

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 15 DECEMBER 2017

Statement from: Councillor C J Davie, Executive Councillor for Economy and Place

Members will be aware that I led a trade delegation to Hunan Province, China, in early October. I was accompanied by specialists in advanced manufacturing and in agri-food technology. Our visit to China was very promising. We reinforced the connections that both universities in Lincoln have made with Chinese counterparts, and we expect that this will lead to joint international courses which will help to diversify both organisations' income bases. We also met investors who are serious about making financial investments in the Lincolnshire economy, and helped Lincolnshire businesses make direct connections with Chinese manufacturers who need the type of components that are made in our county. Several practical follow-up meetings are now taking place. I would like to thank the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for their grant which made the visit possible in the first place. Late October was Lincolnshire business week. A number of events were held which showcased the best of our local businesses.

The Lincolnshire Business Awards had more than a dozen categories, so I won't list all of the winners, but it is clear that we have a lot of strong and innovative businesses from across the whole county. Congratulations to all of the winners.

LCC and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP held an investment dinner in London in October as part of a national investor promotion event. The Dinner was sponsored by Lincolnshire business intermediaries who used it as a platform to meet important national investors who might want to invest in our county. We had 70 attendees at the event this year, which shows a strong level of interest in commercial and housing developments in the county. Several leads are now actively being followed up. We also expect that some attendees at the Dinner will also join the LEP's presence at the international MIPIM investor event in March 2018. It is important that we are well represented by businesses at events like these in order to try and secure further investment in the county.

The LEP held its annual 'Business Live' conference during Lincolnshire Business week. This year's event had around 300 attendees, and there was a particular focus on robotics and how they can be used to improve business productivity. Three important products were launched at Business Live too – the Marketing Lincolnshire promotional toolkit that we considered at our previous scrutiny committee meeting; the World of Work website which tells young people and their parents about the type of careers that are available in Lincolnshire; and Team Lincolnshire which is a membership scheme that will help us to promote the county much better by mobilising the voice of the private sector. LCC has provided substantial support to the LEP in creating these products and I hope that all members of the council will be able to help to promote them.

In early November we took messages to Westminster about the importance of investment in the county's utility infrastructure. Our work has shown that that we need to work closely with utility providers so that they actively support plans for growth in the county. That is something that we will prioritise in the future. Dr Caroline Johnson MP kindly hosted meetings for us with several of the county's MPs and with senior government officials when we were in Westminster. The

Government has recently announced the Modern Industrial Strategy and the economic development measures in the Chancellor's autumn budget statement all demonstrate that the importance of utility provision for economic growth is becoming well understood at all levels.

Looking ahead, December will see practical completion of the Peppermint Junction road improvement scheme in Holbeach. These two new roundabouts on the northwest edge of Holbeach will unlock the development of the Peppermint Park Food Enterprise Zone as well as land earmarked for the provision of 650 new dwellings. These improvements will also bring about immediate safety improvements and assist traffic flow on the A17 arterial route serving the county. This is a good example of how my portfolio, and that of my colleague Councillor Richard Davies, are complimentary and can jointly promote growth. Lincolnshire's Coastal Highway is a similar scheme and we are now working collaboratively across our portfolios to drive forward this priority project for the Council by assisting with demonstrating the economic benefits of that scheme.

Finally, in previous statements I have mentioned the work that we have done to prepare a strong case for hotel operators to invest in Lincolnshire. We are now actively pursuing several leads with hotel operators that we have generated through our proactive approach to marketing the area.

Lincolnshire continues to work hard in keeping its profile high. In June, in an online national poll of over 10k voters, Lincoln Castle was voted the UK's most favourite castle. Five months later saw Lincoln Cathedral voted the country's favourite in a Twitter poll called the Cathedral World Cup in which more than 27k voted. It says to me how passionately Lincolnshire people support their county.

2018 sees the 950th anniversary of the building of Lincoln Castle. I shall be working closely with Cllr Worth to promote this anniversary. Playing host to the Domesday Book at Lincoln Castle this year has shown us how to successfully manage large numbers of visitors. The other very important anniversary is the RAF's 100th which will see the opening of the International Bomber Command Centre and a number of other exhibitions; Lincolnshire has strong RAF connections from the very beginning and right up to the present day.

Lincolnshire has been successful in a number of submissions to the Discover England Fund. Well done to Visit Lincoln for being one of 12 historic cities which have secured a £1 million investment from the Fund for a new project to encourage more US visitors to explore regional England. The money will be spent on bringing history to life by telling stories via enhanced augmented reality and will feature itineraries that link the cities by rail, making it easy to plan and book a multi-destination trip. In a further successful submission, Lincolnshire will collaborate with 13 destinations to develop tourism products in the lead up to 2020, the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower's historic voyage to the New World.

As part of our drive to continue to expand the Lincolnshire Tourism economy, plans are being developed to further exploit the visitor potential of the Lincolnshire Coastal Country Park. A plan of improvements to be implemented over the short, medium and longer term has been developed. Amongst the initiatives in this programme are proposals to improve car parking in Anderby Creek and create a broader range of

visitor facilities at Huttoft Terrace. We hope to begin to unveil some of these improvements during 2018

The construction of the new North Sea Observatory at Chapel St Leonards started on site in early 2016. The scheme was initially delayed by the discovery of buried sea defences and Second World War bombs but is now nearing completion. The huge sea facing windows are about to be installed and the building should be completed by the end of February 2018. The building will open in April 2018 and contain a café, an artspace, a lookout for the Coastwatch organisation and a range of interpretation and information about the Coastal Country Park. The project has been funded by Lincolnshire County Council, Arts Council England and the Coastal Communities Fund.

Following a series of stakeholder consultations, including members and officers from the Council, the Environment Agency is expected to begin public consultation on future approaches to manage the coast from Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point in January 2018. This programme is led by the Environment Agency, and will put forward a number of possible options for coastal management to succeed the current Lincshore programme which concludes in March 2021. LCC will be working closely with the Agency to support and influence this initiative.

Work continues with Anglian Water to progress the Water Resources East Initiative, which is exploring a number of potential locations for large scale infrastructure to secure the public water supply into the future. Implementation of this initiative will also provide significant opportunities for additional benefits in terms of waterways networks, flood risk management, water supply security for communities and businesses, and capacity to accommodate the necessary levels of economic and housing growth. A decision on the location of the infrastructure is expected imminently, and officers have been working closely with Anglian Water to develop proposals for this initiative in Lincolnshire.

A review of the current Carbon Management Plan shows that the authority is on target to meet its carbon emission commitment as the plan nears completion. Work is now commencing on developing a third carbon management plan for the authority.

In April 2013 Lincolnshire County Council adopted its second Carbon Management Plan with a target to reduce emissions by 22% from its 2011/12 baseline of 83,006 tonnes of CO₂. This equates to savings of 18,261 tonnes of CO₂ and £2 million annually.

We continue to work with our partners to reduce local flood risk to the residents of Lincolnshire in a cost-effective way. As an example of the innovative way we work to achieve this, in what is believed to be a national first, Lincolnshire Lead Local Flood Authority has recently taken delivery of two mobile pumps for deployment by Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue to assist in the emergency response to flooding and increase the resilience of communities.

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