as they progress.

#### 7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The report has synergy with the Corporate Plan's aim of 'Creating a vibrant place to live and work' and the priority within this to 'sustain economic growth'.

#### 8. CONSULTATION

Further consultations on specific projects will take place at the appropriate time in project development.

#### 9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risks associated with the projects described in this update report are assessed on a project by project basis and dealt with accordingly

10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

A number of the projects have benefited rural communities in the borough.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications: None
- Environmental implications: None
- ICT implications: None
- Asset Management implications: None
- Human Resources implications: None
- Planning Implications: None
- Voluntary Sector: None

Background papers:None

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