

**Report of the Head of Planning and Local Development**

**Economic Development Activity Update**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To keep the Committee informed of the Economic Development activity and provide members of the committee with the opportunity to influence priorities for the unit.
- 1.2 The Economic Development activity within the Planning Policy and Regeneration Section supports and works towards all five corporate priorities as they are all related to strengthening and encouraging development of the local economy. The direction of activity is in line with the 2011 Economic Development Strategy which is delivered through a network of partners.

**2 Executive Summary**

- 2.1 An ambitious programme of work has been undertaken or is in progress to deliver the objectives of the Borough's Economic Development Strategy, This work is focusing under the generic economic themes of inward investment, business support and education and skills. It is also important that the council works with others to ensure that effort is focused on the major issues in the Borough and importantly business is able to be clear about which agency to contact for help.
- 2.2 The council is taking a leading role in managing an Economic Action Plan which is reviewed by the Borough of Wellingborough's Economic Partnership at its quarterly meetings.

**3 Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Economic Development Activity Quarterly Report - Dec 2013
- Appendix 2 - Economic Development Framework
- Appendix 3 - Town Team Funding Application Form
- Appendix 4 - Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan

**4 Proposed Action:**

**The committee is invited to RESOLVE to:**

- 4.1 **note the Economic Development Activity Quarterly Report – December 2012 attached at Appendix 1 and provide any comment to officers as appropriate.**
- 4.2 **approve the Economic Development Framework at Appendix 2 and the priorities highlighted within it as the basis of activity going forward.**

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 4.3 | <b>approve the Town Team Funding Application Form attached at Appendix 3</b>   |
| 4.4 | <b>approve the updated Economic Development Action Plan at Appendix 4 and the priorities highlighted within it as the basis of activity going forward.</b> |

## **5 Background**

- 5.1 An Economic Strategy for Wellingborough was adopted at Development Committee in June 2011. In order to update Members regularly on the progress that is being made, it was agreed quarterly activity report be brought to Development Committee.
- 5.2 In addition to the quarterly update, a number of amendments to the Economic Development Action Plan are proposed to reflect the changing priorities of the Council and partners.
- 5.3 Economic Development is entering a new phase. The priorities that were first identified in 2011 have therefore been revisited. To help maintain the focus the priorities have been placed under the themes of Business Support, Inward Investment and Education & Skills.
- 5.4 It has been made recently be made clear by the Chamber of Commerce that the Council would need to become more proactive to ensure that the opportunities that are now available can be delivered. They would like to see Business premises in the Town and Industrial Parks reviewed to fit better with what the market is looking for. From the Council's own analysis there is clearly a need for better business networks that provide actual help with businesses to grow and access new markets.
- 5.5 There is a lot to do but the Council has only limited resources and so the report looks to forge strategic partnerships to help deliver Wellingborough's ambitions to become economically successful.

## **6 Discussion**

### Economic Development Activity Quarterly Report - Dec 2013

- 6.1 The report attached at Appendix 1 is the latest quarterly activity update, which lists key achievements between September and December 2013 and forthcoming projects from December 2013 to March 2014.
- 6.2 Members are requested to note the report and provide any appropriate comments to officers.

### Economic Development Framework

- 6.3 The Economic Development Framework in Appendix 2 identifies the Council's proposed priorities for moving forward with Economic Development activities.
- 6.4 The Economic Strategy highlighted four distinct priorities:

- (a) A vibrant Town Centre
  - (b) Tourism
  - (c) Improve the conditions of growth
  - (d) Increase Skills
- 6.5 However, as the economic climate worsened and Council resources became scarcer, it became necessary to further prioritise within these areas. For example, it was clear that, whilst tourism activity has the opportunity to create economic benefits, these would be longer term and that other activities could deliver more tangible economic benefits in the short term. Also, the BID was established in 2011 and became the logical lead partner for town centre related activities.
- 6.6 Therefore, it was decided to concentrate resources on the remaining two priorities of Improving the conditions of growth and increase skills and attainment, these are identified in the Economic Development Framework in Appendix 2.

