AGENDA ITEM NO. 11

TITLE: BUSINESS LIAISON/ JOBS GROWTH UPDATE

Committee: Development & Transport Committee

Date: 3rd December 2013

Author: Daren Hill, Business Development Manager

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To provide an update on the business liaison/ jobs growth activity of the sustainable development section.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are requested to;

Note the contents of the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 This report provides an overview of the business liaison/ jobs growth activity of the business development team in 2013 and provides the first opportunity to assess the monitoring targets set out in the District Council's Jobs Growth Strategy and draft Local Plan.

Business Liaison/ Jobs Growth Activity Update

3.2 The Business Development Manager and Economic Development Officer have continued to undertake a series of visits to companies across the District during the past 11 months including both small and large businesses from a wide range of commercial sectors. Table 1 provides an overview of the companies that have been involved in visits to date. Although, the individual discussions are confidential in nature, some of the broad issues discussed during these meetings have included skills and recruitment related matters e.g. apprenticeships/internships, help with commercial property and land searches and advice and information on available sources of funding. They have also provided an excellent platform for highlighting development opportunities and growth delivery projects within the district. A separate section has been provided in the table for those companies within the Ely Station Gateway as these meetings were arranged specifically to obtain feedback on the District Council’s draft development framework for this area.
### Table 1: East Cambridgeshire Companies visited in 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ely</th>
<th>Soham</th>
<th>Littleport</th>
<th>Rest of District</th>
<th>Ely Station Gateway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas Systems</td>
<td>G’s</td>
<td>JDR Cables</td>
<td>De Sangosse</td>
<td>Standen Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge Commodities</td>
<td>James Graven</td>
<td>3T Communications</td>
<td>Quotient Bio-Research</td>
<td>Hanson Concrete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorlabs</td>
<td>Blue Shed Studios</td>
<td>May Farm (Mushroom Farm)</td>
<td>British School of Racing</td>
<td>EMG Ford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shearline Precision Engineering</td>
<td>Soham Village College</td>
<td>M&amp;D Ltd</td>
<td>Anson Packaging</td>
<td>Network Rail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter Group</td>
<td>Sweat Gym</td>
<td>Littleport Eco Business Park (Jonathan James)</td>
<td>DB Broadcast</td>
<td>Ely Tyre Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumora</td>
<td>Dean’s Minis</td>
<td>Inertia Games Studio</td>
<td>Camro Data Centre</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grovemere Property</td>
<td></td>
<td>Armourstore/ Paragon Properties</td>
<td>Interactive Business Dynamics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ALS Eclipse</td>
<td></td>
<td>YPL Furniture Store</td>
<td>Fernlea Business Support</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Samsun Materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Whizzle</td>
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<td>AAT</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>K3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micron Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wyvern Group</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HSBC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Greys of Ely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Octagon Studios</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Witchford Village College</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoenix Tm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bottisham Village College</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Januarys</td>
<td>IT Green</td>
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### 3.3 From the list of companies included in the table above, the following case studies provide examples of some of the assistance provided by the team.
3.4 **Case Study 1: Potter Group, Ely**

Initial discussions took place with the Potter Logistics Group Management team earlier this year with Cheffins Commercial and focussed on the redevelopment potential of their site given that the Queen Adelaide depot was included as a key employment opportunity within the draft Local Plan. A further meeting was then facilitated with planning and the sustainable development section to explore options further. A Member tour is scheduled for the morning of the 3rd December to provide a wider perspective of the company’s vision for the future. An outline funding bid has also been submitted to the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough LEP Local Growth Fund with regards to developing a logistics training centre facility for the site.

3.5 **Case Study 2: Thorlabs, Ely**

Relations with local photonics company Thorlabs have been strengthened over the past year through a number of specific initiatives including assistance with the development and introduction of a new apprenticeship scheme within the company. The Business Development Manager and Economic Development Officer also provided support on an interim commercial property search given the company’s growth over the last few years as well as providing advice on longer-term development/expansion opportunities. As a result, the chairman of the Council and the Business Development Member champion were invited as official guests to the launch of their new product “Nexus” in May 2013 which provided excellent PR benefits for both the company and the District Council. Thorlabs is one of the District’s largest employers and is looking to develop relations further within the local community.

3.6 The team continues to provide a contact point for business related enquiries and support. To date in 2013, we have responded to a total of 71 commercial property enquiries which have ultimately led to 6 project successes and the creation of 57 jobs and the safeguarding of 12 jobs. The enquiries have been received via our 360 East Cambridgeshire website and include; Offices (22), Industrial (20), Retail (15), Land (3) Hybrid (1), Other (10). This figure also includes 1 foreign direct investment. In total we have responded to 87 other business related enquiries (i.e start-ups/ funding/ grants etc) giving a total of 158 enquiries overall.

3.7 District wide marketing continues to be undertaken predominantly through e-newsletters, and social media via the 360 East Cambridgeshire website. Specific marketing materials are also been developed for all of the key employment sites within the new draft Local Plan (see annex 1). New draft marketing brochures have also been produced in partnership with local agents and developers for Ely, Soham and Littleport which highlight key infrastructure improvements and development opportunities. These will be used predominantly for e-marketing purposes. The commercial premises section of the 360 East Cambs website also underwent a major overhaul in 2013 which will hopefully provide further direct enquiries for the team as the
commercial market improves. In addition, a recent funding event was held in partnership with the Ely Chamber of Commerce at e-space north Littleport which attracted over 40 local businesses. The team also had a presence once again at the Ely Cathedral business exhibition in May.

