

Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance

26 July 2022

Apprentice Scheme

The Council's Apprenticeship Scheme continues to deliver results. The scheme, which provides £2,000 support to small businesses to take on new apprentices, has helped 240 local people to undertake apprenticeships in the district since its inception in 2012.

During the last financial year 31 grants were awarded, our most successful year to date. Follow up checks with the businesses show a high level of retention too with 24 of the apprentices still being with the businesses after a year. All of course benefit from gaining new skills, experience and qualifications.

Strong interest is already evident for the final year of the scheme. To date, 4 businesses have already had grants approved and there are a further 8 live enquiries. This is even before we have launched our summer PR campaign to give the scheme a fresh push. We will be celebrating ten successful years of supporting young people and local businesses across all of our media channels over coming weeks.

Heritage Hub

The latest project to be delivered under the High Street Heritage Action Zone for Northallerton is the Heritage Hub. Located at 90 High Street the facility is hosting a range of artifacts, displays and workshops about the history of Northallerton.

Its purpose is to engage people with the heritage of the town and the work of the Heritage Action Zone with focus on a different theme each month. Used as a base for community engagement inviting people to explore the towns past and add their own memories, artefacts and stories it will build a collection of material which can be used for displays and to create a digital depository of information that is accessible through a dedicated website which has been launched as part of the project www.northallertonheritage.uk

Since opening its doors on the 18th May over 500 people have visited, with an average of 22 visitors a day, market days being the most popular. Historic England, who are providing half of the funding support, have declared it a "fantastic initiative". It is equally popular with local people, visitor book is filled with praise and positive comments, many promising repeat visits and expressing a desire for a permanent facility.

"Interesting project and enthusiastic staff"

"What a welcome addition to the town – may it grow and prosper!"

"So pleased to see we are now shouting about how interesting Northallerton is. More please!"

"Inspiring to see local history of the town"

C4DI Northallerton

As I reported in my last update C4DI Northallerton continues to generate interest which was again demonstrated by the very successful open day held on the 6th July. Over 50 businesses visited many with a strong interest in either taking up space or being a community member. Attendees included The Mercer Group part of the Northern Powerhouse and Armstrong Watson, a local company based in Northallerton who offer Accountancy, Business and Financial advice.

The day was well supported by a range of stakeholder and partners including the Y&NY Local Enterprise Partnership, and Barclays Eagle Labs, who were very pleased to have made some good contacts through the event. C4DI Northallerton businesses CSX (Climate Solutions), Ambasad & Frontier Energy were on hand to demonstrate what they do and what it is like to be part of the C4DI community, together with a couple of C4DI Hull businesses such as FireLabs 3D Printing company

The event was also supported by the C@N Partnership, colleagues from University of Sunderland were on site, promoting C@N and what it has to offer from both University of Sunderland and York College and provide tours of the impressive Campus facility.

The open day was further enhanced by members of the public coming to site, including former prison officers, fire fighters and those who had grown up with the prison on their doorstep and were interested in the transformation of the prison. Visitors were also encouraged to visit the high street Heritage Hub, with some great results as this led to donations of a huge collection of photographs and a hefty visitor log book used by prison officers at the gate in the last year of its operation.

The event enabled both businesses and the general public to have a better understanding of what the Council with its delivery partners have achieved so far on the Treadmills site and opportunities which are available.

Councillor Peter Wilkinson
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance