

Report of the Head of Planning and Local Development

Economic Development Activity Update

1 Purpose of Report

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.

2 Executive Summary

A great deal of work has been undertaken or is in progress to deliver the objectives of the Borough's Economic Development Strategy, and therefore it was agreed that a regular update of recent achievements and future planned projects be presented to Members for feedback and input.

3 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Economic Development Activity Quarterly Report – June 2013

4 Proposed Action:

- 4.1 The committee is invited to RESOLVE to note the Economic Development Activity Quarterly Report – June 2013 attached at Appendix 1 and provide any comment to officers as appropriate.**

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, it is proposed to formally re-engage our economic development partners in a revitalised economic and business partnership.

6 Discussion

6.1 The report attached at Appendix 1 is the sixth quarterly activity update, which lists key achievements and forthcoming projects from March to June 2013. Members are requested to note the report and provide any appropriate comments to officers.

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 2012/2013. 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

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
General		
1	Economic Development Partnership – to re-engage all former Prosper Group partners. The first meeting is scheduled to take place on 30 th May.	April 2013
2	Response sent to East Northants Council on their Economic Development Strategy.	May 2013
Vibrant Town Centre		
1	Town Team – Meetings arranged for 29 May to discuss options for funding.	April 2013
2	Love Your Local Market promotion (15-29 May) limited activities undertaken, however there are three new traders on the market.	May 2013
3	Responded to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Consultation on Street Trading and Pedlary Laws – Compliance with the requirements of the European Services Directive.	March 2013
Improved Visitor Economy		
1	Work by University of Northampton students on the Tourism Audit is on-going.	On-going
Improved Conditions for Growth		
1	Wellingborough Innovation Centre – supported businesses to find new premises. Met with another potential partner interested in operating an innovation centre in the town centre.	May 2013
2	Drafted a survey to gather intelligence about local businesses regarding any issues they are experiencing and supplier information etc. to better understand our local businesses and their needs so that the Council and partners can shape support and services accordingly..	May 2013
3	Started to draft a Wellingborough investment brochure & online presence to promote Wellingborough as a business location	May 2013
4	Contacted the main commercial property agents active in Wellingborough to ask for their perspective on the buoyancy of the commercial market in Wellingborough and whether there any gaps in the employment land supply that need to be addressed.	May 2013
Education and Skills		
1	Careers and apprenticeships fairs took place on 27th March – including workshops on ‘employability’ skills, interview techniques and CV advice as well as local employment and apprenticeship opportunities. Over 320 students attended and the feedback received was good.	March 2013
2	ROSE Events are booked for 2013 – with the most recent event taking place on 21 st May at Wellingborough Library. Dedicated web-pages created at www.wellingborough.gov.uk/ROSE	May 2013



3	Big Lottery's Talent Match Fund programme to improve work readiness for 18-24 year olds who have been out of work for at least 12 months. Support and involvement from partners in Wellingborough (e.g. HOPE Project, Wellingborough Homes) is currently being sought to ensure that we capitalise on this opportunity to build on the good work already taking place here and make a real difference to young people in these areas.	May 2013
4	Discussions are ongoing with Tresham regarding a new facility on their Church Street site.	Ongoing

Scheduled Tasks for Next Period Ending September 2013		
General		
1	Hold a further quarterly Economic Development Partnership Meeting in September 2013	
Vibrant Town Centre		
2	Hold a further Town Team meeting.	
3	Continue to bring forward proposals to revitalise the Market in conjunction with the Market Working Group, NABMA, existing and new traders.	
Improved Visitor Economy		
4	Continue to support students at the University of Northampton to develop a tourism audit /plan map out local events (Waendel) attractions / hotels / restaurants	
Improved Conditions for Growth		
5	Continue to work with partners to secure an Innovation Centre in Wellingborough. A number of options are being considered for this, including identifying potential sources of funding to consider the option of refurbishment and use of Croyland Hall /Abbey.	
6	Send survey 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.	
7	Complete a Wellingborough investment brochure & online presence to promote Wellingborough as a business location	
Education and Skills		
8	Next ROSE jobs fair to take place on 10 September 2013 at the Tithe Barn.	
9	Continue to support and promote the Talent Match project across Wellingborough	
10	Continue discussions with Tresham regarding a new facility on their Church Street site.	