

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICE UPDATE**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Richard Chesterton  
**Responsible Officer:** Jenny Clifford, Head of Planning, Regeneration & Growth

**Reason for Report:** To update members on progress with key Economic Development Service Priorities.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted**

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** It supports the corporate objectives for the economy.

**Financial Implications:** There are no additional financial implications arising from the report.

**Legal Implications:** None

**Risk Assessment:** None

**Equality Impact Assessment:** None anticipated

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of key projects and initiatives developed or supported by the Growth, Economy and Delivery team (GED team).

**2.0 Devon Hydro and Smart Grid Project ('Mills Project')**

- 2.1 The Policy Development Group considered a presentation at its last meeting. Since then progress has been made in developing bids and any further verbal update will be provided on the day.
- 2.2 A 1<sup>st</sup> stage application to Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Enterprise programme has been submitted. Initial feedback should be provided by the end of August 2018, hopefully resulting in a full bid being submitted the following month. The bid covers the installation of hydro generation schemes at Tiverton Weir, Manor Mills (Thorverton) and Flock Mill near Silverton.
- 2.3 In parallel with this, works have been undertaken by Hydromatch Ltd, delivering a full feasibility study on Tiverton Weir and progressing on to pre-application discussions with the Environment Agency. Arrangements are currently being made to secure access to the weir.

**3.0 Enquiries and Investments**

- 3.1 The GED team are continuing discussions with every land owner with an employment allocation in the local plan. This is helping us gain a better understanding of when sites might come forward and what potential barriers there

are. The Council can then decide what actions are required to assist in bringing these sites forward.

- 3.2 There is significant demand in the district for B1, B2 and B8 classification employment space. With low unemployment rates in the District, we are able to focus on supporting inward investment and indigenous business growth in areas that will hopefully achieve skills progression and higher paid jobs.
- 3.3 In the last couple of months we have had a number of internal re-location enquiries, where we have been working with businesses to find suitable sites within the district. Examples of development taking place and inward investment activities:
- Goonvean Development at Venn Farm
  - Planning application from Lidl to redevelop Lowman Works has been received
  - Hitchcocks

#### **4.0 Cullompton Heritage Project**

- 4.1 We heard at the end of May that the Council's bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) Townscape Heritage Programme was once again unsuccessful. This is a great disappointment after all the hard work put into the project over the last three years by the various partners. Feedback from the Heritage Lottery Fund noted the strength of the application but that they had an overwhelming number of applications. In total there were 24 applications nationally to this round, of which only 5 were successful.
- 4.2 However, we are actively looking at alternative ways in which we can take forward some of the strands of the original bid. We have had a very positive discussion with Historic England about how to proceed with a formal partnership under their 'Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas' (see <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/grants/our-grant-schemes/partnership-schemes-in-conservation-areas/>), which may offer the external engagement and some of the funding envisaged under the original HLF scheme.
- 4.3 Whilst Historic England remains very positive about proposals to enhance Cullompton, it is clear that they would not be able to fund a scheme to the same amount as the Heritage Lottery. This means that unless we can identify other sources of funding, there would be reduced overall grant scheme for restoration and regeneration of key buildings. However, the positive message is that this is not a competitive process, and the regional office has total discretion whether to approve the scheme or not.
- 4.4 The success of any regeneration / restoration scheme for the town centre will ultimately dependent on the delivery of the Town Centre Relief Road, since many of the issues of the high street result from the heavy traffic that runs through the town. Historic England is therefore advising that the timing of any bid should coincide with progress with delivery of the relief road. They are therefore suggesting that an outline application should be submitted by the end of the year, with the intention of developing a delivery plan in 2019 ready to start a scheme in Spring 2020.
- 4.5 We would still need to rework the original bid to meet Historic England's priorities, and restructure the financing, including trying to identify any further match funding, but as mentioned he remains very positive that it could be achieved.

## **5.0 LEADER Programme**

- 5.1 Three further projects have been approved by the LEADER Local Action Group, amounting to some £258,000 of funding for Mid Devon businesses. (Newton Equine Services, £133,177; Pegga Holdings £86,464; Terra Nova £39,246).
- 5.2 The fund is now 65% committed, with further large applications in the pipeline for their next meeting in September. There is still a good list of projects being developed with the deadline for applications in December this year.

## **6.0 Masterplanning**

- 6.1 This will be covered in a separate report.

## **7.0 Tiverton Market Events**

- 7.1 Tiverton Pannier Market has a busy round of events this summer, including:

Electric Nights Streetfood: The most recent monthly Night Market event (Electric Nights Streetfood) took place on 4 August with a Pirate theme. Crowds were entertained with sea-shanty music from a pirate band with the usual array of streetfood and children's entertainment also on offer. The summer night markets conclude on 1 September for this year with the addition of a Christmas special scheduled for 1 December to coincide with the town's light switch-on event. A verbal update on the 1 September event will be provided at this PDG.

- 7.2 Wild Wild West Country: On Saturday 18 August, the Market held a 'Wild Wild West Country' event as requested by the Market traders. The event was Wild West themed and offered fun activities for the whole family including: panning for gold, sand pit, tin-can alley and Tepees plus there were hot food stalls and visiting Alpacas. Fundraising activities raised money for the traders' chosen charity - Lucy Air Ambulance – and raised around £250.

- 7.3 Car Boot Sales: Following requests and expressions of interest from the public and traders, the Market's Sunday Car Boot Sale is returning on 30 September. The Car Boot Market will be run by a third party on a hire agreement at the Pannier Market.

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**Circulation of the Report:** Cllr Richard Chesterton  
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**List of Background Papers:** None