

Item 7

COUNCIL QUESTIONS BDC 24th July 2018

Question 1

Councillor Bavington to Councillor Simon Barrett (Cabinet Member for Economy)

My questions are all to do with the continued productive existence of high precision engineering manufacture on the Sudbury site, making use of the outstanding levels of skill and professionalism of the existing workforce, when the production transfer of Delphi Technologies to Romania is completed in summer 2020; and the support that Babergh District Council can and will give to ensure that there is a successful and smooth transition of the site to a new employer who will be able to employ those outstanding skills to continue high precision engineering in the Sudbury area.

1. Are you aware that:
 - the Delphi Sudbury site gives employment not just to people who live in Sudbury itself but to those who live in surrounding villages, for example Great Cornard?
 - Delphi supports other small engineering companies in the local area and beyond?
 - Delphi wage levels are the benchmark for the whole Sudbury sub-district area?
2. Do you accept that the loss of high precision engineering to the local economy will undermine the ambitions laid out in the recently published 'Sudbury Vision for Prosperity' document?
3. Has Babergh District Council commissioned an Economic Impact Assessment of the devastating effects full Delphi site closure would have on the local economy?
4. What active steps is Babergh taking to encourage a new employer with a good business fit in high-precision automotive or aerospace related industries to take over the site and take the development of this uniquely talented workforce to the next level?

5. What financial incentives, for example business rate relief and business development grants, are the Council offering to suitable potential employers to take on this site without any time gap once Delphi leave in 2020?
6. What co-ordination is there between Babergh District Council and the South Suffolk Taskforce set up by James Cartlidge M.P.? Is Babergh contributing to the 'Options Appraisal' apparently being undertaken and will he ensure that any report is published in a reasonable timescale?
7. As far as I am aware, there has been no discussion of this issue at either Council or Cabinet. What steps will you take to ensure that the Council is kept informed of the steps you are taking to preserve this unique high-precision machine tool design manufacturing capability in the most highly populated corner of our district?