

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 11 MAY 2018**

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

### **Triton Knoll**

On 5 September 2016, development consent was granted by the Secretary of State for the construction and operation of the cabling and substation infrastructure which will support the still-to-be-constructed Triton Knoll Offshore Wind Farm.

The Council continues to be involved in this project, working with local groups and landowners to protect the coastal environment. Progress is slow, but recent meetings have focused on archaeology, ecology, site investigation and the Community Investment Fund. Project communications are also being discussed, covering the various site investigations, sequencing plan and public exhibitions.

### **Viking Link**

The project to install a cable to link the UK National Grid system with Denmark has reached the planning submission stage. Applications have been submitted to the four Districts which the cable will pass through and for the convertor station at Bicker Fen. South Holland District Council and Boston Borough Council have already resolved to approve the applications for the development in their areas. East Lindsey are expected to resolve to approved their application in early May and North Kesteven will be considering their application on 15 May. No decision notices will be issued until all four authorities have reached a decision on all the applications.

Should all the applications be approved and the Secretary of State decides not to call the applications in for a public inquiry, it is anticipated that work could commence in summer 2019. However this is very much dependent on no planning challenges and the land ownership matters being satisfactorily resolved.

### **Peppermint Junction**

The Peppermint Junction road improvement scheme in Holbeach was completed on time in December 2017, with work comprising the completion of two new roundabouts on the A17 and A1151 respectively. These roundabouts have seen immediate safety improvements on the A17 in particular and also provide direct access to employment and residential development land on the northwest edge of Holbeach. Work is now well underway to bring forward these large development sites with the residential development land (with scope for circa 650 dwellings) now being marketed for sale and plans for a Food Enterprise Zone (FEZ) also being progressed.

The University of Lincoln will be an early "anchor" occupier on the FEZ and has submitted a reserved matters planning application to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The University will be occupying a 2,384 acre site which will comprise of a Food Centre of Excellence providing high quality post-graduate training and research facilities. The Council is working with utility providers to service the first phase of the FEZ and I am pleased to report that the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise

Partnership (GLLEP) has now agreed contracts with LCC to provide a £3million "Growth Deal" contribution toward the enabling infrastructure. All stakeholders involved in bringing forward the FEZ are working hard to allow work on the construction of the Centre of Excellence to begin in late 2018.

### **Enterprise Commissioning**

In my last report to Full Council I explained that I had led a trade delegation to Hunan province in China. Since then we have continued to pursue economic opportunities between businesses and education providers in Lincolnshire and in Hunan. In April, I hosted a visit of around 70 businesses and politicians from Hunan. The businesses met counterparts from Lincolnshire, and I am aware that several new trade opportunities are now being pursued.

We are putting Lincolnshire on the world stage. Working with GLLEP, we also continue to promote Lincolnshire to UK based developers.

We held a "Lincolnshire in London" event in early March where around 30 Lincolnshire developers brought their potential clients to our meeting, raising the number of attendees to close to 100. Feedback from the event indicates that a number of specific contracts have been signed as a direct result of our event.

We also hosted a Team Lincolnshire brunch at the annual MIPIM property event in France in March 2018. Our attendance at MIPIM was funded by 28 private developers and by the GLLEP. The Lincolnshire brunch was attended by 165 developers, which indicates the level of interest in our county.

In mid-April we held a successful business networking event at the Belton Horse Trials. The event was promoted by our group of business partners, Team Lincolnshire. Close to 100 representatives of businesses and developers attended, and they received information about economic opportunities from both the Leader of the Council, Cllr Hill, and from myself. Matthew Lee, Leader of South Kesteven District Council, also spoke and we had a motivational speech about recruiting young people delivered by the Council's own HR adviser. The purpose of this event was to put developers in touch with possible partners, and I know from feedback that several business opportunities are being pursued. One area we will be exploring as a direct outcome of the event relates to us making contact with business partners who might support the Council's own drive for Extra Care Housing.

Employers tell us that there are two major challenges that constrain their growth: a lack of utility infrastructure and a difficulty in accessing skilled workers.

