

Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance

4 April 2017

Dalton Bridge progress

- Tenders have been assessed and the contract for works it about to be awarded.

Prison site progress

- Demolition of the site continues at a pace and is expected to be completed by June 2017. At this point the archaeological surveys will commence and will include a wide range of public engagement opportunities, including: site visits, archaeological lectures and social media updates on progress.
- C4DI – The Centre for Digital Innovation – will be a key element of the prison site development and will offer coworking, tech incubation and corporate innovation. C4DI will establish a beta project in the area prior to moving into the new development and the Business and Economy team are gearing up to support the rollout.

Vibrant Market Towns

- Vibrant market town e-newsletters have been developed for each market town and are distributed on a fortnightly basis. This is already showing early benefit with business feedback demonstrating the value of shared good practice in the newsletters.
- From 1st April the Business and Economy Team will take on the Policy and Promotion for HDC Markets, the aim is to ensure we put the Market at the heart of our Vibrant Market Towns programme.
- The recruitment process is being completed for a Vibrant Market Towns Trainee Project Officer, this is a graduate post which will support the VMT project.

Business Support

- Innovation Breakfasts bring together businesses on a quarterly basis to share opportunities, advice and briefings. Successes to date include businesses identifying supply chain opportunities, improving links with local education organisations and developing web-based information portals. Initially based around a Stokesley hub, the Innovation Breakfasts proved to be enough of a success that businesses in Northallerton asked for their own hub-based group.
- A Business Network Support Grant of £40k has been made available and will be offered to existing business networks across the district to assist them in supporting their business members; approval of grants will be made by the Cabinet member for Economic Development and Finance and the Director of Economy and Planning.

Graduates and Apprentices

- The Apprentice scheme continues to be popular with 41 applications received during 2016/17, 35 of which have been approved, to the maximum level of funding available.
- Whilst more difficult to identify Graduates within the local area we have still been able to offer 12 places as part of the Graduate scheme.
- Both the Graduate and Apprentice schemes will be going before Scrutiny Committee in the new Council year.

Brexit

The impact of Brexit and Implications on Local Authorities is at a very early stage with the Prime Minister recently confirming the trigger of Article 50 on 29 March 2017.

The Government White Paper on 20 July 2016 highlighted some areas in which leaving the European Union may impact on local government which included:

- Government continuing to support devolution
- Developing a new legal base where in 10 areas of law communities would benefit from powers and responsibilities being held closer to residents
- Local regeneration funding to be guaranteed until UK exits the EU
- Community Cohesion - the role that Councils can play as leaders of their place and future demand for skilled workers in public services
- Trade and Councils track record of building successful European and International relationships that secure trade, investment, boost jobs and infrastructure and help attract visitors across the Country.

Councillor Peter Wilkinson
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance