

Agenda Item No:	7	
Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny	
Date:	2 May 2018	
Report Title:	Progress in Delivering the Economy Business Plan Objectives 2017-2018	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

This report sets out the Council's progress in delivering the Economy related business plan objectives from April 2017 to March 2018. This is to ensure that members have the most up to date information possible.

2 Key issues

Particular successes are:

- The Mentoring Programme at Neale-Wade Academy.
- Implementation of GRANTfinder software to identify funding pots such as Controlling Migration Fund and Groundworks.
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Economic Review.
- Occupancy rates for the Council's Business estates are good, with 100% tenant satisfaction.
- 98% of the berths at Wisbech Yacht Harbour are occupied.
- The Wisbech 2020 Summit and refreshed Vision document.
- Planning performance achieving 97% for major applications, 93% for minor applications and 98% for others.
- Significant work is ongoing to develop Broad Concept Plans with landowners across the district, with Wenny Road site, Chatteris being approved by Planning Committee and East Wisbech currently out to public consultation.
- The awarding of £6.5million from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority for feasibility work for Wisbech Garden Town.
- Improvements to Whittlesea, Manea and March railway stations.
- 9 sites sold via auction disposals, providing capital income to the Council.

Particular issues for attention are:

- Improve relationships with existing businesses in Fenland.
- Take a more proactive approach to inward investment.
- Implement a programme of key site disposals to aid jobs and housing provision.
- Revisit the Business Ambassador Network to improve business referrals across the entire Fenland team.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Panel considers the progress made by the Council in delivering the corporate objectives in the Business Plan.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Chris Seaton, Leader of the Council Councillor David Mason, Portfolio Holder for Growth Councillor David Oliver, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Heritage & Transport Councillor Dee Laws, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Planning Councillor Mark Buckton, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Young People & Tourism
Report Originator(s) And Contact Officer (s)	Gary Garford - Corporate Director garygarford@fenland.gov.uk Carol Pilson - Corporate Director cpilson@fenland.gov.uk
Background Paper(s)	Business Plan 2017-2020

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Progress Against the Economy Priority

April 2017 to March 2018

Cabinet Members



**Councillor
Chris Seaton**
Leader of the Council



**Councillor
David Mason**
Cabinet Member for
Growth



**Councillor
David Oliver**
Cabinet Member for
Community Safety,
Heritage & Transport



**Councillor
Dee Laws**
Cabinet Member for
Neighbourhood
Planning



**Councillor
Mark Buckton**
Cabinet Member for
Leisure & Young
People

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities, whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland

Business Plan Action: Working with our partners, local businesses, the GCGP LEP and the Combined Authority, we will:

- Work with education providers to help improve education attainment and link skills and courses with the needs of local businesses
- Target inward investment to establish new business opportunities, jobs and economic growth
- Facilitate local business support to encourage business growth and improve job diversity and skills
- Improve the business profile of Fenland and create an environment of proactive growth
- Explore and develop funding bids which support business, skills and infrastructure projects
- Influence how the Housing Delivery Grant and infrastructure funding is used to stimulate housing development and economic growth in Fenland


Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Mason

Economic Development Plan

During 2017/18 the Economic Development Plan has been delivered in partnership with Opportunity Peterborough. The achievements from the plan are reported throughout this report. The plan focusses on the following key areas of Economic Development in Fenland:

- **Education & Skills** – linking education and skills with businesses by forming strategic links between schools-colleges-business and raising standards
- **Inward Investment** – Creating a more proactive approach to inward investment – retail, business, premises, infrastructure and money;
- **Attracting Funding** – Explore and prepare funding bids, developing a pipeline of projects which would benefit from grant funding;
- **Raising the Profile of Fenland** – Improving the marketing and profile of Fenland as an attractive place to work & live;
- **Business Support** – Support existing networks to provide improved local business support. Gathering better intelligence on the needs of the area, its sectors and businesses.

