
OVERVIEW OF ECONOMY AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Economy and Regeneration Portfolio.

Relocation of Cattle Market from Clifton Road

2. In accordance with the provisions of the Darlington Extension and Improvement Act 1872, Cabinet recommended that Council vote in favour of the relocation of the Cattle Market from the existing Clifton Road site to Hambleton Farm and to the associated financial package required from the Council in order to facilitate the relocation.
3. Cabinet also authorised the Director for Economic Growth to negotiate and complete, in consultation with the respective Portfolio Holder, the necessary agreements for the proposal which would improve the residential amenity for the properties around Clifton Road, make available a brownfield site in a sustainable location for suitable development in line with the Local Plan and support the business growth opportunities for the agricultural sector which result from a new facility being delivered.
4. It was also agreed that the Clifton Road site be declared surplus to requirements and £20,000 of the future land receipt be released to enable the Council to ensure the site is safe and secure following the successful relocation of the cattle Market from Clifton Road.

Land at Former Eastbourne School Phase II – Disposal and Investment in Eastbourne Sports Complex

5. Cabinet was informed on progress made with regard to the disposal of land at Eastbourne School Phase II and of the proposals for the receipt from the sale of the land to reinvest in sporting provision, in line with the requirements of Department for Education and Sport England, utilising the capital receipt from the sale of the Phase II land.
6. Cabinet also agreed that an area of 1007 square metres of land on the site be declared surplus to the Council's requirements.

Local Centre Site, Central Park

7. Hellens Group has been selected as developer for the Local Centre Site on Central Park. Work is current being carried out with Solicitors to finalise the contracts. The development would comprise a Sainsbury's store, Marstons Restaurant and a small

retail shop unit.

Economy Update

8. Current statistics regarding employment/unemployment are:-
 - (a) Employment rate is 71 per cent - above the North East average and just behind national;
 - (b) Unemployment is at 7.2 per cent reducing from 8.6 per cent in 2013;
 - (c) Youth unemployment is 4.8 per cent reducing from 8.6 per cent the previous year; and
 - (d) The 2014 NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) figure for young people was 6.9 per cent, the 14th highest figure nationally.
9. In a recent Royal Bank of Scotland report, Darlington was shown to be the best performing north east economy for the third consecutive quarter; with our growth beating all UK regional averages outside of London.
10. Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimate that in 2014, 23 per cent (12,000) of Darlington employees were paid less than the 2013 Living wage of £7.65 an hour. Comparatively this is the second lowest percentage of Tees Valley Local Authorities (behind Stockton) and 5th of 12 North East Local Authorities.
11. Darlington currently has 4,951 registered businesses including sole traders.
12. Of the 60 units at Business Central, 20 are now occupied i.e. one third.
13. On 16 September 2015 the Council's Economy Team supported by Tees Valley Unlimited and key strategic partners including UK Trading and Investment, held a series of business growth surgeries to help businesses tap into a range of support services. This event was attended by approximately 25 businesses from the Borough and surrounding area, with positive feedback gathered from all involved.
14. The 'Invest in Darlington' website has now launched www.investindarlington.co.uk. This website is our key promotional tool to sell Darlington to potential investors as a great place to live and work. As part of this aerial photography and a video has been taken of key commercial sites, namely the North Western Growth Zone, around Faverdale; Central Park and Eastern Growth Zone. These high quality images, taken by a drone, enable us to visually demonstrate available sites and premises to support inward investment and showcase the impressive existing buildings we have.
15. 41 Darlington businesses have received a voucher for the TV broadband voucher scheme of up to £3000 to get better connected to a value of £37,000.
16. The Pop Up Shop scheme in the Town Hall Civic Reception has been running since May and to date has engaged directly with 40 local businesses and confirmed

slots with 35.

17. Red Hall Employability project has to date worked with 78 unemployed people with many gaining jobs or securing training or apprenticeships.
18. BQ Magazine Darlington Special is a high quality 52 page publication based entirely on Darlington, showcasing our growing economy and the great things that are happening in the Town, is being distributed this month. It has been sent directly to around 52,000 influential business people in the north east and Yorkshire – mainly targeting potential inward investors but also hitting many of our local businesses, who can use the publication in discussions with business colleagues.
19. The Ingenious Darlington place brand project continues to develop. Close to 50 businesses have ‘signed up’ to use the brand or expressed strong interest in doing so. The Foundation for Jobs Low Carbon event last month was re-branded ‘Ingenious Engineering’ to further raise awareness of the brand and introduce pupils to the project and thinking behind Darlington’s ingenuity. Plans are being developed for a high profile launch event in spring/summer 2016.
20. Aerial photography and video has been taken of key commercial sites, namely the North Western Growth Zone, around Faverdale; Central Park and Eastern Growth Zone. These high quality images, taken by a drone, enable us to visually demonstrate available sites and premises to support inward investment and showcase the impressive existing buildings we have.

National Biologics Manufacturing Centre

21. On 30 September the National Biologics Manufacturing Centre (NBMC) was officially opened by Jo Johnson MP, the Minister of State for Universities and Science.
22. NBMC is located in our core business site near bank top station, Central Park. This is a significant once in a lifetime opportunity for Darlington and so we wanted to provide our business community some further information on what this can mean for our local economy.
23. The NBMC is a direct result of the Government’s strategy for the UK to be a global leader in the life sciences market – having this facility in Darlington will really put Darlington on the global map and will frequently have high level UK and international visitors. We really need to maximise on this opportunity to showcase Darlington as a great place to do business as this will open up significant inward investment opportunities on the back of it which we as a council need to capitalise on.
24. The NBMC will help companies to commercialise ideas and take them to market faster and with minimal risk with businesses will be able to work with the Centre for Process Innovation (CPI) and their expertise in this facility to meet the needs of business through Research and Development within biologics, the types of projects being worked on in Darlington will include personalised drugs for treatment which will dramatically impact the current ‘one size fits all’ pharmaceutical industry

approach. The facilities in Darlington will dramatically reduce the research and development of life saving drugs reducing timescales for some projects from six months lead in to just one month.

25. 30 Initial locations were viewed and considered to locate this facility with Darlington securing this high profile project. It is estimated the value of biosciences to the UK economy by 2025 will reach £8 billion.
26. The project has cost £38 million to build and employs about 40 scientists on site as well as a range of other jobs from HR, business admin to legal support – these are very highly skilled/well paid jobs for our local economy. NBMC is a State of the art 5000m² facility.
27. It includes 12 laboratories, including analytical development suite, advanced processing suite and two simulation suites, an open plan lecture theatre and conferencing space with 120 delegate capacity.
28. CPI has also announced a £20m investment in Darlington of their Biologics Factory of the Future due to open 2017, £10m of this has come from Tees Valley Unlimited Local Enterprise Partnership funding.
29. Darlington's Foundation for Jobs (FFJ) programme have already worked with CPI to host a Bioscience event in July 2015 which was attended by 150 Darlington students aged 14 to 18. This event was aimed to raise awareness of the career opportunities NBMC will create within the sub region.
30. FFJ have been working with CPI to arrange a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) session for Darlington teachers in November 2015. At this session there will be an opportunity to tour the new NBMC facility; hear from staff about the work they will do; and the potential careers opportunities they foresee in this industry in the future.

Housing Needs Assessment

31. An up to date objective assessment of housing needs has been completed and published. Its headline findings are that 9,900 new homes will be needed in the Borough from 2016 to 2026, equivalent to about 500 new homes every year. 36 per cent of these needs are for affordable housing. This is higher than the long term average annual growth in dwellings of about 400 to 430.
32. This is also more housing than was being planned for in the emerging Making and Growing Places document (MGP), which reflected the adopted Local Development Framework Core Strategy requirement of about 350 to 400 new homes per annum. A new local plan will need to be prepared as these higher needs cannot be accommodated in the areas identified for new housing in the emerging MGP.
33. While a new local plan is being prepared, planning applications for new housing will have to be considered against the national planning policy presumption in favour of sustainable development. This could mean granting planning permission for housing on both previously identified and unidentified suitable sites at the urban

fringe and on the edge of villages, as well as sites within the urban area, until the Council can show that there is enough land to provide for at least five years of new housing to meet these needs.

34. A report outlining the housing needs findings, the implications for local plan preparation and for making decisions on planning applications for new housing while a new plan is being prepared, was considered by Cabinet on 3 November.

