

Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customer Services

19 February 2013

Supporting Local Economic Growth through Skill Development for Local Businesses

We have set up with the Local Enterprise Partnership, 7 Lunch & Learn sessions to run for businesses in Evolution Business Centre, Northallerton. The sessions include growing your own business, making the most out of social media and keeping your finances in order - they are an effective way of picking up new skills as well as networking. The first session on 31 January has already attracted 18 businesses – at £5 per session they represent great value for money. We are encouraging members to spread the word in their wards. Information is on our website. This work is being seen as an exemplar of good practice across the LEP region.

Community Right to Bid

In line with requirements in the Localism Act to publish and maintain a register of assets of community value, the Council has received 3 nominations for the right to bid for assets if they come up for sale: Felixkirk Church Hall, which is now listed on the register and The Orchard Inn, Hushwaite and the Blue Bell Country Inn, Alne which are currently being assessed. Once listed on the register, they will remain there for up to 5 years as a trigger if the owner intends to sell – at that point, the community group will have the opportunity to purchase

Grants

The Council introduced a new single process for awarding revenue grants and has now approved 16 applications from voluntary sector organisations amounting to £47,000 – this comes from the revenue grants reserve. Work has also started on a Big Society fund for communities – this will be available from April 2013 in line with Cabinet decision.

Changing Lives Building Business

Good progress has been made in getting young people into work and supporting local business growth. To date:

- a. The Council now has 15 apprentices in line with target in waste, Business & Communities, Leisure, ICT and Customer Services
- b. 12 private sector businesses have successful applications for apprentices across the district and 5 apprentices have already started work
- c. 3 businesses have been successful in approval for the wage subsidy scheme.

Government announced in January the establishment of a national wage subsidy scheme. With this now in place, the Council will re-direct the existing budget into apprenticeship positions.

CCTV Data for Quarter 2 ending December

Impact of CCTV service – we have:

- Assisted the Police in making 31 Arrests.
- Completed 87 CCTV reviews submitted by the Police.
- Issued the Police with 52 evidential packages for interview and court purposes.
- Reported 145 incidents to the Police, which include reports of Anti-social behaviour, Public Order, Retail Theft, Assault, Drunk Driving and Drug offences.
- We have also reacted to Police and local retailers requests for assistance on 235 occasions.

Councillor Tim Swales

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customer Services