

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

24 February 2021

### **COUNCILLOR RICHARD KERSHAW - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

For the period January to February 2021

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

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

##### *Engagement with businesses*

The usual engagement with businesses has been maintained, albeit that site visits have not been conducted. 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.

##### **Lockdown Support Grants**

Following the national restrictions in November/December, the Government committed to providing further grant funding which would again be delivered by Local Authorities. The subsequent tier changes in December, and the announcement of further national restrictions in January, has resulted in a wide a range of grants being delivered by the Council, including:

- LRSO (Closed) Addendum Grant for 5/11/20-2/12/20.
- LRSO (Closed) Tier 2 Grant for 2/12/20-19/12/20.
- LRSO (Open) Tier 2 Grant for 2/12/20-19/12/20.
- LRSO (Closed) Tier 4 Grant for 26/12/20-05/01/20.
- Christmas Support Payments (Wet-Led Pubs).
- LRSO (3rd national lockdown 6 weeks payment) 5/1/20 onwards.
- Closed Business Lockdown (Top up Payment).
- Additional Restrictions Grant (for those unable to access LRSO)

The Council has extended the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) to now include more businesses that were previously unable to apply due to eligibility criteria, allowing the Council to support even more businesses in the district. This extension now includes businesses that offer a service to customers in a face-to-face environment and individuals who have received payment from the Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS). A second phase of the scheme is to be shortly launched, which will further support businesses impacted by the current national restrictions, but whom may not have been able to benefit from the Local Restrictions Grant Schemes.

NNDC has been independently recognised as an authority that has performed strongly in the delivery of numerous COVID grant schemes, according to figures compiled by the New Anglian Local Enterprise Partnership.

The data shows the performance of the District Council in awarding the grant payments ranks the highest among local authorities in the County in terms of amount paid out, number of recipients and percentage of total government allocation awarded.

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

A number of key activities have commenced including:

- a condition survey on The Cedars, with a Stage One of the scoping report due in January;
- a Communication Strategy;
- the formulation of a community engagement plan;
- the Invitation to Bid for design consultant to support the Town Centre Place making;
- a funding bid for the Cultural Consortium;
- a risk workshop and updated Risk Register;
- Stakeholder Group meetings.

### **Visitor economy**

NNDC has continued to work closely with Visit North Norfolk (VNN) to support businesses within the visitor economy and to support marketing aimed at encouraging tourist back when national restrictions have been lifted. Sentiment surveys have indicated that people are starting to look ahead now, given the uplift in the vaccine roll-out programme and the Government's tentative, but positive outlook towards summer breaks in the UK. VNN are anticipating being able to commence the 2021 annual campaign (North Norfolk Uncovered) in April. The campaign will promote the area and also things to do while here on a break e.g. attractions, eating out, visiting stately homes, historical exhibitions, visiting the Deep History Coast, going to museums etc. The 'covid-safe' message will continue to be embedded in all marketing activities and in line with Government guidance.

## **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 has successfully applied to be a 'Gateway' organisation, working with businesses and partners to deliver a local scheme for the north Norfolk District. The Council has now

had two applications to the DWP approved, having received over 100 expressions of interest for placements from local businesses. Work is now being undertaken to progress these which will include acquiring job descriptions for the new roles and ensuring that suitable contractual, employability support and general working arrangements are in place to support the placements.

### **3 Meetings attended**

Norfolk COVID Engagement Board	x6
EAC Committee Mtg	
Norfolk Seaweed Company Mtg	
Bacton SNS 2.0 Hydrogen Mtgs	x7
Lib Dem Council Leader's Mtgs	x5
GOLD	x14
North Walsham HAZ	x3
MHCLG Ministerial Briefings	x4
Development Committee	x3
Norfolk Public Sector Leaders Board	
District Leaders Mtgs	x5
Egmere Energy Mtg	
Cabinet	
Water Resources East	
North Norfolk Careers Group Mtg	
Equinor/Egmere mtg	
DCM	x3
Parish Council Mtgs	x9
Broadland Housing	