Durham Tees Valley Airport

35. In August a pre-application presentation of development proposals for Durham Tees Valley Airport was made by Peel to Planning Committee members. The proposal includes a residential development comprising up to 350 residential dwellings, a local services centre, a gym, a vehicle showroom and a hotel extension. Officers are currently considering the details as part of the Council's pre-application service, and will provide comments on the planning merits of the proposal, and any additional information required prior to submission of the planning application.

West Park Master Plan

36. The Outline application for the strategic housing scheme at West Park Garden Village for 1200 homes had initially been scheduled for the Planning Committee on 4 September 2015. A Council Members' briefing session outlining the scheme and Masterplan, was held 26 August 2015 presented by Bussey and Armstrong and the Council.
37. Issues relating to the viability of the scheme and independent valuation reports and issues relating to Highways England concerns regarding the A68 West Auckland Road impact on the A1(M) have delayed the application in front of Planning Committee. It is envisaged that Planning Committee scheduled for 25 November 2015 is now likely as issues on viability and transport impact will have been resolved.

Red Hall Masterplan

38. Initial public engagement and public consultation from May to July 2013 identified seven 'Draft Core Values', and these have been used to form the basis of the draft Masterplan for Red Hall and identify a number of proposed projects for delivery from 2016 onwards. The Masterplan seeks to consolidate the central area of the area around the school, shop and community centre as part of an expanding wider residential area in the Eastern Growth Zone and improve the image of Red Hall from the B6297. The Masterplan will improve connectivity in and around Red Hall and improve links to Haughton Village for shops, schools and services and integration with future bus services between the proposed Burdon Hill development and the Town Centre. Public spaces have been rationalised and re-balanced across the area providing a variety of play and leisure opportunities and a new focus in the centre of the estate will be created through the creation of a 'Village Green' to complement the centre of the estate.

39. A Red Hall Stakeholder Event held on 17 October 2015 by Groundwork North East provided further opportunity for the community to visit a specific stall on the Red Hall Masterplan and discuss any of the proposed projects with some key members of the team of officers from the Council that were responsible for producing the draft Masterplan for Red Hall. The Red Hall Stakeholder event was well attended and Groundwork confirmed that the event was both well received and attended, with 234 residents in total attending the event. Residents were encouraged to discuss and comment on the draft Masterplan and make suggestions and comments on the suggested projects. In total, 92 comments were made by residents who attended the event on the Masterplan.
40. A Scrutiny report is being prepared to present at a Joint Adults and Place Scrutiny Committee on 26 November 2015.

Darlington Station Masterplan

41. Work is progressing on the development of options for a Masterplan for the Station and surrounding area. The Masterplan will facilitate the realisation of the Council's plans for economic growth by ensuring that Darlington Station is fit for purpose in the 21st Century through:-
 - (a) enabling improved connectivity by rail with other places;
 - (b) being ready for forthcoming high speed train services and Transport for the North fast services;
 - (c) having the capacity for all other forecast passenger and freight train services; and
 - (d) improved passenger access and Station facilities.
42. The Masterplan will also contribute to economic growth by setting out the strategic plan for regeneration in the immediate area surrounding the Station to create additional employment, business activity and housing.
43. The rail proposals are being developed in close partnership with Network Rail and train operators. It is the intention that the preferred rail scheme will be submitted by Network Rail in Autumn 2016 for Government funding.
44. An engagement process is ongoing with key stakeholders, including business leaders, to ensure their input is made to the Masterplan. This will be followed by a public consultation process in 2016, prior to the consideration of the draft Masterplan by Cabinet.

The Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc.) (England) Order 2014 ('the Order') Article 3 and 5

45. Following concerns nationally about the conduct of management and lettings agents, new legislation was introduced to improve standards on 1 October 2014.

The legislation allows private tenants to complain to a redress scheme to deal with and investigate their complaints. Organisations involved in lettings and management must be a member of one of three available approved redress schemes and membership should have started on 1 October 2014. After allowing a period of grace for organisations to join a redress scheme, the Private Sector Housing team started to investigate who were not members of approved schemes. A complaint was also received from a private tenant about their agent not being a member of a scheme. Four legal cases are currently ongoing and three of the agents have exercised their right of appeal about the fines imposed by the Council. Fines are up to a maximum of £5000 and although Councils can set their own level of fines they are encouraged to impose a maximum fine to encourage agents to join and ensure that private tenants can see that their complaints are being taken seriously.

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Economy and Regeneration Portfolio