



Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Gibson (pending the appointment of an Economy Portfolio Holder)	Council	1 December 2011	9(d)

## EXECUTIVE REPORT: ECONOMY PORTFOLIO HOLDER

### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Economy portfolio.

### 2. Current and Future Issues

- 2.1 Summary information is attached in Appendix 1 on recent activities relating to the following desired outcomes.

- Regeneration of Fleetwood and Thornton
- Revitalisation of the rural economy
- Affordable homes for local people
- Revitalisation of Poulton-le-Fylde
- A clear policy framework for future development
- Transport Matters

- 2.2 Information is also included in Appendix 1 on recent discussions on improvements to the local transport infrastructure which, if realised, would contribute significantly to a number of these desired outcomes.

3. 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.

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**ECONOMY PORTFOLIO HOLDER PROGRESS UPDATE DECEMBER 2011**

**1. Regeneration of Fleetwood and Thornton**

- 1.1 On the 12 October 2011 we hosted at Marine Hall the Fylde Coast Jobs and Skills Fair which was very successful with the following outcomes:

The outcome of the event was to 'Support and Improve Pathways to Employment' with a target of 172 people (a 10% increase on last year's target of 160) This event supported and improved pathways for 221 people. In addition:

- 44 people were recruited on the day and so far a further 6 have attended interviews, and a further 20 remain on recruitment lists.
- Hi Flyers Recruitment took on over 30 extra clients
- 27 candidates attended 3 workshops with 6 signing up for the full course
- JobCentre Plus gave out 111 cards with vacancy details
- 20 applications were completed for local construction company Parkinsons - currently working in Fleetwood
- 4 people have entered self-employment, with 3 others looking to become self-employed in the coming weeks.
- Direct Payments received 15 suitable applications for candidates and 7 have registered. 1 person has started work on a 20 hour contract after being unemployed for 4 months
- We were approached by Total Jobs a company advertising on behalf of recruitment agencies to look at working in partnership at a future event.

We will look to hold another Fair early next year.

1.2 Sea Change Project:

Work is continuing on both the Marine Hall Gardens and the formation of the new Rossall Tower and I will ensure that all Members receive details of the planned opening days as and when details are finalised.

**2. Revitalisation of the Rural Economy**

- 2.1 Officers will continue to work with local businesses to support the revitalisation of the rural economy.

**3. Affordable Homes for Local People**

- 3.1 At the Cabinet meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2011 a Planning Protocol for Affordable Housing Schemes was approved and the use of the protocol to identify and bring forward sites will improve partnership working between relevant stakeholders involved in the development process,

reducing conflict and delay at all stages of the development and planning process, from original site identification to completion/handover and beyond, and should lead to an increased provision of affordable homes on rural exception sites to meet the need for such as identified in the adopted Rural Housing Needs Assessment 2010.

#### **4. Revitalisation of Poulton-le-Fylde**

**4.1** A weekly market has been re-established in Poulton. The first Market was held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2011 and was extremely successful with significant increase in footfall. Holding a market on a Wednesday clashes with the Great Eccleston market and following objections from traders and operators of the Great Eccleston market the decision was taken to move the day of the Poulton Market to Monday. The first Monday market was held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011 and again an increase in footfall in Poulton was observed by both Members and Officers. Poulton is a Historic Market Town and the holding of a weekly market not only reflects the tradition and history of the town but also provides an opportunity for economic growth.

#### **5. A Clear Policy Framework for Future Development**

**5.1** Officers and the Policy Group are continuing to work on the Core Strategy and the public consultation process will commence in the spring of next year.

#### **6. Transport Infrastructure**

**6.1** Providing appropriate improvements to our infrastructure remains a priority and it is integral to economic growth. We have championed improving traffic circulation in Poulton and as a result LCC have included the principle of forming a relief road through the Hardhorn car park in their medium term plan. Work will soon commence on improving the bus station at Cleveleys an integral transport hub and the re-opening of the tramway is still on track for spring 2012.