### Town Team Funding Application Form

- 6.7 As identified in Appendix 1 a Town Team has been set up to discuss the best way to spend the £10,000 received from the Government and agree how we can improve the town centre.
- 6.8 The application form shown as Appendix 3 provides an opportunity for organisations to bid for a share of this funding, whilst maintaining the Council's accountability for its distribution.

### Economic Development Action Plan 2011-2014 updated November 2013

- 6.9 To take account of the work that has been undertaken and the future work to be undertaken the Economic Development Action Plan shown in Appendix 4 has been reviewed as it is annually and updated accordingly.

## **7 Legal Powers**

- 7.1 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Council the power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Borough.

## **8 Financial and Value For Money Implications**

- 8.1 Currently there are no requirements for further funding in the revenue budget proposals for 2013/2014. Any funding requirements not already within existing budgets will be highlighted and if approved relevant reports will be developed to bid for these additional resources.

## 9 Risk Analysis

Nature of risk	Consequences if realised	Likelihood of occurrence	Control measures
High quality employment sites are not allocated and developed	Loss of current employers needing to relocate within the local environs. Loss of potential footloose high quality office based employers	High	Develop proposals high quality employment sites.
Virtually every town, county and city of the UK is actively trying to attract inward investment and people looking to relocate	The Borough will fall behind other districts in the County, Region and Country in terms of economic prosperity and long term sustainability	Medium to High	Work with partners to maximise opportunities to promote Wellingborough as a business location

## 10 Implications for Resources

- 10.1 The strategy will help focus future resources but importantly influence the Council's future plans for the Planning Policy & Regeneration Service. In addition to the Council's resources, the strategy is also aimed at influencing the budgets of other stakeholder organisations involved in the economic prosperity of the Borough of Wellingborough but there will be a need to invest resources (human and financial) in some of the recommendations coming out of the action plan.
- 10.2 It is important to note that much of the future funding from Central Government will be aligned to an area's ability to grow its economy and enterprise. Most funders now require a degree of 'payback' or return on their investment and grant funding, as such, is rapidly becoming less and less common.

## 11 Implications for Stronger and Safer Communities

- 11.1 The development of a robust economy will have benefits for Stronger and Safer communities as economic growth is fundamental to the sustainability and success of our communities.

## 12 Implications for Equalities

- 12.1 In line with the Council's duty to design its services around the needs of local people, and to evaluate the impact of its services, policies and activities on different groups in society to eliminate discrimination, an initial Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening has been completed.

**13 Author and Contact Officer**

Nicola Mackenzie, Economic Regeneration Officer

**14 Consultees**

Victoria Phillipson, Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager

Jennifer Bell, Project Co-ordinator

Amanda Johnson, Project Co-ordinator

Nina Taylor, Project Co-ordinator

Sue Bateman, Senior Planning Policy Officer

John Udall, Project Manager

Steven Wood, Head of Planning and Local Development

**15 Background Papers**

None.



Achievements this period		Date
<b>General</b>		
1	'Welcome pack' / directory of partners' services now published on BCW website at <a href="http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/business">www.wellingborough.gov.uk/business</a> .	29/11/13
<b>Improved Conditions for Growth</b>		
<b>Business Support</b>		
1	Small Business Saturday activities organised – including launching the Growth Hub, Young Enterprise teams and 'Is it for me' workshops delivered by NEP.	7/12/13
2	Business Plan drafted for a meeting with businesses on the Finedon Road and Ise Valley Estates regarding a potential BID across the two estates.	28/11/13
3	Business Newsletter published on website and circulated to all business contacts by email.	20/10/13
<b>Inward Investment</b>		
1	Key Industrial Sectors identified.	30/09/13
2	Articles published in Business Times re forthcoming developments in the Borough, Wellingborough Market and the ROSE Events	
3	Continued development of a Wellingborough investment brochure & online presence to promote Wellingborough as a business location. Website currently being designed.	30/11/13
4	Ongoing input into the LEP Growth Plan and Priorities.	15/11/13
<b>Education and Skills</b>		
1	Tresham planning application submitted.	15/11/13
2	Supported Young Enterprise Trade Fair in a vacant unit in the Swansgate Centre on 23 <sup>rd</sup> November.	23/11/13
3	ROSE jobs fair took place on 5 November 2013 at Wellingborough Library.	5/11/13
<b>Vibrant Town Centre</b>		
1	An application form and guidance for the Town Team funding has been produced for interested parties wishing to apply for funding to support their projects (see Appendix 3).	1/11/13
2	Supported the BID with Christmas Lights Switch on event and Christmas market.	30/11/13

