

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 18 MAY 2012

Statement from: Councillor E J Poll – Deputy Leader and Executive Councillor for Economic Development

The announcement on 27 March that the Lincoln Castle Revealed project had secured £12 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, enables us to begin the delivery phase ready for Magna Carta's 800th Anniversary in 2015. This grant rewards the vision and commitment that the council has shown, and my thanks go to all those involved.

Gainsborough Old Hall re-opened to the public on 6th April. Improvements include a new visitor route, PDA electronic guide, access to rooms not previously open to the public, new shop and café, and newly conserved wall paintings.

A grant of £335,000 from Arts Council England's Renaissance Programme and £200,000 of county council match funding will enable a refurbishment of the Museum of Lincolnshire Life over the next 12 months. The planned alterations include the museum's reception, gift shop and courtyard, the creation of a new outdoor play area and opening the museum's storage area to the public for the first time.

The improvements will also make the museum more energy efficient, reducing its utility bills and its carbon footprint. The museum will be updating its conservation and interpretation plans to make sure people get the most from their visit, and a new audience development plan will be created to attract even more visitors to the site.

In March the new community run Sutton Bridge Library was officially opened in the Curlew Centre. This site is run by volunteers and the Library Service supports the operation with book stock and advice. Discussions with five other communities about establishing similar community book deposits are taking place at Heckington, Holton le Clay, Chapel St Leonards, North Somercotes and Irby and Bratoft.

Turning to the Economy, we continue to support and help businesses to grow. The opportunities for green technologies within Lincolnshire was clearly demonstrated when we gathered together 150 attendees from business and communities at the Sustain Lincolnshire conference which focused on this sector.

We held a digital technologies day in Louth, with 40 business attendees who were able to view the latest technology including 3D scanning devices.

Teal Park - Works well underway and expect to be substantially complete during 2012. Siemens are now signed up and will take occupation in September 2012.

The Market Grantham Place refurbishments are now complete and preparation for the next phase of public realm is underway. We have also secured planning permission for the Station Approach, office lead, mixed use development.

These significant investments and projects give cause for confidence in the local economy, a positive message that has been confirmed by senior business people at some very successful recent events which have led to detailed follow up discussions on development and project plans with a number of private sector contacts.