

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

From: Councillor Brewster Cabinet Member for Economy	Report Number: CMU27
To: Council	Date of meeting: 25 October 2018

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 That Council notes the report.

3. Key Activities/Issues Over the Past Six Months

- 3.1 'Visioning for Prosperity' work for Greater Stowmarket communities continues to progress. Cabinet approved the recommendations at its meeting of 4th June 2018 and the final documents were presented to the public at an open day at the Natwest Bank on 16th June 2018. The shop front and accessibility grant funding schemes were launched on 31st August 2018.
- 3.2 The Phase 1 feasibility study to progress a Technology Hub for the Mid Suffolk area is almost complete. Working in association with Nautilus the consultation period was extended but work is now being undertaken to develop design briefs and financial modelling before the final report and recommendations are delivered at the end of the year.
- 3.3 Work with Suffolk Chamber of Commerce has continued so the Council can support their ambition to develop a Central Suffolk Chamber that covers the Mid Suffolk and Babergh area.
- 3.4 Discussions with Suffolk Libraries have continued with a view to their providing some visitor information services as happens elsewhere in the County. The first Library to deliver this activity in Mid Suffolk will be Stowmarket with others to follow depending upon success.

3.5 Officers have worked with *the mix* in Stowmarket to develop further youth employment support. The *Together* project, which has been designed in collaboration with *the mix*, will support young people to develop and improve their employability. Funding is being provided by Mid Suffolk, Suffolk County Council and from a significant local employer and I expect the scheme to be launched imminently.

4. Future Key Activities

4.1 Progressing all of the above to next stages.

4.2 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.

4.3 Tourism strategy work streams will continue to progress. Senior Officers will be thanking TIC staff for their contribution to the organisations.

4.4 The Open for Business team will continue to progress the feasibility work for Needham Lake Visitor Centre/Café.

4.5 Officers will also be progressing regulatory policy/local standards reviews in Gambling Act 2005 and Taxi/PHV matters.

4.6 Continuing to support the inaugural 'Stars of Babergh & Mid Suffolk' Community and Business Awards preparations, nominations and event – to be held at St.Mary's Church, Hadleigh on Thursday 18th October 2018.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The above demonstrates that the Councils are continuing the good momentum that has been achieved 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.

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