Scheduled Tasks for Next Period Ending March 2014		Target Date
<b>General</b>		
1	Hold a further quarterly Economic Development Partnership Meeting in March 2014	11/03/14
<b>Improved Conditions for Growth</b>		
<b>Business Support</b>		
1	Continue to hold discussions with potential operators of an innovation centre in Wellingborough - particularly location options including the High Street development site	25/03/14



2		Develop a business directory to encourage local businesses to develop responsible procurement and trading practices - exploiting local opportunities where possible.	28/02/14
3		Work with partners including the Chamber of Commerce, to gather intelligence about local businesses regarding any issues they are experiencing and supplier information etc and collate information to use to shape support and services accordingly.	25/03/14
<b>Inward Investment</b>			
1		Review the previous Place Marketing work and develop an Action Plan for marketing Wellingborough.	25/03/14
2		Complete the Wellingborough investment brochure & online presence to promote Wellingborough as a business location	31/01/14
<b>Education and Skills</b>			
1		Host an apprenticeships Fair and ROSE event to mark National Apprenticeships Week	04/03/14
2		Encourage developers to enter into negotiations with organisations such as Construction Futures.	28/02/14
3		Continue to launch, support and promote the Talent Match project across Wellingborough	25/03/14
<b>Vibrant Town Centre</b>			
1		Provide advice on the Market in conjunction with the Market Working Group, NABMA, the BID existing and new traders.	25/03/14

## **Economic Development Framework**

### **Background**

Wellingborough's economy is traditionally a low wage, low skill economy. The forthcoming growth in housing and therefore population that the Borough will receive presents us with the opportunity to raise skills and prosperity levels of the Borough by exploiting and promoting our key assets of geographical centrality and connectivity to many other UK centres.

With property prices (both commercial and residential) remaining favourable compared to many other areas, Wellingborough's offer is a strong one and will be key to securing the future prosperity of the area and its residents and businesses.

Economic Development works in partnership with a number of external agencies (including Northamptonshire Enterprise partnership, Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, and the Education establishments in the Borough) as well as with other services throughout the Council.

### **Vision**

All five of the Council's corporate priorities are related to strengthening and encouraging development of the local economy.

- High quality growth is necessary if we are to attract a diverse range of employers and high quality jobs to the area.
- A continuing reduction in crime will help to attract investment and jobs.
- Improving life chances for young people will help to create a local pool of talented employees who are able to be successful in new jobs coming to the area.
- Delivering efficient and responsive services is about the Council working with its partners to guide business and the local community and to offer help where appropriate.
- Finally, a high quality local environment is more likely to attract businesses and people to the area as well as encouraging those who are already here to stay.

Services provided support sustainable delivery of the planned growth and town centre regeneration that the Borough will see in the next ten to fifteen years. This will include the provision of high quality employment opportunities and encouraging large employers to locate in Wellingborough. At the same time, we wish to ensure that the Borough retains its distinctiveness and remains an attractive destination for both residents and visitors with a 21<sup>st</sup> Century market town at its heart. This will be achieved, in part, by supporting small businesses and ensuring that the town's historic market prospers.

