

report

Nottinghamshire
County Council



meeting **COUNTY COUNCIL**

date **Thursday, 16 December 2004**

agenda item number

from: **Cabinet Member for Environment**

REPORT FOR PERIOD OCTOBER 2004 – NOVEMBER 2004

1. Mansfield and Ashfield Regeneration Route

I am absolutely delighted to report that MARR, the biggest ever regeneration project set up by Nottinghamshire County Council, is set to open almost a year ahead of schedule. The new road will bypass Mansfield to the South and link up with the A617 Rainworth bypass, taking traffic away from the town centres. Planning applications for employment uses along its route have already been submitted and it is hoped that some 10,000 new jobs will be created as a direct result of the improved infrastructure.

The scheme was first conceived by the County Council in the early 1990s as a response to the major decline in Nottinghamshire coal mining and other traditional industries over the previous decade, resulting in a severe reduction in job opportunities and high unemployment. Despite the national trend during the 1990s in favour of non-road building solutions to regeneration and transport problems, the County Council won the support of local, regional and national bodies for MARR.

In addition to its regeneration benefits, the new road will bring major road accident savings and relief to the communities it bypasses. Part of the route is already in use and an official opening ceremony is planned for the 21st December. It is hoped that the road will be open to all traffic that same afternoon.

2. Beacon Council Bid for Sustainable Energy

In my report to Council in November I reported that the Authority had submitted a bid for Beacon Council Status for Sustainable Energy. Government guidance emphasised the broad nature of this theme and

the role that land use planning, transport and waste management policies can have in reducing energy and CO₂ emissions. The County Council has considerable achievements in these areas and I am delighted to report that the Authority has been shortlisted.

Beacon status brings significant recognition to successful authorities. They are expected to deliver a wide and varied programme of events to disseminate their good practice amongst other authorities. This is a substantial commitment, but Beacon Council status does bring in funding to help with this work. The successful Beacons will be announced in April 2005.

3. Commemoration of the Nottinghamshire Coalfield

I am very pleased to report that the County Council is honouring Nottinghamshire's mining heritage with the erection of a statue at the former Silverhill Colliery near Teversal. The larger than life sculpture, created by sculptor Antony Dufort, depicts a miner holding a Davey Lamp and is called 'Checking for Gas'. The statue will stand on the highest point in the County, Silverhill Wood and will look out, therefore, across all the Nottinghamshire coalfields.

Silverhill Wood was created after the closure of Teversal and Silverhill collieries to help regenerate the area. It offers panoramic views across the County and footpaths to the top will allow local communities and visitors the chance to celebrate almost 150 years of mining in the County.

I was very impressed by the clay version of the statue and am looking forward to seeing the final bronze figure.

4. Colwick Loop Road

I am delighted to report that despite considerable unforeseen, problems encountered on site, this difficult road reconstruction scheme was opened 4 days ahead of schedule on Friday, 26 November allowing free-flowing traffic for the weekend. The works involved raising the level and completely reconstructing the footways and carriageway and replacing the safety fencing.

Whilst the works caused major disruption affecting 10,000 vehicles per day and attracted adverse media attention in the early days, a minimal number of complaints have been received.

I have expressed my thanks and appreciation to all staff who contributed to the success of this project.

5. Oakham Business Park, Mansfield

I was pleased to see that work will shortly begin at the Oakham Business Park on the Sheepbridge Lane link with Hamilton Way. This

is a £1.4m scheme to help regeneration in Mansfield by linking the business park to the main road network. The scheme will also resolve existing problems with peak period traffic delays on local roads by redistributing traffic. The new junction will include new facilities for pedestrians and disabled people with links to existing cycle routes.

The main construction works are due to begin in January 2005 and will take approximately six to eight months. Once the scheme is completed Mansfield District Council can begin on the second phase of development at the business park.

Councillor Terry Butler
Cabinet Member for Environment

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