We continue to lobby hard for improved utilities in Lincolnshire, but we do need to find our own local solutions too. My support councillor, Councillor Mark Storer, and I have explored opportunities around Smart grids, electric vehicle charging points, and we were very impressed when we visited Hemswell Cliff Business Park where they have implemented a local solution based on a neighbouring anaerobic digester facility.

We also continue to lead skills initiatives: 3500 trainees and 900 businesses have already benefitted from our Skills Support to the Workforce programme. We will shortly also be launching a Career Learning scheme which will help employed

people to gain training in order to develop their careers further. This is a pilot scheme funded by Government and we are one of just a handful of areas in the country who are receiving this funding.

Providing business premises continues to be a priority. The Council's economic portfolio of sites is currently healthily occupied. It is 90% full, which gives us a useful income whilst leaving us with some headroom to respond to economic opportunities or any shocks. I have taken the formal decision for us to move ahead with delivering the Holbeach Food Enterprise Zone, and currently we are preparing for the handover to the County Council of the North Sea Observatory at Chapel Point. This is a truly magnificent building and it will add to our overall plans to extend and diversify the tourism season.

Finally, councillors will be aware that important anniversaries such as RAF 100 and Mayflower 400 help us to attract visitors to the county. I was delighted to see the excellent publicity that the various RAF anniversary events have generated locally and, as a direct result of us working with partners across the country, we are now starting to see the arrival of new American visitors to Lincolnshire.

### **Flood Risk**

We continue to work with our partners to reduce local flood risk to the residents of Lincolnshire in a cost-effective way. For example, a £1.1m flood alleviation scheme has recently been completed at Stamp End in Lincoln to protect 119 properties from surface water flooding, and similar value-for-money schemes in other places are being developed and prepared for delivery this year. Looking ahead, so that we can do more, we will endeavour to attract a significant proportion of external funding to support the Council's own capital investment in schemes to protect the public from flooding.

A review of our existing partnership arrangements and their governance has been completed this month, in preparation for a complete updating of our joint flood risk and water management strategy. The partnership and strategy were ground-breaking, and have been considered national exemplars of good practice since they were first developed in 2010 and 2012 respectively. However, in order to remain effective, we need to ensure that more recent developments, such the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships, are fully reflected in our strategic and local approach to managing flood risk. The revision of the flood risk strategy will seek to achieve this, and we anticipate its completion by next April.

### **Coastal Development**

The Council continues to work closely with our partners to develop appropriate ways and robust approaches to managing our coastline. While the Environment Agency is the operating authority with responsibility for maintaining coastal defence structures, the importance of these to the successful growth of our economy means that the Council has a significant role to play in ensuring that they continue to provide the widest possible range of benefits as well as sustaining their basic function as flood risk management assets. Public consultation on the next stage of managing the east coast after 2021 has recently been completed, and we will be engaged in the next few months in refining proposals for the coast, initially for 2021-26, but also for the longer term future.

In a similar vein, the Council is supporting the development of a strategy for flood risk management on the Humber, which is important for Lincolnshire in terms of the potential impacts of estuary flooding on the upper reaches of the tidal Trent and Ancholme. A public consultation, similar to that for the east coast, is expected towards the end of this year.

## **Environment**

In early April Anglian Water published its draft proposals for managing public water supplies for the next five years, in the context of the need to explore how resilience of supply can be secured over future decades. The Council will be responding in detail to this consultation draft Water Resources Management Plan, and we see this as the first step in developing a robust vision, with our partners, for managing future water resources that meets the needs of communities and businesses in the long term.

Earlier this year, Defra published its twenty-five year plan for the environment. This policy document incorporates ideas previously articulated in a Government White Paper and in independent research, such as the Lawton report. It is the first that comprehensively links environmental management with community and economic growth, and provides a framework within which Lincolnshire can further develop its approach to this area. In particular, the concept of natural capital is a useful mechanism that we can apply to existing and emerging initiatives to ensure that we realise the full range of potential benefits to the health and well-being of local communities from successful environmental enhancements.

Work is now in progress to develop the Council's third Carbon Management Plan, building on the success in meeting the ambitious targets in the previous plan. This has begun with discussions in the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee, and officers are currently putting together a new plan for further examination later in the year.