

LEADER'S OVERVIEW

Darlington Partnership

1. The Darlington Partnership Board meeting held on 9 May focused on the Tees Valley Combined Authority Economic Strategy, and how it aligns to Darlington growth priorities. Ian Williams, Director of Economic Growth, gave a presentation to the Board highlighting Darlington's levels of employment which was higher than that of the Tees Valley, unemployment was lower and wages of employees in Darlington were the highest of the 12 North East authorities. He then went on to state that the initial focus of the Northern Powerhouse would be on the four 'primes' – globally significant economic assets concentrated across the North namely:- advanced manufacturing; energy; digital; and health innovation, and that these fit well with Tees Valley priority sectors. In addition the devolution deal and Combined Authority offers a new opportunity with more control of key funding areas and capacity to develop new mechanisms and initiatives.
2. The Partnership Board also received an update on the plans in place for the Festival of Ingenuity which was held in Darlington Town Centre on 8 and 9 July and recorded thanks to all the organisations and businesses who have contributed to it.

Regional and Tees Valley Updates

3. The Tees Valley Combined Authority held its Business Summit on 5 July 2016. Now in its fifth year, the 2016 Business Summit offered a unique opportunity to showcase businesses under one roof, in one day. The seminar helped develop skills and gain vital information to help grow and develop business as well as excellent networking opportunities. Invest in Darlington had a stall and there was significant interest from business in opportunities within the borough.
4. Lord Heseltine has been working with a number of key stakeholders in the Tees Valley to support their economic growth plans. He published his report and recommendations at an event in the Tees Valley on 7 June 2016, which I attended. I am pleased to see within the report a strong recognition of the economic assets within Darlington, and an endorsement of the key transport priorities that I, along with colleagues have been lobbying for.
5. I chaired the first meeting of the Combined Authority Transport Committee which considered the timetable to develop the first Tees Valley Strategic Transport Strategy, along with progress in seeking resources to take forward our immediate priorities. Bids have gone in to seek early work on the new Tees Crossing, together with further development of options for better east west connectivity.

6. The Combined Authority has now met three times, signed off its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), bids to the Local Growth Fund, and debated inevitably the potential impacts of the referendum outcome to our economy and timetable for devolution.
7. Consultation on the powers and constitution for a Mayoral Combined Authority is under way and Leaders will review the outcomes later in the summer. Along with the other Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) Leaders' and Mayor, I met with Greg Clark, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 12 July to discuss taking the Devolution Deal further.
8. I attended a meeting of HS2 East in Leeds on 8 June and on 9 June Transport for the North (TfN) Board followed by Rail North Association meeting later that day.

General Updates

9. Together with the Chief Executive I met with the Cllr Carl Les, Leader of North Yorkshire County Council, to consider the worrying and potentially serious implications of the current review of Acute Hospital services. The Memorial not only serves the local population but is an important accessible asset for residents of the Dales and Catterick. The two Health Scrutiny Committees intend to do some joint work on the options and implications that could best serve our communities.
10. As part of my Business Engagement Programme, I visited Mech-Tool Engineering (MTE) on 6 July. Based in Darlington, with additional manufacturing and assembly facilities in the Tees Valley, the 220-strong multi-disciplined team offers end-to-end service in design, engineering fabrication, project management, supply and installation.
11. I hosted a Breakfast Launch in advance of the Festival of Ingenuity which came to the Town on 8 and 9 July 2016. Darlington came together to celebrate its ingenious businesses and organisations who in turn, responded with creativity, enthusiasm and generosity to deliver this fantastic spectacle. Exhibitors included Cummins, Modus, Mech-Tool Engineering, Nifco, Arriva, Sherwoods, A1 Trust Cleveland Bridge, DeepOcean, Darlington College and Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue. Together we want to make a statement about the strength and vibrancy of Darlington and in particular inspire our young people. There were 27 organisations who contributed to the event, which was well attended despite the poor weather, and over 300 school aged children engaged in activities on Friday, 8 July.
12. On 18 July 2016, I was pleased to 'Open' and welcome guests to an event at Teesside University entitled '**Economic Strategy for Darlington – what happened and what's next?**' Local businesses were invited to attend by the Council and the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to discuss and put forward views and ideas on ways to further develop the local area enabling Darlington to continue to grow and prosper. The event highlighted what has been achieved during the past four years since the introduction of Darlington's Economic Strategy; revised priorities; update on progress; new developments in the Borough; update on Darlington's Local Plan; and discussed what will take Darlington to the

next level.

Policing and Community Safety

13. The Darlington Community Safety Partnership Board met on 27 May 2016 at which a number of issues were considered including the desistance work led by the Durham Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation Company, which is progressing well.
14. The Community Safety Partnership recognised the work being done on developing awareness of The Chanel Panel, including e-learning resources and a perception survey.
15. The Board further considered the sub group structure of the Partnership and will propose changes at the next meeting.

Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)

16. Discussions about the future of governance arrangements for the substance use agenda in Darlington continue, with key partners and stakeholders, as part of the implementation process around the MTFP proposals.
17. Work continues on the development of the Substance Use Pathways. The prison discharge pathway pilot works well. Work is mostly complete on the young people's pathways, with some finalisation needed on the overall hospital, and A&E, secondary care pathways.
18. Process mapping events were held in June and July with key managers, service users and carers and practitioners. A final report will be presented to the September DAAT Board and then circulated to key internal and external forums. Ongoing and follow up work will include joint training to ensure that the pathways are disseminated at practitioner level to all staff, in both treatment service and referring/referral organisations.
19. Publication of a national drug strategy has been delayed to autumn 2016. In lieu of this direction, work will now progress on development of the local Substance Use Strategy 2016/20.
20. The Psychoactive Substances Bill came into force in May. The local, multi-agency Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS/Legal Highs) Stakeholder Group continues to progress the local action plan to tackle associated harms. Recent work includes completion of the video and news platform resources with journalism students at Darlington College. These will be disseminated for use across multiple settings.
21. Under the Tobacco Control agenda, the Standardised Packaging Legislation came into effect on 20 May 2016 and this Council submitted a response to the Government's Tobacco Licensing Consultation.

Bill Dixon, Leader