

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 13 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**Statement from: Councillor C J Davie, Executive Councillor for  
Economic Development, Environment, Planning, Tourism**

### **Greater Lincolnshire LEP**

The Council's relationship with the GLLEP continues to develop. Our officers have been commissioned by our LEP to develop a Growth Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire. This has involved undertaking primary research into the barriers to prosperity that exist in the county through detailed visits to 100 of the county's key businesses. To support this work, I myself have held discussions with each of Lincolnshire's City, Borough and District Councils to ensure that we understand each other's priorities and to develop a shared list of future economic regeneration schemes which, when implemented, will have long lasting economic benefits for the people of Lincolnshire.

### **Progress on Key Development Schemes**

In addition to looking forward to what needs to be done next, we continue to implement our current programme of works. Whilst officers in the Highways Department have progressed Compulsory Purchase and Traffic Regulation orders for the Lincoln East West Link, the Economic Regeneration Team have provided support by negotiating terms for the purchase of 80% of the land and properties required. Projects partnerships with the private sector are also being developed which will help ensure that the East West link is not only delivered as a road but also as a thriving business corridor.

### **Nurturing a Fragile Recovery and Promoting Growth**

Elsewhere, we may be beginning to see the shoots of economic recovery. House building has started within Grantham's Poplar Farm urban extension, enquiries for employment land are resurfacing and we are starting to receive an encouraging increase in inward investment enquiries. Further evidence of a fragile improvement in the economy can also be taken from our quarterly performance indicators where we have already met our annual jobs created target.

As well as the growth I have just described, it was very good to see the results of a recent survey showing that tourism in Lincolnshire grew significantly last year.

However, the picture is not the same across the county. I was disappointed to hear the news that Glisten in Skegness are planning to relocate outside the county. My officers and I will do all we can to convince Glisten to stay on the site. If this is not possible, we will assist all those affected and help to support them into new employment opportunities.

Pushing ahead with the Growth Strategy and promoting Lincolnshire as a good place for business and investment will be key in the months ahead.

### **Building on Successful Economic Development Initiatives**

My colleague, Cllr Davies, is leading work on putting a superfast broadband infrastructure in place across the county. It is vital that businesses have the skills

and abilities to make the most of this network. In order to help with that, we have recently secured £2.1 million of European funding to provide twelve industrial estates in Lincolnshire with superfast broadband. These are areas that would not have been upgraded by BT in the forthcoming onlincolnshire project. Over one hundred businesses will also be able to receive business support. We have recently facilitated a partnership between AB Internet and Fantasy Island at Ingoldmells as the first stage of making superfast broadband available to coastal communities that would not otherwise have it. Speeds of up to 50mbps are now available up to 100 times faster than previous access.

There are many opportunities for economic growth through the green economy, and our SUSTAIN Lincolnshire programme has just been awarded another £420,000 by the European Regional Development Fund to extend its work. Working in partnership with the University of Lincoln, the project will help at least 68 more businesses compete more effectively through reducing their running costs and their carbon footprint by cutting down waste.

At the last Council meeting I mentioned that the GLLEP has been awarded €113.5m of European grant for the 2014-2020 period. Some of that money will be available to help small businesses and manufacturing businesses to grow, and my officers are working with officials from the Government's Department for Business, Innovation, and Skills to make sure that we get the best possible deal for those businesses.

### **Salix Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund**

Lincolnshire County Council's Salix Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan fund was rated 9<sup>th</sup> best out of 146 public sector clients in the use of available funds for the financial year 2012/13.

Lincolnshire County Council committed £443,000 on energy saving projects via its revolving fund in the 12/13 financial year. These projects included:

- £295,000 upgrading traffic signals to LED
- £131,000 on lighting upgrades
- £17,000 on boiler room works

The above projects will save £90,000 and 455 tonnes of CO2 annually.

### **Coastal Car Parks**

Following concerns raised by the local community, the Council has acted to prevent overnight campers from staying the night in its Marsh Yard, Moggs Eye Coastal car park by erecting and locking a height barrier at the entrance to the site. Staff visited the site and erected warning notices in advance; however, some campers remained on site. Arrangements were made with the Police and our staff regarding temporarily unlocking the barrier to allow the campers to leave. All campers have now left the site.

A similar exercise will be carried out this month at Huttoft now that we have received consent from the Environment Agency to erect a height barrier. We are also hopeful that DCLG will soon confirm the byelaws that were approved at our Council meeting earlier this year.

### **Concerns over Fracking**

The County Council has recently created a section on our website where members of the public can find out more about fracking. It also explains what the County Council's role is in determining planning applications that relate to shale gas. The 'go live' date for the page is 12 September and I would encourage you all to take a look and visit [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/shale](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/shale)

I can confirm that with regard to fracking, there are no planning applications or enquiries regarding any sites in Lincolnshire at this time.

### **Lincolnshire Remembrance: Memories and Memorials**

The Lincolnshire Remembrance project, which is a community project involving recording of war memorials, a schools programme and celebration of WW1 events in 1914, has been successful in receiving 2 year funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant programme. The total cost is £146,000 of which the County Council is contributing £30,000. A project officer will be in place by October.

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