

report



meeting	COUNTY COUNCIL	
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REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

REPORT ON ACTIVITY TO JULY 2003

1. Introduction

This report outlines activity as Cabinet Member for Economic Development in the time since Council last met. This has been a busy period for a range of services. In this report I have focussed on the opportunities created by the Doncaster Finningley airport proposals and a summary of recent business support activities.

2. Doncaster Finningley Airport Developments.

Finningley is located just a north of the Bassetlaw/South Yorkshire border. The site was a thriving RAF base from 1936-1996, supporting a population of 3,500 servicemen and their families. After closure, the Finningley site was acquired from the Ministry of Defence by Peel Airports Limited, a subsidiary of Peel Holdings plc, a property and transport group that also owns Manchester's Trafford Centre, Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the Manchester Ship Canal. Peel Holdings will fund the Finningley Development from its £1.5 billion gross assets and plan to have the airport fully operational by late 2004.

The proposed international airport is of potential major importance to both South Yorkshire and to North Nottinghamshire. It is expected that the £98 million airport development will create around 7,000 new job opportunities by 2014. Finningley is expected to be the largest site of future employment in Bassetlaw before the end of the decade.

Finningley's 3,000m runway, the second longest in the north of England after Manchester, has the potential to serve the passenger markets of long haul destinations such as the US, Caribbean, and the Far East as well as numerous European destinations. It has a catchment of over 4 million people within a one-hour drive time and is convenient to the existing motorway system, and the East Coast Main Line railway. The well-preserved facilities lend themselves to a range of other aviation services including freight, manufacturing and maintenance services. Finningley will aim to handle 2.3 million passengers and 62,000 tonnes of freight each year by 2014. Peel predict that the new international airport will bring back into use existing facilities on a brownfield site to create between 4,700 and 5,600 direct on-Airport and off-Airport jobs. The actual number of jobs will be dependent upon a number of external factors. These include the number of passengers attracted to the Airport; the proportion of freight to passenger traffic; the take up of flights by low-cost airlines; whether the site sustains full air maintenance; and the dynamics of air market demand.

A further 1,400+ 'knock-on' jobs are predicted within supply chain companies, in inward investment and indigenous growth of companies based in the designated development zone, and through the impact of increased tourism. Construction is expected to create the full time equivalent of 130 jobs for the life of the development phase.

County Council officers are working closely with Bassetlaw District Council, the Local Strategic Partnership and a wide range of other agencies to ensure that training packages are in place to help local people compete for the jobs on offer and also that local firms can compete in the supply chain of goods and services.

3. Business Support Activities

- A Business Advice Day was held in partnership with Manskep, Business Link and Employment Services at Mansfield Old Town Hall on July 3rd. One to one advice sessions were held with local small businesses and start-ups. 15 sessions took place throughout the day.
- The Nottinghamshire Company of the Year Awards were held immediately prior to my last report when Hardy Hansons' outstanding progress was rewarded with them joining a long and distinguished list of companies winning the award.
- Poznan Visitors – Meeting with representative interested in SME development and EU accession were held earlier this month.
- The Business Innovation Network has been supported by sponsoring their June event dealing with innovation in the construction and allied trades industries.
- A presentation was made by Business Support staff to a group of companies from East Germany looking to develop trading links. The visit was hosted by the Chamber of Commerce and was aimed at promoting the support to local businesses especially for International trade.

- Financial support has been awarded to the Marketing Group to assist in the development of its forum meetings and networking opportunities. This has also helped to lever in £70,000 of funding from EMDA towards e-business development within the county.
- Organisation of events for Notts International Trade Network has continued with “Getting Goods to Market” and “Cultural Differences” the latest topics when 25 companies took part.
- I am pleased to note positive coverage in Nottingham Evening Post of businesses supported by this Council. These included European Transaqua (Financial Support) recycling of in-flight literature for airlines and Stormsaver (Financial Assistance) and their launch of new rainwater recycling system that has been installed in a Notts primary school.

Councillor Chris Winterton
Cabinet Member for Economic Development