

Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance

Business Support and Development

Lettings across the Council's industrial units and managed workspaces are performing very well with occupancy rates at higher levels than predicted. The Business and Economy team continue to work closely with businesses and are seeing growth in the volume of virtual tenancy applications at both Springboard and Evolution.

Dalton Industrial Estate

Following the successful implementation of the bridge at Dalton Industrial Estate we have experience significant economic growth in the area. Since then we have been working closely with businesses to identify how to unlock further business development and are facilitating improvements to the power network into the site. A recent submission to the Local Enterprise Partnership is also seeking funding to explore the feasibility of improving the highway infrastructure within the estate.

C4Di

The C4Di Beta Project continues to develop and following a very successful launch in December with partners and stakeholders involved in Agri-Tech has moved into the next phase of the project with the design of the digital hub, which will be located within the Treadmills development.

Skills Village

The Skills Village is a project that works closely with key delivery partners to provide industry required skills to help address a skills shortage within the construction industry. Working with housebuilders, training providers and other small to medium building trade businesses this would be an innovative approach to give students an understanding of careers in construction through the use of an on-site construction classroom and early discussions with local industry and education providers has received an extremely positive response.

I will be bringing a Cabinet paper to seek support for this project, which will enable Hambleton District Council to play a key role in developing much needed skills in construction based careers such as Brickwork, Marketing, Joinery, Quantity Surveying and IT.

Apprentices and Graduates

The apprenticeship programme funded by Hambleton District Council continues to deliver support to businesses to employ young people in apprentice positions. This year has seen a high number of successful applications to the fund which has resulted in a waiting list by the end of quarter three. Unfortunately there have been fewer applications to fund graduate positions than anticipated, which has allowed me to agree to move some of the graduate funding to support up to an additional six apprenticeship positions in the district.

Graduates are seen as a key part of future business growth and I have therefore asked officers to review how we can support graduates into local businesses, particularly through digital skills and the links we now have with C4Di.

Hambleton Business Conference

I am pleased to confirm that the Hambleton Business Conference will be held on 22 May this year with a theme of 'Embracing the Digital Revolution' which aims to showcase how business can use digital technology to maximise their competitive advantage. Last year's event had over 130 attendees and received very positive feedback and we can expect the same mix of engaging speakers and high quality workshops at this year's Hambleton Business Conference.

Councillor Peter R Wilkinson
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance

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