

Committee: Council

Date:

Title: Report of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development

Tuesday, 9 October 2018

Report Author: Councillor Howard Ryles

Summary

1. This report summarises the ongoing key economic development activities.

Recommendations

2. None, this report is to note only

Financial Implications

3. None.

Background Papers

4. None.

Situation

Saffron Walden Business Improvement District

6. Positive ballot result - turnout rate was 47% (higher than the national average) with 68% voting yes
7. Businesses have voted for a 1.5% levy based on their rateable values, which will raise around £90,000 per year for five years to be used to support business growth initiatives in the town centre.
8. The council are collecting the BID levy from the 178 businesses comprising the BID on behalf of the BID
9. Saffron Walden BID company (limited by guarantee) being set up with official start date of 1st December 2018
10. The council is a levy payer and Cllr Ryles is becoming a director.

Car Parks

11. The Cabinet on 16th October 2018 will receive a car park work plan – the focus will be on the procurement of the replacement of the existing ticket machines to enable robust data to be produced for analysis - procurement commences in October with a forecast installation by May 2019. The report also sets out proposals for the Christmas 2018 parking promotions.

Broadband

12. Gigaclear has commenced their rollout of fibre to the premises – by end 2019 the forecast is that over 99% of homes and businesses in Uttlesford will have access to superfast broadband.
13. Superfast Essex, Gigaclear and Uttlesford information events were held on 31st May & 13th June 2018.
14. The Essex-Herts Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ) “a local strategy to secure future prosperity and health” will be available in October 2018.
15. On December 14th the council will be hosting a business forum at Chesterford Research Park on behalf of the DIZ entitled “The Internet of Things”.

Local Plan

16. The economic development team are involved in discussions regarding the employment land policies and employment proposals for the garden communities and the emerging economic development strategies and therefore ensuring robust employment evidence for the local plan is in place.

Grant Funding for Rural Businesses

17. Due to the extensive promotion of the availability of European LEADER funding by the economic development team the district continues to attract the largest amount of grant funding for rural businesses in the Essex/Herts LEADER area.

Uttlesford Business Breakfast

18. The annual business breakfast is scheduled for November 15th 2018 with the theme of how businesses can exploit the capability and opportunity provided by access to superfast broadband.

Uttlesford Business Awards

19. The Business Awards Gala Dinner was held on 14th June 2018, for which UDC is a key sponsor.
20. The 2019 business awards commence in October this year.

Economic Growth

21. Research into the types of sustainable economic growth and how to influence them will be commissioned in October 2018 and reported in December 2018.

Tourism

22. In consultation with partners such as the Tourist Information Centre service level agreements are in place with both Visit Essex and Visit Cambridge.

Other Potential Business Improvement Districts

23. Having consulted with the Great Dunmow Town Team the potential for a Business Improvement District will be assessed in January 2019.