

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 14 SEPTEMBER 2018**

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

### **ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY**

#### **Skills and Employment**

Helping people to gain employment and acquire the skills that employers need continues to be a significant priority to us. The issue is important both to my portfolio and to that of my colleague, Cllr Patricia Bradwell OBE. Working with our partners in the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) we are responsible for designing how £13m of Government funding for skills is spent. We have commissioned major schemes to provide careers information through the [www.theworldofwork.co.uk](http://www.theworldofwork.co.uk) website; we help unemployed people to gain the skills that they need in employment; and we help employers to train their staff in the direct skills that they need. I recently arranged for the colleges, training providers, and voluntary groups who deliver this work for us to meet lead economic development councillors from each of the District councils so that links can be strengthened with them.

We are also one of just four areas in the country who are running a pilot, funded by the Department for Employment, which is concerned with helping operational staff within sectors like tourism and food production to receive training to become supervisors and technical staff. Across all sectors, jobs are changing and more people will take on supervisory or technical roles therefore this pilot is particularly useful. It is also good that the Department for Education recognises Lincolnshire as a place to test out new initiatives.

#### **Attracting Investment**

On 24 July 2018 the Ministry of Defence announced its intention to close RAF Scampton. There is a risk that the closure of this base will have a negative impact on the local area and its economy; this is something that we will press the MoD to avoid at all costs. I will personally be very disappointed if the Red Arrows, such excellent ambassadors of our county and nation, leave Lincolnshire. Officers are in contact with the MoD and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation to understand what their more detailed intentions are.

Team Lincolnshire is a group of private sector intermediaries whose work is facilitated by LCC, championing the whole of Lincolnshire as a place to invest. In early July we held an informal Team Lincolnshire event, which gave businesses the opportunity to meet the key council officials that they need to know in order to make projects happen. Around 50 of our Team Lincolnshire partners attended.

We have also published a calendar of Team Lincolnshire events for the next two years. We will continue to fly the flag for Lincolnshire at the international and national MIPIM property events; and with a business lunch at the Belton Horse Trials. In addition, we will be holding 'Lincolnshire in Leeds' and 'Lincolnshire in Birmingham' events because these are cities where the next wave of potential investors in Lincolnshire are based. As well as these major events, we will also be

holding 'pop up' meetings in every district in the county. The 'pop up' meetings, which are partnerships between Team Lincolnshire and District councils, will be informal sessions where the various investment opportunities in each district are showcased to developers.

I celebrated the construction of the North Sea Observatory at Chapel St Leonards on 18 June with 70 invited guests and stakeholders. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, both in terms of the quality of the building and the range of facilities. It is a fabulous addition to our coast. High quality design and materials have been used and they show our ambition to extend the tourism season to full effect. The centre opened on 30 July 2018.

The Seascape Café at this location has had an incredibly strong start and is already building a repeat customer base. Over 5,000 visitors came through the doors in the first two weeks after it opened. In addition to the daytime offer, the café is organising a regular programme of themed 'pop up' events – the first (a tapas event) sold out almost immediately and proved to be a roaring success. The second, a Jamaican food night, is planned for mid-September. The art space in the building is also hosting its first exhibition, entitled '200Fish'. There are about 200 native species of fish in the North Sea and this exhibition records their existence through works of art. A large number of artists have been invited to pick a fish species and produce a painting, sculpture or other art form, and these have been displayed in the gallery. This will run for two weeks followed by a second exhibition as part of the Heritage Open Days project. There have been numerous enquiries for future exhibitions.

We took a conscious decision to focus our own tourism promotional work on PR – i.e. working with journalists to put stories and information about Lincolnshire in the travel press. The PR work continues to be successful, and we have had notable coverage of Lincolnshire's Mayflower heritage in the American travel media. The coverage is particularly welcome because it tells potential visitors about all of Lincolnshire and it encourages them to visit many of our county's excellent attractions. An American coach tour operator has started to make block bookings in one of our hotels for its UK Mayflower Tour.

Members will be aware that I have been leading an initiative to agree an economic partnership with Hunan province in China. This is an important stepping stone in giving Lincolnshire businesses access to a huge new trading market following Brexit. I am delighted to announce that senior Hunan officials are travelling to Lincolnshire in October 2018 to sign a formal economic twinning agreement. This will open up many opportunities for Lincolnshire businesses to export to China.

### **Growing Businesses**

The Lincolnshire Growth Hub continues to provide advice and support to businesses of all sizes in the county. It will have supported 650 businesses over the past 12 months. The Growth Hub arranges conferences and training events on subjects that are particularly important to business. For example, many businesses have told us that they need assistance in combatting the risk of cyber-crime. Therefore, on 15 June we held an event organised in partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Marc Jones, and attended by 80 businesses. We have recently submitted a funding bid to extend the Growth Hub's work for another two years, assisting a further 1000+ businesses.

We have been contacted by several businesses – spanning manufacturing, food production, and technology – that are looking for high quality employment sites in the county. Each of these potential investments is worth in the region of £15m and we are working closely with those businesses to identify the right site and to tell them why it is right for them to invest in Lincolnshire. Ultimately, each investment will be a business decision for that company, but we will be making sure that the Lincolnshire proposition is as strong as possible.

The Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee recently visited the Technology Hub at Mortons of Horncastle. The committee saw 3D printers and motion capture videos in action. The hubs (there is also one in Lincoln and one in Boston) provide small businesses with the opportunity to test new products and processes on a small scale, essentially de-risking the prototyping. The technology hubs, which were created as a result of our investment, have been very useful in growing a number of businesses from across the county. For example, a medium sized Lincolnshire trampoline manufacturer is using the slow-motion camera to test the elasticity of different materials in order for it to create a competitively priced product.

### **LEP/Funding**

Our relationship with Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership remains strong. The Government has rated all of the LEPs in the country, and Greater Lincolnshire LEP was highly rated. On 24 July 2018 the Government issued its 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships' paper which followed the review of LEPs. Greater Lincolnshire LEP will now be responding to their recommendations, one of which addresses the relationship that LEPs have with their accountable bodies. In the case of Greater Lincolnshire LEP, this is LCC. We will be working hard to ensure that any change that arises from the Government's recommendations is efficient and continues to support local economic growth, i.e. it is not bureaucratic and a disincentive to the excellent private sector involvement that there is in the LEP.

The Government is currently designing a new funding pot to replace EU funding. It will be called the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and I was very pleased to co-sign a letter which set out what we in Lincolnshire would like to see from the Shared Prosperity Fund. My co-signatory, Cllr Tony Bridges, who as well as being Vice Chairman of the Council is also Chairman of the Brexit Working Group, ensured that both the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Brexit Working Group have had the chance to shape our intended outcomes. LCC officers led a workshop on the fund on 11 July 2018, and as a result of that workshop we will be inviting the senior civil servants whose role is to design the new fund to meet us here in Lincolnshire.

Finally, those of us who represent coastal areas will be aware of the benefit of the Coastal Communities Fund. The fund has enabled us to invest in Gibraltar Point Visitor Centre and in a programme for retailers and restaurants along the coast. The Coastal Communities Fund comes to an end shortly, and I will be adding my voice to that of other coastal politicians in calling for the fund to be extended permanently.

## **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.

Public Information Days which focused on the onshore substation works took place as follows:

- **26 June 2018 14:30 – 19:00** – Irby & Bratoft Village Hall, Brambleberry Lane, Irby in the Marsh, Lincolnshire, PE24 5DQ
- **27 June 2018 14:30 – 19:00** – Anderby Village Hall, Sea Road, Anderby, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE24 5YB
- **28 June 2018 14:30 – 19:00** – Frithville Village Hall, Church Corner, Frithville, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE22 7EX
- **29 June 2018 14:30 – 19:00** – Hogsthorpe Village Hall, Thames Street, Hogsthorpe, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE24 5PT

Two separate Councillor Presentations open to all Parish and Borough councillors to attend were also arranged. At the Councillor Presentations, Innogy ran through the material being presented at the Information Days in more detail. Information included construction timescales, the works involved, how people can keep informed and also details on the Community Fund. The presentation also included some time for a Q&A session. The sessions were held on:

- **27 June 2018 11:30 – 12:30** – Anderby Village Hall, Sea Road, Anderby, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE24 5YB
- **28 June 2018 11:30 – 12:30** – Frithville Village Hall, Church Corner, Frithville, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE22 7EX

Archaeological work has now started on site. It is being carried out by Headland Archaeology and Allen Archaeology Limited. LCC is monitoring works over the coming months to ensure the best possible record of the remains identified is made proportionate to the development.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Cllr Richard Davies and Cllr Perraton-Williams welcomed 70 stakeholders from across the UK to Riseholme College in June to a demonstration event showcasing the new Verge Harvesting machine which has been designed and built in partnership with the GLLEP and the private sector. The machine has been built by Lincolnshire Agricultural Engineers, Scotts Precision Manufacturing. The demonstration was also attended by members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee. The verge cuttings are being used as a feedstock in three Lincolnshire Anaerobic Digesters, which then produce energy.

In addition, the current exhibition in the gallery space at the North Sea Observatory entitled '200Fish' is an art project whose objective is to raise awareness of the biodiversity of the North Sea. We will continue to support the tenants and partners to ensure this momentum of activity is sustained, in order to bring maximum benefits to the Lincolnshire Coast.

### **Flood Risk**

Officers have begun work to revise our Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Strategy. When first approved at the end of 2012, this was one of the first in the country, and was unique in being designed to cover all sources of flood risk and to align the work programmes of all relevant partner authorities operating within Lincolnshire. The new strategy will retain this inclusive and co-ordinated approach, but will be able to take into account major developments since its predecessor was published. It will seek to harness the capacity of effective water management to support growth and environmental enhancements, while joining up with the wider strategic issues of long term water availability and storage. We anticipate completion of the new strategy by Spring 2019, and look forward to working across LCC and with all our partners to continue developing the successful approach to flood risk and water for which we are known nationally.

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