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
MPI BE4 Number of inward investment enquiries handled	17	10	
<p>Inward Investment enquiries are those where business originates from outside of the District and who are looking to establish a presence within the area, either via premises, recruitment or business activities.</p> <p>The number of inward investment interactions with the Economic Development Team is dependent to a large extent upon the demand from external organisations. The target established in April 2017 was based upon a revised target from 206/17 and was an estimate of the likely number of interactions.</p> <p>Officers are currently preparing a revised structure for the Economic Development Team and, if endorsed by Cabinet & Council in 2018/19, it will enable a dedicated full time Economic Development Officer to be deployed to cover the entire district, helping to build relationships with existing and potentially new businesses and inward investors.</p>			

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
MPI BE5 Number of social media followers (Fenland business engagement and profile enhancement)	600	726	
<p>The number of social media followers is a quantitative measure of the engagement activity from Fenland for Business with local businesses, support providers and individuals.</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;">  <p>During 2017/18 the number of tweets made from the Fenland for Business Twitter account and the quality of the information has increased significantly, enabling an increased awareness of the activities of Fenland for Business brand. This growth has also driven attendance at events and an increase in the number of monthly newsletter recipients.</p> </div> <p>The Fenland for Business Twitter account (@fenlandbusiness) and the Fenland for Business website (www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk) remains the primary platform for information sharing and support offered by the Council's Economic Development</p>			

Team.

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
MPI BE6 Number of businesses referred to Economic Development from Business Ambassadors network	30	2	

The Economic Development Team recognise that the Council's numerous 'customer facing' teams are already engaging directly with businesses in Fenland, it also recognises that the Council is not maximising the benefit of these established relationships, with limited knowledge sharing at this time. To promote Economic Development across Fenland, FDC has develop a network of Business Ambassadors to support the business community and to develop a wealth of business experience and knowledge through existing teams within the council, which will enable an effective referral and signposting service, adding much greater value to Fenland's businesses.

The Economic Development Team have been working with the Business Ambassadors to ensure that colleagues were adequately trained to spot opportunities and refer them to the Economic Development Team. The Business Ambassadors programme is now beginning to yield positive results and it is expected that referrals will increase significantly in 2018/19.

Activity is anticipated to increase more substantially in 2018/19 as the process is embedded amongst other service areas. The Environmental Health Team has been early-adopters and have recognised the value of the Business Ambassadors network by including it with their 2018/19 Service Plan.

Employment, Skills and Apprenticeships

The Skills Service

94 businesses visited the four schools 157 times between them over the course of 2017/18. Approximately 1,600 business hours were spent at 21 events.

6,165 young people took part in business-led interactions in 2017/18.

Careers Show

The Skills Service's annual Careers Show was held at the East of England Showground in June 2017. It was attended by three Fenland schools (Sir Harry Smiths have never attended). Around 350 Fenland students attended. This was less than in 2016, the barrier to attending is funding for both transport and cover in school. The Skills Service

were able to subsidise a percentage of the travel. Incredibly positive feedback received from all three schools. The Careers show catered for 6,000 students in all.

Three of the four Fenland schools have already booked to attend The Careers Show in June 2018 and over 500 Fenland students will be attending this event.

Mentoring

Neale Wade is participating in a mentoring programme being delivered by The Skills Service. Eight business mentors have been interviewed, recruited and trained. Mentoring sessions started in January 2018 and are being provided for 40 students who have now each received three sessions. The programme will run for seven months.

Employability Skills

CV writing, workplace behaviour, and interview workshops were provided to Neale Wade, Cromwell, Sir Harry Smith, and Thomas Clarkson

250 students from Year 10+ attended the Neale Wade workshops, seventeen businesses took part in the Cromwell workshops, and Anglian Water supported the Year 13 mock interviews at Thomas Clarkson.

Neale Wade held its Employability Day for Year 12s on the 13th. Workshops were delivered by NEACO and grocery logistics partners. The Skills Service delivered a series of Interview Skills sessions supported by Cambridge Commodities Ltd. Mock interviews were held in the afternoon, supported by Perkins and Stainless Metalcraft amongst others.

