

SCRUTINY ECONOMY COMMITTEE

3 JUNE 2010

Key Elements of the Programme for the Economy Portfolio for 2010/11

Economic Development Strategy

This year the priorities of the Economic Development Strategy focus on promoting and securing the growth of businesses, a better-trained workforce, helping people into work, bringing forward the availability of employment land and lobbying for investment in transportation and the communications infrastructure. A fuller statement of the Economic Development Programme is set out in the report under item 9 of the Agenda.

Exeter & Heart of Devon Economic Development Partnership

We shall set out the key themes and actions that are important to Exeter's economy in the Investment Plan for the Homes and Communities Agency's Single Conversation. In particular we shall identify those areas where investment will be sought to bring forward employment sites.

Small Businesses

Through the Exeter Business Support initiative, secure the starting up of 50 small businesses in the city.

Help local small businesses to secure public sector contracts by working with partners to improve the functionality and awareness of the 'Buy, Sell, Prosper' website.

City Centre Promotion

Work with the business community to prepare a business plan and gain support for the establishment of a Business Improvement District for the city centre seeking to further improve the attractiveness of the city centre to visitors and investment.

Canal Basin

The new build at the head of the Basin has been completed and a long lease granted to Signpost. The affordable units are all occupied and negotiations are well advanced with a restaurant operator for the ground floor. The Michael Browning Way extension and new car park/ seasonal boat storage area has been completed. Negotiations are in hand to facilitate starts on both the Old Electricity Building and the remaining new build site at the head of the Basin. Planning consent has been granted for the new Outdoor Education Centre and Devon CC have agreed provisional terms with ECQT for the site. An update on the overall Delivery Strategy will be submitted to Executive in the Autumn.

Science Park

Following the establishment of the Exeter Science Park Company we will continue to progress the development with our partners, encouraging the development and growth of science, technology, and research based sectors in the local economy, in particular undertake initial marketing of the site to potential occupiers and to attract prospective joint venture partners for significant investment in phase 2. This year, subject to confirmation of the funding for the Major Scheme Bid for improvements to Junction 29 and 30 we expect to see works commence on the site infrastructure.

Inward Investment

Through a new Exeter Marketing Partnership establish a public private partnership to promote a positive and progressive image of the City's economy including the New Growth Point projects and encourage inward investment.

Undertake a marketing campaign aiming to attract government agencies seeking to relocate prompted by the Government's Smith report.

Skills and workforce development

Work with the Employment and Skills Board to promote investment in relevant training provision for employers and identify skills issues relating to potential job opportunities arising from the Exeter and East Devon New Growth Point projects.

Assist a minimum of 300 people from the most deprived neighbourhoods in the city to take up training and/or employment by continuing the successful activities of the Exeter Positive Steps Fund.

Tourism

We shall continue to grow and develop the Exeter and Essential Devon Tourism Partnership increasing its membership base and thereby its resources to undertake a marked increase in promotional activity.

Employment Land provision

The Local Development Framework is expected late this year to identify some 40 hectares of employment land to be brought forward in the City by 2026. A significant addition to Exeter's employment land supply will be provided at Yeoford Way, Marsh Barton where some 15 hectares of employment land has recently been approved by the Planning Committee.

Councillor Stella Brock
Portfolio Holder Economy and Tourism