

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr Peter Murphy Economy Portfolio Holder	Council	22 January 2015	20(d)

Executive Report January 2015: Economy Portfolio Holder
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Purpose of report

1.
 - 1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Economy Portfolio, as set out below.
2. **Coastal Communities Fund Scheme**
 - 2.1 Restoration of Euston Park has commenced with the removal of the fountain for repair and the renovation of the shelters. Tenders for the landscape work have been received and the appointed contractor is due to start at the end of January with completion scheduled for May 2015.
 - 2.2 Landscape plans for the ecology zone at Rossall are being prepared by LCC appointed through the sea defence contract by Balfour Beatty. A meeting with stakeholders was undertaken in November and a public consultation exercise is planned for late January early February.
 - 2.3 The Marine lakes were drained on the 6th December and silt moved from the main lake area to drain at the western side. Repairs to the aprons and installation of egress steps commenced on the 20th December and will continue through January and February. New paths have been created linking the promenade and the Marine Lake allowing a circular walking route.
 - 2.4 One training course on social media took place on 4 December with 13 beneficiaries attending. A further 3 courses are taking place between now and end of March 2015. All these courses are being run for SME's and are delivered by an external training provider called Vie.
 - 2.5 In addition to this, a 'Gateway to Tourism' course started w/c 5 January and this is being run for unemployed participants in conjunction with Blackpool and the Fylde College and Job Centre Plus. In tandem with attending the course, beneficiaries will 'give back' 20 hours of volunteer time to the Council.

3. Business support

- 3.1** Small Business Saturday took place on December 6. This year saw a massive increase on last year's event with 61 Wyre businesses taking part each with a different offer. Our role was to promote these offers on social media and our website.
- 3.2** Work is continuing on developing the Wyred Up website and the new Economic Development pages on the Wyre website. Both are on track to be launched January 2015.
- 3.3** A membership fee for the Wyred Up service to allow members to access 4 networking events per year has been set at £40 per annum. These fees are being introduced January 2015. The next Wyred Up event will take place on February 18 venue TBC.

4. Wyre Local Growth Plan

- 4.1** The Wyre Local Growth Plan was launched in January 2014. The quarterly report for Sep-Dec is now available, with an Annual Report published at the end of January. The document will be updated and refreshed to dovetail with the Council's Business Plan and also the Fylde Coast Growth Accelerator Strategy currently being developed by Genecon.

5. Growth accelerator

- 5.1** The Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company have appointed consultants to undertake a review of existing economic data across the EDC area and to produce a single economic baseline report. This report is to be used to identify the main growth opportunities in the area and develop a Growth Accelerator Strategy and action plan to highlight key activity to maximise positive economic impact. Further feedback from Wyre Council was to be provided early January 2015.

6. Planning policy

Local Plan

- 6.1** Work is progressing in defining a housing requirement for the Local Plan. The housing requirement needs to align with economic growth targets. The latter need to be defined.
- 6.2** Work is commencing in January on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) level 2, which informs the selection of sites for development.
- 6.3** Discussions are taking place with the County Council's Highways team with regards to the capacity of the Local Highways network to accommodate development. Particular Issues relate to the capacity of the A6 corridor.

Fylde Coast Highways and Transport Masterplan

- 6.4** The County Council and Blackpool Council have published the draft Masterplan for consultation until 20 February 2015. The Masterplan sets out a vision for travel and transport on the Fylde Coast and seeks to identify options to achieve the vision. Its purpose is to set a cohesive highways and transport strategy for this part of the County. It specifically states that one of its purposes is to put forward the measures that are considered necessary to support future growth and development. A Portfolio Holder report will be prepared setting out the Council's response to the consultation.

Onshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production and Distribution – draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- 6.5** The County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen BC have published the draft SPD for consultation until 2 March 2015. Its purpose is to interpret the policy requirements in the adopted Minerals and Waste Development Plan with regards to onshore oil and gas exploration. The draft SPD does not propose new policies but provides guidance and assist in the determination of planning applications relating to onshore oil and gas exploration. A Portfolio Holder report will be prepared setting out the Council's response to the consultation.

7. Comments and questions

- 7.1** 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.