Careers Fairs

Sir Harry Smith's bi-annual Careers Fair was attended by approximately 40 businesses exhibiting and the whole school were able to attend.

The Neale Wade Careers Fair was attended by 40 businesses and 600 students as well as parents.

Cromwell's Career Fair was open to Key Stage 4 and 6th Form students as well as to 200 year 6 pupils from feeder primary schools.

Thomas Clarkson's Career Fair was attended by 1,100 students.

Enterprise Challenges

Produce World supported a Build a Business challenge at Neale Wade

Thomas Clarkson's Grab A Grade Week happened from the 5th to the 9th of February. The Skills Service delivered five enterprise challenges and five team building exercises across the week, working with 600 students from years 7, 8 and 9. Anglian Water, One Alliance and the College of West Anglia supported the students during the week.

Business Engagement

Stainless Metalcraft have agreed to be a Cornerstone Employer supporting their local Fenland schools of Cromwell and Neale Wade.

PCML are being supported in the development of an apprenticeship strategy, working with Neale Wade, Thomas Clarkson and Cromwell, from where they currently recruit most of their apprenticeships. PCML are also interested in becoming a LEP Cornerstone employer as part of the Opportunity Area programme.

Greenvale AP are being supported to address challenges regarding apprenticeship recruitment. Meetings have been brokered between the HR Director and staff from Neale Wade and the College of West Anglia in order to explore how they can work together to meet their future skills needs.

Representatives from over 15 companies such as Anglian Water, Skanska and JCB spoke with students at Thomas Clarkson about the opportunities their organisations had together with running a series of workshops during the day.

Apprenticeships

We are currently sourcing a provider for a number of additional internal apprenticeship opportunities

LEP Engagement & Funding Activity

Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership

Officers established a series of quarterly meetings with the acting Executive Directors of the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP), aimed at improving the relationship between both parties and ensuring that Officers are able to secure the best deal for Fenland, its businesses and its residents.

These meetings focussed upon a number of key Fenland projects and how the LEP could assist with improving outcomes. These meetings also enable LEP Officers to better understand the projects, objectives and culture of Fenland in order to better tailor assistance.

In August 2017 FDC's Economic Development Team, together with Executive Officers from the GCGP LEP joined Councillor Clark and Butcher in welcoming and presenting the economic picture in Fenland to Mayor Jamieson from the Sunshine Coast Council in Queensland, Australia.

Mayor Jamieson's fact finding tour to the UK included a Twinning visit to Fenland to learn about the relationship of the Council, the GCGP LEP and the Business Sector in

Fenland.

LEP Growth Deal Funding was achieved for the Wisbech Access Study, along with the feasibility study for Fenland railway station improvements.

Further Growth Fund bids have been submitted, which will be considered by the new LEP Board, now part of the Combined Authority organisation.

In November 2017 it was confirmed that Martin Whiteley, currently the Chief Executive of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority was appointed as the Interim Chief Executive of the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP. These changes subsequently set the course for the absorption of the GCGP LEP into the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority.

Grants & Funding Activities

The Economic Development Team have been working with a number of grant-awarding agencies and met with the INNOVATE team based at Anglia Ruskin University. INNOVATE and KEEP+ are two funding streams aimed connecting SMEs to academic expertise and graduate talent, KEEP+ will help boost business through research and development support to launch new products, services and promote entrepreneurship.

In January 2018 the Economic Development Team and Environmental Health Team jointly attended a 'Better Business for All' Workshop. Better Business for All (BBfA) brings together businesses and local regulators to consider and change how local regulation is delivered and received.

Although the regulations themselves cannot be modified at a local level there is plenty of scope to transform the way that businesses and regulators work together. There are over 160 local authorities in 18 LEP areas involved with the programme, preparing and implementing action plans for their areas and sharing good practice. Huntingdonshire District Council is taking the lead role on this project for our area.

In August 2017 the Council acquired a licence to GRANTfinder, a software application which enables specific grant types to be identified easily and quickly. The system increases accessibility to grant financing for businesses, community groups and the Council itself.

