

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 12 JULY 2013**

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

### **Economic Regeneration**

The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review placed extra importance on the role of local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships in economic growth. The Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) is very important and as a county council we support it strongly. The importance of this sort of relationship, which I intend to promote in my new role, can be no better evidenced than in the recent announcement of EU funding. I am very pleased that Greater Lincolnshire has been allocated £110m and I will be working with the GLLEP and officers to make sure that fantastic projects come forward and that this money is spent to best effect.

We continue to support small businesses. Shortly before the election we established a scheme to help small businesses to raise equity finance. I am pleased to say that we are already actively working with 30 businesses on this scheme.

The planning application for the Southern Relief road in Grantham is now lodged and should be ready for consideration by the planning committee at SKDC later this summer. In addition to this we have also secured the display of the Mallard Steam Locomotive in Grantham later this year as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of its record breaking run. A series of major events are being organised to coincide with its display which are designed to showcase Grantham's offer to investment audiences.

The official opening of the Wyvern House office development on the former coal yard in Lincoln will take place at the end of this month. Further development proposals for the East West Link Road Corridor are now being developed with partners. By 2016, we hope not only to have a major new road running through this area to improve cross city links but also a thriving business zone of mixed use developments.

Elsewhere, developments of new eco-workspace at Long Sutton and the coastal observatory are progressing whilst officers have also invested significant time in the initiation of a regeneration feasibility study for RAF Scampton designed to develop a masterplan for joint RAF heritage and business use.

Overlaying this we continue to operate our portfolio of commercial premises, which give small businesses the opportunity to 'give it a go' in a supportive environment. Our levels of occupancy remain high in most market areas of Lincolnshire, including the coastal strip where we have just taken over management responsibility for the Skegness Business centre from ELDC and quickly found occupiers for previously vacant space.

We continue to promote Lincolnshire as a place for Investment, business and growth, through a full programme of business to business and investment promotion events such as the Lincolnshire property Show, Belton Horse Trials and the Lincolnshire Show.

## **Environment**

The Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service has continued to punch above its weight with:

- nearly 5,000 enjoying this year's Walking Wolds Festival;
- co-hosting the national AONB conference including winning the highly regarded national Bowland Award for the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project - for its innovative restoration and habitat improvements;
- co-ordinating the production of the new statutory AONB Management Plan on behalf of all relevant local authorities and the Joint Advisory Committee partnership;
- securing nearly £100,000 of lottery funding for the new Down Your Wold community heritage project.

Work continues to develop the Coastal Country Park, with the next major project to develop several 'gateways' at primary visitor attractions, encouraging visitors to explore the area.

We are working closely with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to ensure that LCC-owned nature reserves at Gibraltar Point and Snipe Dales provide a high quality environment for visitors, while forming focal points in a network of sites and areas that encourage biodiversity and boost the county's tourist economy. Other areas contributing to this network include the Coastal Country Park, Coastal Grazing Marshes, Limewoods and numerous National/Local Nature Reserves.

LCC has adopted a second Carbon Management Plan which covers 2013-18. This plan has established a 2011/12 baseline for emissions and sets a target to reduce them by 22% which is equivalent to some 83,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. We will be working within and outside of the council with our partners to achieve this.

The statutory Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is complete and available on the Council's website. It is one of the first in the country to be completed, and is unique in the extent to which it represents a partnership approach, covering all sources of flooding and seeking to maximise efficient use of existing resources, while maximising resources brought into the county from national and regional sources. 2013-14 will see the implementation of the first co-ordinated flood risk action plan, including the work of all flood risk management authorities in the county, along with a simple performance framework which will clearly demonstrate progress in delivering the action plan and, more broadly, our strategic objectives.

The Council continues to work with neighbouring Local Authorities, the Local Government Association and the Environment Agency, to raise maintenance of our coastal flood defences as a priority for Defra and this Authority remains the highest-funded of all Lead Local Flood Authorities. This reflects the level of flood risk that we need to manage and our position as a nationally-regarded exemplar for the way in which we have undertaken our responsibilities in this area. However we cannot make any assumptions about future levels of central resourcing and we are proactively exploring long-term means of resourcing our role.

We are now planning for the introduction of new duties on the Council from April 2014 as a sustainable drainage approving body and for the development of the

statutory Flood Risk Management Plan by 2015. This is a requirement under the 2009 Flood Risk Regulations and we will work closely with the Environment Agency and other partners to ensure that it functions as a delivery plan in line with our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

### **Planning**

Andy Gutherson has been appointed to the post of Head of Planning Services and will start with us in early/mid September.

We continue to work with our partners on the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee and with our partners at South East Lincolnshire in developing these strategic high level plans, both of which are due for public consultation later this year.

We will continue to maintain, develop and enhance the County Historic Environment Record for which the council has a legal remit. We are striving to make as much of this information publicly accessible by different websites and manage community projects as capacity allows. We review and maintain the 'Every Street Matters' Handbook. We also host a British Museum funded post for the national Portable antiquities Scheme and advise and assist the police in matters of Heritage Crime.

### **Tourism**

Tourism is an important part of our economy, and it is one of the areas where Lincolnshire is particularly strong. In order to make sure that we retain strength and create growth in the sector, we need to make sure that our tourism offer is fully co-ordinated. Visitors to Lincoln or the coast, say, should be encouraged to visit other attractions and locations across the county. I am pleased to say that officers are working with counterparts in tourism businesses and in other authorities to prepare a plan which will do just that.

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