

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**4 July 2019**

### **COUNCILLOR GRAHAM MIDDLETON – CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

For the period 17 May to 24 June 2019

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

I am delighted to have been asked by the Leader to take on the portfolio for Business Development for the forthcoming municipal year. Many challenges are facing us with one being town centre promotion. I am in the process of driving my vision for the future which will be to make King's Lynn centre a destination place for those living, visiting and investing within our wonderful borough.

#### **HAZ BID (HERITAGE ACTION ZONE)**

The Property and Regeneration Team is in the process of compiling a bid for High Street Heritage Action Zone funding. Historic England has launched a new £40 million fund which will allow them to work with partners, such as the borough council, to find new ways to champion and revive historic high streets. The programme is administered by Historic England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Under this programme we can apply for a grant of between £250,000 and £2,000,000 to set up a four-year partnership from April 2020 to March 2024 to deliver physical improvements together with cultural and community activities to regenerate historic high streets and town centres. We believe that King's Lynn fits well with the bidding criteria and we hope to put in a strong submission.

Whilst attending the R&D Meeting this month I was fortunate to observe a break-out session held. I'd like to thank all councillors in attendance for their input. Myself and officers have made some detailed notes and will be putting these into consideration, not only with regards to the HAZ bid but also future regeneration projects. Many thanks Cllr Judy Collingham for her wonderful execution of the break-out session.

#### **FUTURE HIGH STREETS**

Government set out in this year's budget an over £600 million pound pot for district councils to bid into for high street regeneration. The council has submitted a phase 1 bid as part of this. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of June I was delighted to have been invited to attend an all-party parliamentary group to discuss Britain's high streets. This gave me a great opportunity to discuss our plans

for west Norfolk, projects we have completed, and future growth plans. We await a response to this bid and should hopefully hear in July as to whether we can progress to stage 2.

### **APPRENTICESHIPS**

Officers have been working with the College of West Anglia on an initiative to try to identify additional funding which might be used to increase apprenticeship training locally. Officers have approached 34 of the more significant businesses in the borough with a view to identifying whether they are using all funds available to them from their payment of the Apprenticeship Levy, and if not whether they would be willing to transfer any surplus (which would otherwise revert to HM Treasury) to support the costs of apprenticeship training in smaller local businesses. A number of these approached have responded positively and have been introduced to colleagues at the college so that they can explore this further.

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

During my induction and familiarisation with my new portfolio I have been looking at some of the strategic acquisitions that we as a council have been undertaking over the past few years, for example around the Southgates roundabout. This programme of proposed improvements at “gateway” sites on arterial roads in and out of the town I believe to be extremely important and I will be exploring other opportunities around King’s Lynn in particular that may, at the moment, be giving visitors the wrong first impression.

We are in the process of compiling a group of active stakeholders in Hunstanton in line with work undertaken by the Hunstanton CCT. To look into options for community engagement within the regeneration area on and near to the sea front.

Soon we will be receiving detailed final proposals on the plan from Wayne Hemingway and will be working closely with stakeholders to consider realistic projects to undertake.

### **EVENTS**

The council and its partners have a fantastic range of events coming up over the next couple of months, festival too, mini meet, heritage open day to name a few. I look forward to seeing Councillors and public there and I will update you on the success of these in due course.

## **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

HAZ Briefing  
Cabinet sifting  
Parliamentary group. High streets ( district council network ) at parliament

BID introduction meeting

Tour of industrial estates and commercial interests

CPP panel

Tour of corn exchange for cinema project

R&D Panel

Portfolio session with exec Director ( Chris Bamfield)

Cabinet

Local enterprise partnership workshop

Portfolio session with various officers ( half day )