The GRANTfinder system provides a fantastic opportunity to search for funding pots and provides a tool for the Economic Development Team when engaging with external businesses. In addition the system opens up a wide range of opportunities for internal projects and Officers look forward to exploiting this fully.

The Economic Development Team facilitated training for 6 FDC staff on the GRANTfinder system and grants relevant to the local economy are being promoted through social media to help encourage take up of the grant schemes. FDC teams are receiving Grant Finder newsletters relevant to their area of work and share any

relevant information/grants to their wider teams and partners.

Since subscribing to the Grant Finder system it has raised the awareness of grant schemes and yielded a number of positive results.

Bids that have been applied for by FDC or working with partners:

- Sport England Deprivation Fund
 - Unsuccessful with this fund unfortunately

- Controlling Migration Fund
 - Successful total amount: £140,000 over 2 years
 - Clarion Futures are match funding this by £20,000 over 2 years
 - Start date: 1/4/18

This project is based in Wisbech, using sport as a vessel of achieving better community cohesion in the workplace and in the community.

- Groundworks Tesco Fund

Awaiting decision on funding. Application been submitted for a Fit and Fed project. This helps tackle hunger and decrease of physical activity levels of children when they are in the school holidays.

- Applied for £4,000
- Start date will be summer holidays

- Groundworks Onestop Fund

Awaiting decision on funding. Application been submitted for a Fit and Fed project. This helps tackle hunger and decrease of physical activity levels of children when they are in the school holidays.

- Applied for £2,000
- Start date will be summer holidays

Working with partners we have applied for:

- Reaching communities
 - Assisting Groundworks with their application for this fund.
 - Groundworks have applied for £141,864
 - Through to the second stage of the application

Working with pre-school children to increase skills and confidence in active outdoor play

- Groundworks Clarion Communities

Signposting community clubs and sports clubs to apply for this. No specific examples to share

- Police and Crime Commissioners Fund
 - Assisting Living Sport with their application.
 - Awaiting decision
 - Cost TBC – waiting on details from Living Sport

Applied for just under £5,000 to run a project targeting SEMH young people (aged 14-

19ish) in Fenland to align with the Satellite programme. Project essentially has 3 strands.

- 1 - Doing consultation with young people after identifying them in schools
 - 2 - Creating a forum with them to identify needs/challenges
 - 3 - support them to set up local community physical activity opportunities suited to similar minded young people to encourage participation.
- Football Foundation Premier League and FA facilities Fund
 - Helping Leverington Football Club apply for funding to improve their facilities and put in a new 3G pitch.
 - Cost will be £650,000 in total and will need to apply for a number of different funding pots including this one
 - They will also be applying to Amey and Mick George
 - Early days with this funding application – series of meetings taking place currently with the funder before applying
 - Sport England Community Asset Fund
 - Helped Leverington Sports Club apply for funding to renovate their Tennis Courts with the aim of making them more accessible to widen participation in a range of sports.
 - Applied for £35,000
 - Awaiting decision

GRANTfinder is very well received by the third sector and education providers. Partners are seeing the benefit of this information being provided to them and have identified that they feel the Council are trying to help them identify funding opportunities. Brooke Weston Trust obtained £100,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation community project funding to assist in building a nursery facility at Peckover Primary School. Having this money meant that the School could seek an additional £400-£500,000 from Cambridgeshire County to complete the project. Work has yet to start but all is in place to deliver. This derived from a Grant finder search, and information being passed onto Brooke Western.

A detailed bid writing training day is being arranged, which will assist officers in developing and writing funding bids for the Council and supporting organisations that need to write funding bids.

Fenland Agri-Food Projects



The Fenland for Business team has been working with GCGP LEP to promote, and increase uptake of, the Agri-Tech Fund which is managed by GCGP LEP. Activity to date has been successful and significantly increased the number of Fenland-based applicants to this scheme. More focussed work is in the pipeline and is expected to build on this success.

Part of the activity to promote the fund to Fenland's Agri-Food businesses involved running an event at the South Fens Business Centre. This was a very successful event with a great turn-out including Mayor Palmer from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority who attended to provide delegates with an insight into his vision for future growth in the area.