We aim to strengthen the links between business and education to ensure that young people develop the skills required in the workplace. This will help to provide local businesses with the skilled employees they require while encouraging those who have recently left education to stay in the area. We will work with our partners to improve educational attainment and support the development of further and higher education in the area.

The Council has a duty to deliver economic well-being and aims to lead in the delivery of the Borough's Economic Development Strategy.

### **Economic Development Priorities**

The Economic Strategy highlighted four distinct priorities A vibrant Town Centre, Tourism, Improve the conditions of growth and Increase Skills

However, as the economic climate worsened and Council resources became scarcer, it became necessary to further prioritise within these areas.

For example, it was clear that, whilst tourism activity has the opportunity to create economic benefits, these would be longer term and that other activities could deliver more tangible economic benefits in the short term. Also, the BID was established in 2011 and became the logical lead partner for town centre related activities.

The committee is therefore requested to look to changing these priorities and further refine the way the council delivers its Economic Development responsibilities.

As a result, the following areas have been identified as those which should be the focus for the Council's resources going forward:

### **BUSINESS SUPPORT**

#### **1. Who are the businesses in the Borough**

- Know the business profile of those businesses that are located in the Borough of Wellingborough – refresh the Adam Breeze place making document – April 2014.
- Produce a business directory to help local businesses to develop a locally based supply chain.
- Understand the geography of the businesses, their suppliers them and their customers.
- Presentation by and visits to businesses in the borough by Councillors and Officers to help understand the complexities of the local economy.
- Develop strategic partnerships to help deliver Wellingborough's ambitions to be economically successful.

#### **2. To support local business and help direct them to reliable sources of help**

- To provide a comprehensive range of up to date information on the business pages of the Council's website to allow businesses access to useful information to help them be successful and grow.
- Provide links to useful business focused agencies.
- Help the Chamber of Commerce with their breakfast briefings. Introduce commercial stands at the event to give businesses an opportunity to promote their businesses (e.g.: legal and accountancy firms as well as business-focussed Council promotions)
- Work with partners to develop employment and business skills projects

which will attract external funding.

- Work with Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership and other economic partners to promote Wellingborough projects and submit applications as required to maximise external funding opportunities.

### **3. To help the Borough's Retail sector**

- To map the retail offer of the Borough and direct businesses to appropriate business support initiatives
- To understand the long-term future direction of the retail sector in town and village centres throughout the Borough and the sector's contribution to the local economy.
- Involve stakeholders including the Town Team partners in the provision of knowledge and expertise on the economic issues relating to Wellingborough Town Centre during the revision of the Town Centre Area Action Plan.
- Work closely with investors and large stakeholders particularly the Swansgate Centre to ensure their inclusion within the plan making process.
- Research the technologies of the future which will become part of the retail shopping experience and plan them into the future retail sector strategies.

### **4. Employment Land Opportunities/issues**

- Get a better understanding of the current employment land and properties available to the businesses and develop proposals with stakeholders to improve the offer to reflect future land and property needs.
- Ensure that the Borough is served with the latest superfast broad band to the highest standards providing the highest level of sustainability for businesses into the long term future.
- Prioritise the business needs according to the present offer. The highest priority being the master planning of the Denington Industrial Estate.

## **INWARD INVESTMENT**

### **5. Marketing of Wellingborough as an attractive place to live, work and visit.**

- "Destination of choice" Work with developers to promote Wellingborough as a location as well as their individual development(s) by getting involved and being part of the communication strategy the major developments of Stanton Cross, Appleby Lodge and Wellingborough North. In addition with Network Rail and East Midlands Trains and the electrification of the East Midlands Mainline.
- Work with intermediaries such as commercial and residential property agents to promote Wellingborough to all of their enquirers by asking them to distribute our inward investment materials and provide us with regular updates.
- Encourage existing businesses (e.g. through Chambers of Commerce and direct contacts) to act as ambassadors for Wellingborough to their own networks and supply chains.
- Review the Place Marketing work completed in 2009 and develop an

Action Plan for marketing Wellingborough as a Business Destination of Choice.