3.8 The East Cambridgeshire District Council Apprenticeship Scheme was launched in 2013. An update paper will be brought to this committee early in 2014 by the Economic Development Officer, but to date five offer letters have been sent out to local businesses who have accessed the funding including; G and J Peck - Ely, Cobham Antenna – Cheveley, Kings School - Ely, Ivor Searle – Soham, and Hybrid Laser- Ely totalling £9,000. Round 2 of the scheme is now open with a remaining £7,000 available for local businesses.

3.9 October also saw the launch of the East Cambridgeshire Youth Enterprise Forum which was piloted during a year 11 Personal and Social Health Education (PSHE) day at Witchford Village College. The Forum aims to bring together young people, businesses and partners to help raise awareness of the local opportunities, world class businesses and ways to work in the district. Business participants included Shearline Precision Engineering, Michell Instruments and Forces Recruitment. On the day, 140 students experienced five different themed rooms hearing from business leaders and career specialists on topics ranging from apprenticeships to practical CV/interview tips. They also learnt to debate with Councillors from East Cambridgeshire District Council. The pilot was very successful and it is hoped to roll this out to other schools across the District in 2014.

3.10 The team also continues to provide a useful link and “delivery arm” for development services supporting both the statutory control and policy sections through both project delivery and by providing advice and information in relation to major and minor business planning applications and key development sites. Some of the major sites where we have been involved in the last year include (Ely Octagon Business Park, Camro Data Centre, Sutton, Littleport Eco Business Park, Lancaster Way Business Park, Old Station, Sutton, Soham Northern and Eastern Gateways, Crystal Structures, Bottisham.)

Jobs Growth Targets and Monitoring

4.0 The District Council has an overall target for monitoring purposes included in both our jobs growth strategy and draft Local Plan of an increase of a minimum of 460 jobs per annum in the local economy over the next 20 years. This figure was an ambitious target based on economic projections provided at the time and due to the need to improve on historical job creation levels to match population growth. The latest figures released from the County Council via Business Register and Employment Survey data show that between 2011-2012 the East Cambridgeshire economy saw an overall increase of 300 employee jobs. Since 2009 and the baseline period of the jobs growth strategy, there has been an overall increase of 1800 jobs across the four year period at an average of 450 per annum, only slightly below the target set.
BRES data also excludes farm agriculture jobs which would add significantly to the overall figures given the prominence of this sector within East Cambridgeshire.

Table 2: East Cambridgeshire Business Register and Employment Survey (ONS 11th November 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobs</td>
<td>23,400</td>
<td>24,200</td>
<td>24,900</td>
<td>25,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Other positive news within the local economy over the last 12 months includes a fall in Jobseeker Allowance claimants from 1,158 in January 2013 to 866 in September 2013, a fall of 0.4%. The number of VAT/PAYE based enterprises in the district also increased from 4020 to 4080 between 2012-2013. Data on business births and deaths for 2012 will not be available until mid December. However, the corresponding figures for 2010-2011 saw an overall increase of 30 new businesses from 310 to 340 and a decrease in business deaths from 330 to 295.

5.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The national economic outlook has improved considerably over the last year with a return to growth and reductions in unemployment and inflation. This report provides a barometer for how the local economy is performing overall in relation to the monitoring targets set out in the District Council’s jobs growth strategy and draft Local Plan. Although the increase in jobs over the last year is below target, average figures over the last four years suggest that the target set within the strategy is set at a sufficiently high level and broadly on target if farm agriculture positions are taken into consideration.

5.2 Work over the future year is expected to focus on assisting in bringing forward some of the major proposed developments in the District such as Ely Station Gateway, Soham Station and Soham gateways developments, North Ely, Lancaster Way, Superfast Broadband, as well as continuing the programme of marketing and company visits.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

7.0 APPENDICES

Example employment land leaflet
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Background Documents</strong></th>
<th><strong>Location</strong></th>
<th><strong>Contact Officer</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Room FF102               | Location: The Grange, Ely | Darren Hill  
Business Development Manager  
(01353) 616450  
E-mail: darren.hill@eastcambs.gov.uk |
Tunbridge Lane
Bottisham CB25 9TU

- Site area 1 hectare
- 2 miles from A14
- 6 miles from Cambridge
- Potential B1 use
- Established B1 employment uses nearby
- Allocated ‘employment land’ within Local Plan
**LOCATION**
The employment land is located in the village of Bottisham conveniently located midway between Cambridge and Newmarket.

Excellent road links from the land with the A14 (Quy Junction) being approx 2 miles providing easy access to the M11 and A11. Cambridge can be reached in approx 6 miles.

**DESCRIPTION**
The site comprises 1 hectare of allocated employment land.

**TENURE**
The land is available on a freehold basis.

**PRICE**
Details upon application.

**BUSINESS RATES**
Interested parties are advised to check with the Local Rating Authority as to the amount payable.

For the year commencing 1st April 2013 rates are normally charged at 47.1p in the pound on the Rateable Value.

**PLANNING**
The land has been designated, as 'employment land' within the East Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan 2013 suitable for B1 uses.

Interested parties should satisfy themselves as to the suitability of their planned use of the land by contacting the Local Planning Authority.

**VIEWING OR FURTHER INFORMATION**
If you are interested in finding out more about the Tunbridge Lane Bottisham employment land please contact:

**East Cambridgeshire Business Development Team**
Tel: 01353 616458
Email: business@eastcambs.gov.uk

These particulars do not constitute or form any part of an offer or contact nor may they be regarded as representations. All interested parties must themselves verify their accuracy. All measurements are approximate. Unless otherwise stated, all prices and rents are quoted exclusive of value added tax.