Enterprise Zones – Wisbech & Chatteris

The Government has announced that it is unlikely to declare any further Enterprise Zone bidding rounds.

The Council will be working with the Combined Authority (funding of £50,000 for each town) towards developing Market Town Masterplans for Growth which will mean that Chatteris, March and Whittlesey will have a shared ambition for the future which authorities, businesses and community can unite behind. It will focus collective resources on these shared priorities which could include infrastructure, leisure and culture as key place making/attractiveness drivers and be used to unlock new investment to support future growth from both the Government and private sector to makes these plans a reality. Wisbech is not covered under this work as it is being delivered successfully through the Wisbech 2020 Vision, and The Wisbech Garden Town Proposal.

Business Engagement & Inward Investment

The Economic Development Team has introduced new **business networking meetings**, the team co-ordinates and hosts the bi-monthly events in South Fens Business Centre, Chatteris. The events have a themed topical subject to entice businesses to attend and then provide the chance to network with likeminded businesses.

Following the successful delivery of these events in Chatteris, March 2018 saw the start of the roll out into The Boathouse, Wisbech.

The Economic Development team supported NWES to deliver a two day 'Grow your Business' event at the Boathouse Business Centre. The event was designed for business owners, senior managers or aspiring managers who have responsibility for growing a business, organisation or department. 6 Fenland businesses attended the two days, and benefited from the course, leading onto signing up to future support events.

The Economic Development team produces monthly **e-newsletter** containing news (information) of the relevant activities, policy changes etc. The newsletter is distributed to the business network (600ish businesses)

Business Engagement

Events

Six very successful bi-monthly events were held at the South Fens Business Centre over the course of 2017/18 attracting upwards of 30 delegates to some. The purpose of the events was to support and educate small businesses in the area. Subject covered reflected those identified by small businesses via the 2017 Fenland Annual Business Survey and included gearing up for growth, skills development, funding for agri-food business (attended by Mayor Palmer), finance and grants, cyber security, and GDPR. The events have proved so popular that a decision was taken to replace the informal networking events being held at The Boathouse with a similar format of events and the first of these took place in March 2018.

Events are now being held every month alternately in Wisbech and Chatteris. Support is being provided to the Whittlesey Business Forum regarding their events and opportunities to hold events in March are being investigated.

Supporting the Whittlesey Business Forum

Support has been provided to the Whittlesey Business Forum in their plans for the Whittlesey Business and Community Fair. This was originally to take place in October 2017 but due to venue changes this will now take place in May 2018.

Support has been provided through the production of press releases, marketing support, designing of a flyer for the event and promotion via social media. Officers regularly attend Forum meetings and input on the steering committee meetings.

Retailer A

A local retailer/museum attraction located in March was supported with business mentoring, general business advice, and support regarding waste services.

Engineering Company A

A March-based engineering company is being told that their landlord is not going to renew their lease in November 2018. The business owner is therefore seeking land on which to build a 10-12,000sqft facility in the March area. They have been supported in their search by Fenland for Business and the FDC Planning team but to date a suitable

location has not been found. If a solution cannot be found then the business may close with the loss of 6 jobs.

Engineering Company B

A follow-up meeting to discuss skills, funding and future growth aspirations will take place on 19th July.

A follow-up meeting was held in March. The meeting covered funding, skills and joint promotional activity. Following the meeting introductions were made to Rebecca Sussex from The Skills Service, to Rebecca Mills in the OP marketing team so that a case study can be created to help promote engineering in Fenland, and to DWP/JCP regarding recruitment. Information was also provided regarding funding opportunities related to capital investment and water, energy and resource efficiency as well as contacts for free sustainability audits.

Construction Company A

Meetings have been held with a historic Fenland construction company who are seriously considering relocating from Wisbech to King's Lynn. Pull factors include Enterprise Zone business rates relief and logistical advantages. Push factors include inability to attract staff to Wisbech, lack of a direct train to London and low business confidence. Introduced to College of West Anglia and The Skills Service with regards to skills requirements, and provided with relevant funding information including Signpost2Grants.

