



meeting County Council

date 23rd December 2004

agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION

Report on Activity to November – December 2004

Introduction

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

Enterprise and Innovation

2. Discussions have been held with the pro vice chancellor of Nottingham Trent University looking at opportunities for developing a stronger presence from the higher education sector in the north of the county.
3. The proposals from Business Service East Midlands (BSEM), who are charged by emda with the responsibility to review business support regionally, have been announced for the future of Business Links. Through my role as board member for Business Link, my officers and I have been engaged in early discussions about the new brokerage model 'No Wrong Door' and how we can deliver part of this agenda.
4. Future plans for Siemens Business Centre in Beeston, in which Nottinghamshire County Council have a forty percent stake, are subject of a master-plan review of the whole Siemens site. The Borough Council in conjunction with the Greater Nottingham Partnership and the County Council are preparing a master plan for the future of the site, in response to the site being sold by Siemens to a developer. The site forms an important employment site for the west of the conurbation and should be safe guarded.
5. As part of the County Councils commitment to building a knowledge economy, plans to extend the number of business innovation centres have been supported by a study undertaken by the research team. The study involved contacting

business centre managers, tenants and businesses who had successfully graduated out of business innovation centres across the conurbation and the Alliance SSP area. The results of the work indicate three areas of future demand

- additional high quality business innovation centres
- graduation space to allow companies to expand locally out of the centres
- early stage incubation for companies or individuals with ideas that are not commercially viable but given appropriate support will develop successfully. We are in discussion with a number of interested parties and funding agencies to seek to ways of delivering an innovation network.

Learning and Skills

6. The Gateway to Construction Programme is seeking more recruits this month in line with a reduction in the minimum age requirement to 18 years for participants. The Gateway to Construction programme operates in the Objective 2 wards of North Nottinghamshire and North Derbyshire and is funded by the Alliance SSP, ESF and the County Council.
7. Nottinghamshire Training Opportunity (NT0) has reported considerable success in evolving its portfolio of services as a result of the reduction in unemployment and the changing needs of employers. The introduction of workforce development with the aim of increasing competitiveness of companies and safeguarding jobs in Nottinghamshire has seen the project deliver support to over 500 businesses providing 558 individuals with workforce development. The project has also supported 13 graduates into permanent jobs. New funding from ESF and LSC in 2005/06 will see the introduction of Intermediate and Higher Level Skills training for over 640 individuals working in Nottinghamshire.

Community Engagement

8. For the Ashfield Partnership, officers are currently involved in developing the four geographically based Partnership Groups (ex LAF's) into groups that can effectively monitor and amend the Partnership's annual delivery plan. Kirkby Partnership Group has already reviewed the partnership's half-yearly plan report and the Sutton, Hucknall, Rural and District wide groups will be consulted later this month. The Partnership Groups will develop a new delivery plan early in the New Year.

9. Selston Area Forum funds, and with the help of local volunteers runs Radio Salistune twice a year. Most recently, it was on air from 15-21 November. Programmes included interviews with local service providers like the police, updates on community activities, and music chosen by local people. The Forum also organises the annual Selston Festival which took place on 20 November, with support from the Catalyst Fund. This year's event had a war time theme, with market stalls and children's entertainment during the day and a concert in the evening.
10. Officers are also supporting an Information Day for Ashfield voluntary organisations to be held on 16th Dec at Ashwood Resource Centre, Kirkby. Over 40 organisations, including Sure Start, Big Lottery, CAB, Healthy Living Initiative, Volunteer Bureau, and literacy volunteers will be present. The four Area Partnership Groups in the district will have a stand providing information about the Ashfield Partnership and how local people can get involved. This will be an opportunity for the Partnership Groups to raise their profiles, highlight their importance as a link to strategic local decision making and recruit more voluntary and community sector volunteers.
11. In Bassetlaw, the Council is working with its partners within the Harworth Police Priority Area to establish a domestic waste collection site. The programme is designed to minimise the currently high levels of fly tipping in the area.
12. On 30 November, Broxtowe LSP held its action planning day for the development of its annual Action Plan for 2005/6. The event was also used as an opportunity to start the process for the development of the borough's Community Strategy for 2006/11.
13. In Gedling, officers are working with Ravenshead Parish Council on the development of a Parish Plan that will be launched early next year. A questionnaire was sent out to local residents in mid-November seeking their views on issues affecting the parish, the results of which will be used to inform the plan.
14. The review of the Mansfield Area Assembly framework is ongoing. It is anticipated that Mansfield District Council will shortly produce a formal consultation document to seek partners' comments.

15. Four "Beating the Winter Blues" events have been held in Newark, Southwell, Ollerton and Bilsthorpe and were aimed at improving the health and safety of older residents. Some of the events featured "community plays", run by Trading Standards, about how to deal with doorstep callers. The Fire Service took a number of referrals to fit smoke detectors, and eye tests were carried out by the RNIB at each event. These events were organised in conjunction with Newark & Sherwood Community and Voluntary Service, patient participation groups and the Community Development Project.

16. In Rushcliffe, West Bridgford Local Area Forum hosted the Rushcliffe Community Partnership area consultation event on the evening of 4th November at Pierrepoint Gamston Primary School. Over 50 attendees examined the draft Community Strategy, and how the proposed priorities could be achieved. Lead partners from the Rushcliffe Partnership have hosted 4 area consultation meetings. The West Bridgford Local Area Forum also funded a very successful range of children's Christmas activities held as part of the Christmas Lights Switch on event on 27th November. These free activities took place in West Bridgford library and included a Forum sponsored Community Christmas tree, tree decoration making, singing around the tree and face painting. Forum members, who also volunteered to serve refreshments for the children and adults, carried out some of the activities. Over 200 children and adults were present.

Councillor Chris Winterton
Cabinet Member for Regeneration