

## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

<b>From: Councillor Brewster Cabinet Member for Economy</b>	<b>Report Number: CMU10</b>
<b>To: Council</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 26 April 2018</b>

### TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY

#### 1. Overview of Portfolio

- 1.1 Increasing jobs, productivity and supporting our businesses to thrive and grow
- 1.2 Attracting and encouraging inward investment
- 1.3 Business friendly and collaborative strategies to support being 'Open for Business'
- 1.4 Build relationships with local businesses
- 1.5 Liaise with neighbouring authorities and other organisations such as NALEP, SELEP and the Haven Gateway Partnership to support cross-border economic development and investment.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 This report is for information.

#### 3. Key Activities/Issues Over the Past Six Months

- 3.1 'Visioning for Prosperity' work for Greater Stowmarket communities is progressing and the team have met with local place shaping groups in Stowmarket to look at the outputs so far. Collaborative work continues towards establishing deliverables and activities which link to the visioning project.
- 3.2 Approval of our Joint BMS Economic 'Open for Business' Strategy by both Cabinets in February 2018. This is now being formatted ready for publishing before April 2018.
- 3.3 The New Anglia Economic Strategy 2017-2036 was successfully endorsed by both Cabinets in October 2017 and formally published on 25 October 2017. The next phase of this work is a Local Authority and New Anglia LEP summit on identifying the big opportunities that Norfolk and Suffolk face and what actions and investments are needed to make sure that the people, businesses and communities see the maximum benefits and opportunities from growth. This summit was postponed on 28 February 2018 due to weather but BMS will be represented when the meeting is reorganised.
- 3.4 The Open for Business Team have advertised a temporary project co-ordinator post and feasibility study commission to progress a Technology Hub for the Mid Suffolk area. Officers, in collaboration with core stakeholders, will review applications and scope the next stage (and interview process) from March 2018. Jo Churchill MP has also expressed interest in being part of the extended group involved with this work as she holds a particular interest in this concept.

- 3.5 Officers are continuing work in the Eye area with colleagues from SCC (highways), businesses and business support sectors to progress economic growth opportunities and will be looking to engage further with businesses in Eye in the near future. In October 2017 the Department for Transport confirmed funding of £3.75m for A140 improvements from its National Productivity Investment Fund. BMS will continue to support delivery of this important project to help unlock the significant potential of Eye Airfield.
- 3.6 In January 2018 the Cabinet Member, Ward Member, Chief Executive, Assistant Director and Corporate Manager for Planning met with Moulson Coors following their recent acquisition of Aspalls. They described the history of the company and ambition for Aspalls, drawing on examples of similar acquisitions elsewhere in the country.
- 3.7 Significant tourism and visitor economy work is underway – reviewing our directly delivered TIC services, working with SCC/NALEP/Visit East Anglia, Local Tourism Action Groups and Destination Management Organisations to best support the vital visitor economy sectors.

#### **4. Future Key Activities**

- 4.1 Progressing all of the above to next stages.
- 4.2 Officers will be developing a baseline of evidence and also forming service plans for 18/19 - linked to the Joint Strategic Plan, performance measures, budget work, economic strategy, achievements and successes and team development.
- 4.3 Officers will also be continuing several collaborative and commercially sensitive lines of conversation with some significant businesses, attractions and developers. This increases the potential for high value inward investment and links to unlocking stalled sites and promotion of our Enterprise Zone/Food Enterprise Zone designated sites. This work also potentially helps to create jobs, increase the options for our micro and SME businesses, increase value of existing businesses and attract New Anglia LEP and central government investment, including vital infrastructure. Influence and networking is growing with businesses, utility sectors and other partner organisations – all focusing on sustainable growth, jobs and productivity.
- 4.4 Tourism strategy work streams will progress significantly over the next few months, some of which will form reports to Cabinet.
- 4.5 Officers will continue to work with SCC and other stakeholders to progress Skills and Youth Employment Service strategy during the next period.
- 4.6 Officers will also be progressing regulatory policy/local standards reviews in Gambling Act 2005 and Taxi/PHV matters.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 The above demonstrates that the Councils are developing good momentum on key activities and collaborations delivering against set priorities. As well as justifying Officer activity the Open for Business strategy also outlines the breadth of work underway and demonstrates the Councils' impact. There is a lot of other supportive activity and 'business as usual' engagements underway in addition to the above report headlines. The next period will push all of the above work on further, and the key activities in section 4. As progress is made there will be difficult decisions and choices to be made, including on resource investment, and therefore a clear and transparent strategic approach is crucial to underpinning this.

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