- Develop a long term marketing strategy to promote Wellingborough's ambition to maintain its position as a Destination of Choice and the best place for businesses to locate.
- Produce a business focused promotional presentation to be used at local and national events. (to include logos of businesses operating in the Borough).

**6. To encourage inward investment, especially in key industrial sectors by:**

- identifying the key industrial sectors that are important to the Borough's economy
- developing inward investment materials (printed and electronic).by December 2013
- continuing to review, through various intelligence, what would encourage businesses locate/relocate to Wellingborough and what information they want to help them make that decision by July 2014
- updating the Inward Investment Brochure and other materials with this intelligence by December 2014

## **EDUCATION and SKILLS**

**7. Improve education standards and facilities to learn.**

- What does Wellingborough need to do to improve attainment in schools?
- Work with the headteachers of the local schools to tell them of the ambitions for success and inform them of the activities already being delivered to provide good economic prospects for the Borough and its residents.
- Ensure Tresham College redevelopment is given the highest of priority for the Council.
- What are the future facilities and needs for the Borough to help improve the education and skills of the people who live in the Borough?

**8. Foster better links between business and education**

- provide signposts to training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities
- encourage schools and businesses to work together through programmes such as Young Enterprise.

**9. Develop with partners opportunities to create highly skilled technology occupations for local people to be trained to deliver**

- seek developers to enter into negotiations with organisations such as Construction Futures to provide training and employment opportunities for local residents and contract opportunities for local businesses.

# Town Team Funding

## Information and Application Form

**PLEASE READ ALL INFORMATION CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING THE  
ENCLOSED APPLICATION FORM**



## **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

### **Criteria:**

The Town Team has been awarded £10,000 to fund projects that will enhance the town centre.

### **Terms and Conditions:**

1. Applications for amounts less than £3,000 will be welcomed to enable a number of projects to be supported.
2. If the application is successful the project owner will be obliged to report back to the Town Team on their use of the funding.

### **Completing the Form**

Please complete and return the application worksheet for each individual project that you intend to submit for consideration for funding and send to [nmackenzie@wellingborough.gov.uk](mailto:nmackenzie@wellingborough.gov.uk)

### **Project Owner**

Please provide the full details of the individual responsible for the project and the organization they belong to. They will be expected to take responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the project and report back to the Town Team on the project's progress / success.

### **Project Details**

Project activity and key outcomes - Please provide an overview of the intended activity to be undertaken through the project and outline how it will benefit the town centre. The information provided in this section will be key to the success of the application.

Evaluation - Please provide an outline of how you intend to evaluate whether the project has been successful.

### **Finance**

Match Funding - Please provide details of any matched funding that partners may also contribute towards delivering the project. This can also be resources in kind such as additional deployment of personnel or equipment.

Breakdown of Funded Items and Activity - Please provide a breakdown of the items and activities the funding is intended to resource, such as equipment, salary costs, marketing etc.

### **Application Process and Timescale**

Once received, each application will be acknowledged and the applicant will be informed of the date by which the outcome will be known.

Applicants should allow a period of four weeks for their application to be assessed.

#### **Please note:**

**We will not fund activities or projects which exclusively support or promote religion or religious belief or those of a political nature.**

# APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING

## Project Owner

Name of your organisation:	
Main contact:	
Position in group:	
Address:	
City:	
County:	
Postal code:	
Email address of main contact:	
Main telephone number:	

## Project Details

Name of project	
Amount of grant requested:	
Please give a brief summary description of your project including how it will specifically enhance the Town Centre.	

## Finance

Please provide below a breakdown of how you will spend the award on items and / or activity:	Breakdown of Items / Activity		Cost
Please detail below how much funding from other sources is already committed to the project.	Funding Source	Amount Awarded	In Kind Contribution
How will you monitor the success of the activity and benefits achieved?			
How will the project be publicised?			

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please print name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position in organisation** \_\_\_\_\_











