

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 16 SEPTEMBER 2011

Statement from: Councillor E J Poll, Executive Councillor for Economic Development

I am delighted to report that we have made significant progress on a number of major economic infrastructure projects since my last statement. In particular, I can report that we have commenced construction of the Teal Park development, which was marked by an official sod turning event late last month and which resulted in significant positive media coverage. Furthermore, public realm improvements to both Boston and Grantham Market Places are now at an advanced stage and already receiving favourable comments. Significant grant finance has been won to support the development of new workspace both in Lincoln and Alford and these developments are expected to commence construction later this financial year. Finally, we have secured £14.3 million to improve the speed of and number of connections to broadband in the County. Well done to all involved in these projects.

A 74 week contract to repair the south curtain wall of Lincoln Castle has started. This is the first element of the £18.9M Lincoln Castle Revealed project, and will mean that the area to the south of the prison building, including Lucy Tower, will be closed to the public during this period. Our bid to Heritage Lottery Fund is due in September with a decision in January 2012. If successful, a complete wall walk circuit with lift access, the opening of the male Victorian prison, a new home for Magna Carta, and new ticketing shop and café will be completed in 2014.

Lincs to the Past Website

Lincs to the Past had its official launch on Friday 13 May at The Collection. The new site builds on the success of the Cultural Collection's website and features more than 500,000 images, documenting thousands of years of county history, and is aimed at both dedicated researchers and casual browsers, with records, photographs and actual objects being shown as high-quality images, which are also available to buy. Since the launch the website has had over 1.3 million page views, or 42,900 visits from 18,900 visitors.

Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) Accreditation

Through a partnership with Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire (AHL) The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Visitor Centre has been recently awarded VAQAS accreditation, which offers enhanced national and international promotion on official websites Enjoy England and Visit Britain.

Library Design Business Award

Lincolnshire Libraries won the Bronze Award for Design Effectiveness at the Design Business Awards in London. Recommendations from the Fundamental Library Review together with the great opportunity to introduce RFID (Self Service) into libraries enabled library managers to work with Optima Design in creating a corporate design scheme and creative use of space. Optima Design, Lincoln, entered the work undertaken in our libraries for the Design Business Awards.