



meeting County Council

date 7th October 2004

agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION

Report on Activity August - September 2004

Introduction

1. This reports outlines activity undertaken within the Regeneration portfolio in the time since Council last met. A wide range of activities have taken place contributing to the strategic objectives of the authority.

Business Support and Inward Investment

2. Over 235 companies have been assisted through the PACE project (Partnership Cluster Events) funded by the EU. A series of events took place over recent months looking at improving the ability of local companies to compete and target new markets. More events are being planned for the next quarter; the project will be completed by December.
3. I continue to chair the national Leading Action for Textiles, Clothing and Footwear (LATCF) group, following elections held at the AGM in July.
4. Marketing support group Prolog has expanded again acquiring new buildings at Sherwood Park, Annesley and Manton Wood, Worksop, bringing total investment in the county to over £50 million since 1995. The new operations will see a further 200 jobs adding to existing employment of 800 people.
5. UK 1 Racing, the Mansfield based motorcycle training project and racing team, won the 125cc British championship at their first attempt. The project which has received support from Regeneration Division officers, aims to give local young people the opportunity to work on all aspects of running the team. The team has been invited to participate in next year's World Grand Prix.
6. Hexgreave Hall near Bilsthorpe, opened its doors following a £1 million refurbishment to return the building to its former glory creating new high quality

office space. The project, which is hoped will create 100 jobs, has received financial and marketing support from the Council and has successfully secured EU funding.

7. Award winning Triton Technology is the latest company to successfully expand out of Mansfield i-centre. The company specialise in materials testing with its latest dynamic mechanical analyser. The company move to new premises with the expectation of creating 10 new jobs.
8. The County Council supported four companies attending the East Midlands Manufacturing Exhibition at Donnington Park this year; all reported success in winning new business.

Learning and Skills

9. The Training Partnership is supporting 37 young people in its Entry to Employment programme based at the Eastbourne Centre in Sutton-in-Ashfield. This involves vocational training to Level 1 in horticulture, retail, painting and decorating, brickwork, concreting and tiling, home maintenance or tyre fitting and repair.
10. The Training Partnership will also deliver training to 30 learners from September as part of the Advanced Modern Apprenticeships in Early Years Care and Education. The learners have work placements in schools and nurseries in the Mansfield area gaining their practical experience.
11. The Adult and Community Learning Service (ACLS) has been successful in a 'Skills for Families' bid which will result in an extensive family literacy, language and numeracy programme across Nottinghamshire.
12. ACLS, working with a consultant, has produced a 'Toolkit' which provides a one stop directory for Adult & Community Learning in Nottinghamshire. In particular, the toolkit helps providers who have to deliver learning that meets the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework (CIF).
13. Nottinghamshire Training Opportunity has successfully bid for EU funding of £191,561 to support 85 businesses developing higher level skills training in their workforce.
14. I hosted a visit of senior representatives from the Puglia region of Italy who are responsible for operating Employment Centres in the region. They were visiting as part of a two week tour of the UK to learn how we, as a Beacon Council, help remove barriers to work for local people.

Economic Initiatives

15. A report to my portfolio meeting in June summarised the findings of a review of independently managed and run community resource centres across the County. This review was undertaken in order to look at the support already offered through my portfolio to this important social enterprise sector and to make recommendations about future support.
16. The findings of the review highlighted a range of factors that influence the successful and sustainable operation of such centres, most notably referencing the delivery of services; the securing of tenants; tailored funding and good practice in terms of management and financial and business planning.
17. The support offered by Regeneration Division's Social Enterprise officers has shown the benefits of a clear and coherent business planning process and, particularly, the benefits of working closely with centre managers and trustees to enhance their capacity in developing and steering the business. The review helped to focus the thinking on how best to support the Community Resource Centre sector in the future and, as a result, a package of support for managers and trustees is now being implemented.
18. Since last reporting, support to both social enterprise and economic initiatives projects within our most disadvantaged communities continues, including:
 - Initiatives aimed at developing the sustainability of the East Kirkby Summit and Selston Tin Hat Centres;
 - Two offers of financial support to social enterprises, one concerning the development of a service working with schools in support of vulnerable and challenging pupils and another supporting its ambitions to expand its trading while supporting adults with a range of learning difficulties.
19. I previously reported on the Coalfield Communities Campaign holding its national Conference in the East Midlands this year. I can now confirm that it will be held on the 8th, 9th and 10th of November and that the Right Hon John Prescott MP will be attending. Aside from supporting the event generally, I am pleased to confirm that a study tour on regeneration and transportation issues will be facilitated by the County Council and that a speakers slot has been secured to reinforce the role of local authorities in regeneration issues.
20. Through my role on the Alliance for Regional Aid, Nottinghamshire County Council has submitted comments to the DTI consultation process, highlighting the importance of state aids to the future development of the county economy and ideas for future action.

Community Engagement and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)

22. During the summer, we have continued to drive forward our work with partners and communities across the county. Some headlines from a wide range of activity include the following:

Ashfield

Sutton Partnership Group has contributed to setting up Ashfield Community Radio and broadcasts were made successfully in August. Lottery grant, bid for by Community Radio, enabled broadcast training.

With assistance from County Council officers, a new group has been set up in Hucknall. It is a strategic group with the brief of assisting the Ashfield Partnership with its local agenda and is now developing a constitution and working on getting local people involved. Lead officers are key in the new structure in terms of being brokers between the Ashfield Partnership Hub and local groups.

We recently supported the Selston Area Forum through a Planning For Real exercise. A draft report has now been produced, which will help to determine the work of the Forum over the coming years. Assistance has also been provided with the organisation of the Selston Festival, which this year will have a 1940's theme.

Broxtowe

Broxtowe LSP has set up a Consultation and Engagement Strategy working group to plan the development of the next Community Strategy and to ensure that consultation events run by individual partners are co-ordinated as far as possible. With our support, it has also set up a Walking the Way to Health group in the south of the borough, to run together with the existing group in the north which has been running very successfully for over a year now

Gedling

Gedling LSP held a young persons' consultation event at the end of September. The Arnold Local Area Forum has launched its website which was a project involving NCN students and members of the LAF. It is also looking to 're-launch' Arnold town centre in the late Autumn when Severn Trent's works are complete. This is likely to be a joint scheme with Gedling Borough Council.

Mansfield

Mansfield LSP had its annual review in July; Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) graded the partnership as 'good' with some recommendations for improvement.

Officers continue to provide support for Neighbourhood Renewal and the setting up of new teams. A very successful programme of summer activities took place alongside the MASH2 initiative which saw over 300 children involved in activities on Oak Tree, Bellamy and Ravensdale estates.

Rushcliffe

Officers are working with partners on the LSP, on a series of projects aimed to increase levels of independence in older people in the borough. The LSP is also developing a project to establish a young person's reading group for 13 to 16 year olds, with the aim of spreading this into other areas of the county in due course. Projects are also being developed through the LSP to add value to the Children's Centre and Support Unit proposed for Cotgrave, on the "extended school" model.

Newark

County officers have been heavily involved in the setting up of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum, to which over a 100 groups and organisations have signed up. Work has also been undertaken with colleagues at the District and the community on the development of young people's facilities on the former Sconce Hill School site - preliminary drawings have now been produced.

Taking a countywide view, on the 23rd September officers supported the first County Travellers event hosted at Kelham Hall, Newark and on 28th September, the first County Tenant Participation Forum event was held in Worksop. This was hosted by GOEM's Tenant Participation officer and supported by our community development and community safety officers.

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Cabinet Member for Regeneration