



meeting **County Council**

date **18 May 2006**

agenda item number

Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration

Report for the period April to May 2006

Strategic Regeneration

1. As chair of the Alliance Sub Regional Strategic Partnership's Economic Infrastructure Group I have recently overseen a tourism bidding round aimed at attracting more visitors to the North Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire area. The SSP will be allocating approximately £1m Single Pot and ERDF funding to schemes and it was pleasing to note that a few applicants referenced and submitted schemes to support the partnership ambition for Sherwood Forest and the £46m Living Landmarks bid that the County Council is leading on behalf of the wider partnership. These include:
 - Experience Nottinghamshire Marketing and Branding Campaign
 - Clumber Park Tourism Development
 - Sherwood Forest Art and Craft Centre
2. I am pleased to report that positive work on promoting employment opportunities along the Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route continues in partnership with the District Councils and the Alliance SSP. The championing of employment possibilities has already led to significant interest from the private sector in developing sites at Sherwood Oaks at the junction with Southwell Road West and at Hamilton Road adjacent to Oakham Business Park.
3. The work is being further explored to look at the wider area as the "Sherwood Growth Zone", recognising the economic potential of the area across towards the M1 around Junctions 28 and 29 and east towards Ollerton.
4. At a Robin Hood Airport familiarisation event on the 24th April David Ryall, the managing director of the airport issued a challenge to the public and private sector in the region: "Are you moving forward as quickly as we are?".
5. The new Robin Hood Airport offers:

- access to European business markets
 - access to global freight and commerce
 - potential for inward investors
 - potential inbound tourism market
6. The airport is keen to work with partners to develop a credible tourism offer to attract in-bound tourism and particularly the American market.
 7. Future developments at the airport include a dedicated airport rail station, a motorway link road to the M18, an on site hotel and a new 60 acre business park with the old RAF technical site to be developed. The County Council is exploring links with partners in North Nottinghamshire in an attempt to maximise the airport's regeneration potential
 8. The Council has long been a member of the Coalfield Communities Campaign (CCC) and one of its key priorities has been the maintenance of a ring-fenced National Coalfield Programme managed by English Partnerships (EP). The Programme is concerned with the reclamation and servicing of former pit sites for quality employment and related after uses.
 9. Members will be aware of the long-standing issues at the former Gedling Colliery site. It is understood that an announcement will be made at a forthcoming joint EP/CCC event confirming the reaching of an agreement by EP to fund the site's reclamation and re-development. This investment follows the County Council's lobbying via the CCC and a presentation by the County Council on the plans and ambitions for the site.

Adult Learning

10. This year two celebration and awards events are planned, for up to 300 learners and next week, on 24th May, a series of awards will be presented at our events celebrating Adult Learners' Week here at County Hall. Adult Learners' Week is the UK's largest celebration of learning, promoting education and training for adults, providing access to information and guidance and celebrating learning achievements. With its nationwide promotional campaign and high profile activities, Adult Learners' Week offers organisations like the County Council an ideal opportunity to promote our learning provision.
11. The County Council's Adult and Community Learning Service supports over 11,000 learners a year throughout Nottinghamshire, and for many this represents the first step back into learning in a very long time.
12. We are hosting an evening awards event for Adult Learners on 24th May and tutors have been invited to an afternoon celebration of Family Learning.

Participants can look forward to a day of music and entertainment, celebrating the achievements of our learners from across the County.

Employment

13. I have previously reported on the recent Government Green Paper on Welfare Reform. The focus of the green paper is measures aimed at reducing the number of people in receipt of incapacity benefit, reducing the number of lone parents claiming incapacity benefit and to increase the number of people aged over 50 in employment.
14. The County Council has now responded to the government green paper on welfare reform - "*Empowering People to Work*". In addition to responding to the fixed questions within the consultation we also took the opportunity to highlight the role local authorities' play in delivering and influencing local provision, and the importance of our own and the voluntary sector advocacy and advice services in supporting the most vulnerable people in our local communities.

Enterprise and Innovation

15. East Midlands Business Ltd, a consortium of Chambers of Commerce and Business Links in the region, has won the regional contract to deliver information, diagnostic and brokerage services under business support.
16. I am pleased to report that progress is being made on the proposed Newark business innovation centre. Funding has been agreed and secured and work will commence on site in the Autumn, with likely completion by April 2007.
17. We are again sponsoring the Nottinghamshire Company of the Year Awards jointly with KPMG and the Nottingham Evening Post, and the judging of the finalists took place on the 10th May with the awards ceremony scheduled for 28th June.
18. I am pleased to report that the first seven participants in the HIVE outreach project in the Mansfield i-Centre have completed their intensive 12 week pre start-up business training and have presented their business plans to a panel of experts including a bank manager. Ten further participants commenced the programme on 3rd May. This project is co-funded by the County Council and Nottinghamshire Trent University and will assist 40 embryonic pre start and new businesses.

Councillor Chris Winterton
Cabinet Member for Regeneration