

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

23 January 2020

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM MIDDLETON - CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

For the period 29 November 2019 to 10 January 2020

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Future High Streets Fund

The deadline for the submission of a draft business case to Future High Streets Fund is looming and officers are working hard to get everything together ready for the 15 January.

We have concluded the latest phase of consultation and received some valuable insight from respondents about how they use the town, what the barriers are, and ideas they have for the town. This is on top of the original consultation we did for the expression of interest. We are grateful to everyone who has taken the time to give us their views as this input is a vital part of our submission. In total we have heard from around 500 people, and a number of these are keen to remain engaged in the project and further consultation.

The majority of respondents frequently visit the town centre either daily, several times a week or weekly. The top three reasons for coming into the town were clothes shopping, eating out, or banking. The biggest pulls into the town centre in terms of shops were Primark, M&S and Debenhams and the most visited streets are High Street, Tuesday Market Place and New Conduit Street. The main things people enjoy about the town are the shops, the history and meeting friends. When it comes to wellbeing people cited the festivals, the events and The Walks as being beneficial. It was clear from the way people described the town, that there are good things happening and lots of potential to improve.

It was also clear that the perception of the town from frequent visitors is less positive than from infrequent visitors. Traffic, parking and variety of shops were also highlighted as barriers to the town and that those that came to town on foot or by bike or public transport were more positive about the town.

Feedback from the survey will be made public shortly through the Vision King's Lynn channels, and this feedback will be used to support our draft submission to Government.

Mayor's Business of the Year

I met with The Mayor and the council's business development officer on 12th December to review the entries received for the Mayor's Business of the Year category of the annual Mayor's Business Awards. I am pleased to say that there was a strong field but after considerable debate we selected three businesses as finalists for this year's award. We will be visiting these businesses on 22nd January, after which we will select the winner. The winner will be announced by The Mayor at the annual Mayor's Business Awards dinner on 6th March.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Cabinet
Cabinet Sifting
Various officer meetings