

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

18 November 2020

### **CLLR. RICHARD KERSHAW - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

For the period September 2020 to November 2020

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Business as usual activity**

###### *Engagement with businesses*

The usual engagement with businesses has been maintained, albeit with a reduced level of site visits. Much of the current resource and activity has been focused on helping businesses to access grants administered by the Council (see below) and helping businesses to obtain funding and other local and national support.

###### *North Walsham Town Centre Heritage Action Zone*

The current HAZ round has now had its official national launch, with £95m having been awarded to 69 High Streets.

A number of key activities have commenced including:

- a condition survey on The Cedars with a scoping report to follow;
- a Communication Strategy;
- the formulation of a community engagement plan;
- a draft tender brief for the Town Centre Place making;
- a funding bid for the Cultural Consortium;
- a risk workshop and updated Risk Register;
- a Stakeholder Group meeting.

###### *Visitor economy*

Visit North Norfolk's marketing campaign, *North Norfolk, Naturally*, a two-year marketing campaign (April 2018 to March 2020) was coming to an end just as lockdown occurred due to Covid-19.

The two-year campaign comprised 16 short films focusing on the coast and beaches, towns and villages, history and heritage, food and drink, arts and culture, walking and cycling, wildlife and nature, experiences to enjoy and family holidays. To date, there has been over 4 million film views across a number of media platforms.

This successful marketing outreach has been reflected within the 2019 Economic Impact of Tourism report received in September) which shows a tourism value of £528,931,378 (an increase of 3%) and total actual tourism related employment of 11,898, which is 29.7% of all employment (increase of 4%). Compared to 2018, the

average number of staying nights per trip was down 2.6%, however, the spend per overnight trip increased by 0.5% and the spend per night saw an increase of 3.2%. Spend per day trip saw an increase of 1%.

The current three-stage marketing campaign, *Unexplored North Norfolk*, runs to the end of 2020, forming part of a regional-wide campaign called Unexplored England run by Visit East of England. VNN is currently executing stage three, with a focus on building demand for 2021. The recently announced national lockdown will create a natural hiatus, with potential reduced national movements after the lockdown should a tiered system be re-instated. Nevertheless, through well considered and appropriate marketing, north Norfolk is well placed to capitalise on an anticipated desire for safe staycation locations next year.

Tourism marketing messages generally, for the time being, have been changed to “Now’s not the time...”

#### *Tourism Sector Support Grant*

The Council received almost 80 applications to the £175,000 North Norfolk Tourism Sector Support Fund. The standard of applications – for projects and initiatives and winter adaptations – was good and almost half have been invited to provide a more detailed Full Application. These will shortly be evaluated by a panel and Grant Offer Letters (with appropriate conditions) issued to successful bids.

#### *Energy Sector*

North Norfolk District Council is to help fund an important feasibility study into extending use of the Bacton Gas Terminal beyond its current expected life and role supporting the processing of natural gas, to create a major location for the production of hydrogen energy as the U.K. transitions to a “net zero” carbon energy economy.

The ‘Bacton 2.0’ Hydrogen Production Feasibility Study will be led by local cleaner energy experts Hydrogen East, a not-for-profit company, and the Council is matching a £12,500 funding contribution already committed by the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. The remaining £25,000 cost of study will be funded by the Oil and Gas Technology Centre.

The Council will be represented on the steering group for the feasibility study.

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

#### *Kickstart Job Support Programme*

This initiative, led by DWP, will provide funding for the creation of job placements for 16 to 24-year olds, the age group identified as most at risk of long-term unemployment as a result of the pandemic.

NNDC is looking to become ‘Representative’ organisation. Acting as a ‘Gateway’ we will be working with businesses and partners to deliver a local scheme for the north Norfolk District. An application has been made to DWP and, through expressions of interest from local businesses, the Council has identified its first cohort of

placements. Upon successful confirmation of the Council's application, we will look to implement the scheme shortly after.

#### *Lockdown Supporting Grants*

With the announcement of the national lockdown (5 November to 2 December), the Government has committed to providing further grant funding which will be again delivered by Local Authorities. There are two types of grants:

1. Local Restriction Grants – provided to businesses that are legally required to close due to the restrictions and are registered for Business Rates;
2. Additional Restriction Grants – a discretionary grant to support certain businesses that have not closed but have been heavily impacted or are not registered for Business Rates. The Council will need to design this scheme and determine the priority areas.

Guidance documents have just been issued by Central Government and work has commenced on preparing for the delivery of these schemes.

### **3 Meetings attended**

Meeting with Swift Aircraft, Scottow Enterprise Park  
NNDC Business Skills and Support  
National Grid Skills Apprenticeships