Food and Drink Company D

Due to the loss of a major contract a food and drink company is looking to close its Chatteris facility due to the loss of a major contract with the loss of c.100 jobs. The company is being supported regarding redundancy planning and has requested support for planning should a change of use be required for the site.

The company is being supported to run two employee support events in association with Fenland for Business officers. Jobcentre Plus, NWES, College of West Anglia and The Fenland Psychological Wellbeing Service (IAPT) are confirmed attendees for 18th and 19th April. The Citizens Advice Service have yet to confirm. A separate recruitment event involving local companies with vacancies will take place on 27th April. The facility is on the market.

Food and Drink Company E

Additional employees to be recruited by a food producer, linked to a £9m investment in new refrigeration equipment, increasing rotations from a two to a three shift system. Grant information provided.

Food and Drink Company F

A meeting was undertaken with a company that supplies vegetables to major supermarkets. Price pressure is an issue as is innovation both in the operation at the facility and production of crops, especially with the planned EU ban on certain pesticides. The company has been introduced to food research facilities including

Rothamstead. Information on possible grants was supplied relating to the company's plans to introduce robotics to the end of the production line.

Brewery A

A Wisbech brewery plan to move into a building along the road from the current facility and turn the current facility into a museum. They are looking to develop a wedding business and are applying for a licence to hold weddings in the grounds of the brewery. This will lead to 3 additional employees. The company is being supported to identify relevant funding opportunities.

Inward Investment

Department for International Trade (DIT)

Following a visit from the DIT Regional Manager for Regeneration and Infrastructure, and the submission of applications, Wisbech Garden Town will be included in the DIT 'Invest in Great' branded Investment portfolio. This will be promoted to the DIT international network and potential investors such as sovereign wealth funds. Details of the investment opportunities also formed part of the DIT offer to investors at MIPIM, Cannes.

A review of large, predominantly foreign-owned employers in Fenland was undertaken and 19 companies identified as targets for introductory meetings. The purpose of the meetings were to explore the possibility of expansion projects, job safeguarding, and the possibility of future growth at the sites by attracting additional divisions of the companies to Fenland. Where appropriate, DIT Account Managers were contacted in order to ensure work was coordinated and/or to bring opportunities to their attention for additional support.

The Fenland for Business team also connected with DIT Account Managers to raise the profile of Fenland with relevant foreign-owned businesses, such as those in Engineering or Food and Drink, who have a presence in the UK but not in Fenland.

Life Science Company A

A foreign-owned, Chatteris-based company specialising in the rental and leasing of Life Sciences & Chemical Analysis equipment is being supported to expand its employee count by three. They have been introduced to two sector networking groups and provided with information on relevant funding opportunities.

Life Science Company B

Officers met with an analytical testing company. The company want to re-engage with the community as the focus for the last year was to merge 3 sites into the Chatteris facility following an acquisition. There is the potential to bring another 50 jobs to the site but this would require an additional building on an already constrained site. If it is not possible to develop an additional building the jobs will go to another facility within the UK rather than elsewhere in Fenland.

- o Introduction to College of West Anglia
- o The company would like to meet with other large employers in the area to share

best practice regarding recruitment and training.

- o The company will be introduced to a new brewery investor in Peterborough and would like links to the Lidl distribution centre
- o University links to be provided in relation to 1 year or summer placement schemes
- o Connections provided to One Nucleus, a Life Sciences & Healthcare membership organisation

Logistics Company A

Discussions with a leading food and drinks logistic company regarding expansion of their existing operations, including relocation of some operations from Denmark, are progressing positively. Introductions have been made to Jobcentre Plus regarding potential employment of the long term unemployed.

Information supplied to address issues raised by the company includes;

- o Architects for the food and drink sector
- o Links to the FDC Planning team
- o Introductions to The Skills Service
- o College of West Anglia contacts
- o Apprenticeships support
- o R&D tax credits

International Food and Drink Company A

This Wisbech based company is exploring the potential to develop and bring in-house its own manufacturing process on site which would enable the creation of 5-10 technical jobs. An introduction has been made to DIT experts that can advise on the technical side of this enquiry.

