

## BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

<b>From: Cabinet Member for Economy</b>	<b>Report Number: CMU12</b>
<b>To: Council</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 24 July 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 New Anglia LEP, South East LEP and the Haven Gateway Partnership to support cross-border economic development and investment.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Council notes the report.

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

- 3.1 'Visioning for Prosperity' work for Greater Sudbury communities continues to progress. Cabinet approved the recommendations at its meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and the final documents were presented to the public at an open day at the Sudbury Town Hall on 21st June 2018. Further presentations will be provided to Parish Councils between August and October.
- 3.2 The Joint BMS Economic 'Open for Business' Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet in February 2018 and has now been published on the Councils' website (here: <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Economic-Development/OpenForBusiness-Strategy-with-links.pdf>).
- 3.3 The Open for Business Team continue to support the South Suffolk Taskforce, led by local MP James Cartlidge, to explore options for the future of the Delphi site in Sudbury and to support the local economy. Officers are currently working with New Anglia LEP to develop an options appraisal for the site. Babergh has been working hard with Suffolk County Council and the legal team to achieve a smooth handover of ownership to BDC on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018 of the South Suffolk Business Centre, located near to the Delphi site. The South Suffolk Business Centre is currently 100% occupied, supporting local SMEs. Building maintenance and improvements are currently taking place/being negotiated with Suffolk County Council.

- 3.4 The Open for Business Team, alongside the Chief Executive and Strategic Director, continue to work with Suffolk Chamber of Commerce to develop a Central Suffolk Chamber. Progress on this will be reported to Cabinet in August.
- 3.5 Planning permission for infrastructure elements of the Sproughton Enterprise Zone site was granted on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and permission for the first occupier was granted on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018. A related Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) relating to enterprise zone infrastructure funds has also been progressed between BDC and Ipswich Borough/New Anglia LEP.
- 3.6 Significant tourism and visitor economy work remains ongoing and a workshop with stakeholders was attended by over 30 people on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Discussions with Suffolk Libraries continue with a view to them providing some visitor information services as is the case elsewhere in the county. The latest update report was presented to Babergh Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and includes a recommendation to delegate authority to the Strategic Director to negotiate a lease or disposal arrangement with a view to Lavenham Parish Council taking over the building to provide visitor information and other community facilities.
- 3.7 The team are supporting two interns over the Summer (which started on 11 June 2018) and also a work experience placement in July. This provides vital work experience, mentoring, coaching and skills support to these young people, while also gaining their ideas, insights and perspectives.

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

- 4.1 Progressing all of the above to the next stages.
- 4.2 Officers will 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, increases the options for local micro and SME businesses, increases the value of existing businesses and attracts 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.
- 4.3 Tourism strategy work streams will continue to progress.
- 4.4 Officers will continue to work with SCC and other stakeholders to progress Skills and Youth Employment Service strategy during the next period.
- 4.5 Officers will also be progressing regulatory policy/local standards' reviews in relation to Gambling Act 2005 and Taxi/Private Hire Vehicle matters.
- 4.6 Continuing to support the inaugural 'Stars of Babergh & Mid Suffolk' Community and Business Awards preparations, nominations and event. This will be held at St. Mary's Church, Hadleigh in October 2018.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 The above demonstrates that the Council is continuing the momentum that has been achieved on key activities and collaborations, delivering against set priorities. As well as guiding officer activity, the Open for Business strategy also outlines the breadth of work underway and demonstrates the Council's 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, including 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.