

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr Peter Murphy, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder	Council	8 September 2016	8(d)

**Executive Report: Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1** To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio, as set out below.

**2. Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) Scheme**

- 2.1** The CCF scheme is now complete and an evaluation report was submitted to DCLG as part of the funding requirements. Some of the key findings relating to interviews with the public are set out below:
- Four in five people interviewed at the Promenade were aware of the improvements with people most likely to be aware of improvements to Marine Lake, the Splash Pad and Euston Gardens (in that order)
  - Nine in ten people interviewed at the Promenade felt it had 'got better' over the last three years
  - More than half said the improvements were very important in their decision to make that visit to the Promenade
  - 93% of people at the Promenade were very or quite positive about their visit, whilst seven people at other towns had very or quite positive perceptions of Fleetwood Promenade
  - One in five people interviewed in other towns commented on improvements made to Fleetwood Promenade without prompting
  - Four in five visitors to the Promenade are very or quite likely to return in the future, with locals most likely (88%)
  - Three in four people interviewed in other towns are very or quite likely to visit Fleetwood Promenade in the future.

The full report can be viewed via the following [link](#):

- 2.2** Officers submitted an expression of interest in respect of Round 4 of the CCF announced in May 2016 focussed on providing business support for new and existing businesses and training for local people within Fleetwood and other coastal town centres. This was based on the feedback received after recent training funded by Coastal Community Team (CCT) monies and a growing demand following our previous CCF

training projects which benefitted approximately 100 individuals and businesses. We are still awaiting a decision, and I am hopeful that this will be received in time to report it verbally at the meeting.

### **3. Coastal Revival Fund**

**3.1** Contractors were appointed for each of the three elements of the works to the Marine Hall dome and interior lighting i.e. glazing, blind/s and interior lighting. The lighting works at marine hall are 95% complete and the main hall lighting levels are dramatically improved. The works to the dome itself have been delayed due to scaffolding and paint issues. The blinds and the replacement glass installations have also been delayed due to the specialist restoration process that is necessary.

### **4. Fleetwood Coastal Community Team**

**4.1** Support is being given to new and existing businesses in Fleetwood and support includes dealing with premises enquiries, assisting with shop improvements including painting, signage and the re-use of furniture previously used for the 'Pop Up' shop initiative in Poulton by multiple tenants occupying a large single shop unit on Lord Street

**4.2** A business support advisor has been commissioned to advise retail businesses in Fleetwood Town Centre on growth, networking and funding opportunities. The former Tobacco and Toffee Shop has been restored to its former glory.

### **5. Hillhouse Enterprise Zone (EZ)**

**5.1** A Masterplan is to be prepared for the EZ during 2016 and the main land owners (NPL) and partners including Council officers are about to appoint consultants to undertake this work.

### **6. Business Support**

**6.1** A total of 9 flood application grants were processed in partnership with Lancashire Boost totalling £17,479. In addition to this Business Rates Discounts were also awarded to these businesses totalling £39,074.

**6.2** Wyred-Up membership renewals are underway for 2016, and every opportunity is made to encourage new memberships at events. Wyred-Up events have taken place at Fleetwood Town Football Club's new training facility at Poolfoot Farm and at Wyre Banqueting Suite, Garstang both events were very well attended.

**6.3** The Wyre Business Exhibition (Wyre Expo) will take place on Tuesday 11 October, and the Wyre Business Awards will take place on Thursday 24 November.

### **7. Local Growth Plan**

**7.1** The Local Growth Plan, which expires in March 2017 is to be refreshed and a draft will be circulated for comment in the Autumn, with the final document being considered by Cabinet in Spring 2017. Outputs in the current plan have been successfully delivered under the six key

strategic initiatives and a full output report on the delivery of these will be provided alongside the draft plan in Spring 2017. The refreshed Growth Plan will set out our economic objectives and aspirations for 2017 to 2020 and will be prepared in consultation with our business community.

## **8. Planning Policy: Local Plan**

- 8.1** As previously reported, evidence in relation to the scale of constraints in relation to highways and flood risk is critical in determining what level of the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing can be delivered in the Local Plan. The Planning Policy team is working with consultants and strategic partners including the Environment Agency, LCC and Highways England (HE) to identify the extent to which flood risk and highways capacity is a constraining factor in delivering housing growth and consequently determine an appropriate deliverable housing requirement for the local plan.
- 8.2** A final report on highway capacity was received at the end of August and the detailed highway report relating to Poulton-le-Fylde will be completed by the first week in November.
- 8.3** Highways England, (HE) have advised that they cannot provide conclusive advice on the capacity of the A585 following completion of the Little Singleton Bypass in 2022 until the scheme for the road is designed in detail later this year. A meeting was held with HE at the end August and timescales agreed by when HE will complete their work. Highway evidence is crucial in finalising the Local Plan.
- 8.4** A working draft Local Plan has been prepared and briefings with ward members took place throughout August. Meetings with Parish and Town Councils on the draft Plan will be organised for September.
- 8.5** The draft Plan is also being shared with service providers and in particular the Local Education Authority and the various CCGs so as to establish what level of services are needed to support growth in the Local Plan. As Members will be aware the Local Plan will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 8.6** The draft Plan is currently being assessed in terms of viability, sustainability and habitat regulations.
- 8.7** As previously reported, under the 'Duty to Cooperate', letters have been sent to adjoining Local Authorities (except Ribble Valley) asking if they can assist Wyre with meeting the housing requirements. All Local Authorities that we wrote to have indicated that they are not able to assist Wyre. Those authorities, particularly those who share or overlap with our Housing Market Area have a duty to assist unless they can demonstrate why they are unable to. To date, we have not received any evidence from any of the neighbouring local authorities on this matter. Adjoining Local Authorities will want to see our highways evidence which is the basis for the request for assistance. Further discussions are necessary so as to agree a position between Wyre Council and adjoining Councils so as to at least demonstrate to the Inspector that in

preparing the Local Plan we have satisfied the requirements under the duty to co-operate.

- 8.8** The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level II is expected to be completed in September 2016. The draft report has been sent to the Environment Agency, United Utilities and the Lead Flood Risk Authority (Lancashire County Council) for comments.

## **9. Development Management**

- 9.1** The Government sets performance targets in respect of the speed and quality of decision making, in relation to major applications. The current targets are at least 50% of all major applications determined within the requisite 13 week period (speed) and not more than 20% of appeals allowed (quality). Failure to meet these targets measured over a period of two years leaves an authority open to being designated, under which certain applications would be able to be made directly to the Secretary of State. The local authority would still be required to register and administer the application but would not receive the normal fee. Current performance levels over the two year period are in excess of 60% for speed of decision and below 15% of appeals allowed for quality of decision.

## **10. Comments and Questions**

- 10.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.