The same business is also consolidating its UK warehousing operations onto a 5 acre plot they own adjacent to their current Wisbech operations with the potential to create c.25 jobs. This project is currently at design stage.

International Food and Drink Company B

Contact has been re-established with a food manufacturer with a vacant site in Wisbech. Investigations have been carried out on their behalf regarding interest from developers looking for sites for a new free school. Awaiting further information from DfE. Particulars for the site have been issued to DIT and other intermediaries in order to further promote the site.

International Food and Drink Company C

A large international food and drink company is being supported in their plans for a £20m capital investment and R&D programme at the Wisbech facility to update the manufacturing process. The company already work with the College of West Anglia and the National Skills Service and claim R&D Tax credits.

Information supplied to address issues raised by the company includes;

- o Introduction to the local Skills Service so that the company have links into the local schools
- o Information regarding employees facing redundancy at Cummins and a Chatteris company
- o Links to providers for apprenticeships in leadership and management as the company want to develop existing workers to replace the aging management in the workforce
- o Introduction to the DIT Agri-tech R&D specialist as the company are looking to partner with food research establishments regarding existing products and how they react in the manufacturing process

Agri-Tech Company A

A new, significant Japanese agri-tech investment is being supported in association with GCGP.

Other enquiries handled:

An Irish company expanding into the UK supplying concrete products to the HS2 rail project wanted to acquire 20/25 acre site to build a concrete production facility. Fenland was discounted as an option due to the client's requirement to be based next to the national primary road network.

A Turkish food and drink company was interested in locating the company's UK HQ in South Fens Business Centre but chose a location in the Midlands due to proximity to their supplier.

Two national retailer chains are being supported to explore opportunities within Fenland.

A national pub chain who are establishing a new premises in the area have been supported with regards to skills development through introductions to The Skills Service.

Marketing and Communications

Website

The Fenland for Business website has been proactively maintained to ensure that it provides up-to-date information and fresh content. Traffic to the site has been positive.

Case studies of successful local businesses are being development for the website and to support inward investment activities.

Twitter

Recruitment of new followers is going well at 726, 126 more than the annual target of 600. 392 tweets over the year have resulted in 3,323 profile visits, 124 mentions, and 130,929 impressions.

Social media training was provided to the team by Opportunity Peterborough.

Newsletter

A monthly e-newsletter covering events, skills initiatives, funding opportunities and local business news has been distributed to a list of approximately 680 contacts. Analytics show that it is well received with an impressive open rate (% of recipients that open the email and engage).

Press Releases

A number of press releases have been produced and adopted by the local press over the year, predominantly raising the profile of the business events but also to promote the Annual Business Survey and raise the profile of the team and its services in general.

Collateral

Collateral has been produced and improved over the course of the year including the addition of pop-up banners, which can be found on display in the business centres and in use at events, branded slide decks, and fliers promoting the services of the Fenland for Business team.

Strategic Work

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER)

A response to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review Call for Evidence was prepared, approved and submitted.

Work has also been undertaken to support the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review Working Group. Working with the University of Cambridge, officers have applied knowledge of the local economy to provide an accurate view of existing businesses, their size and operational focus.

Digital Connectivity

A meeting has been held with BT to better understand the current roll-out plans for superfast broadband (SFBB) across Fenland and what can be done to help service those areas that will not be serviced under existing plans. This has been augmented with additional research and a report on findings is being produced.

Engagement with Connecting Cambridgeshire is ongoing in order to support the further roll-out of Superfast and Ultrafast Broadband as well as the promotion of the Local Full Fibre Networks Programme.

Fenland Annual Business Survey

The Fenland Annual Business Survey 2017 garnered the views of 40 local businesses, slightly down on the 2016 return rate. The results of the survey have helped to shape the services of the Fenland for Business team over the past year, particularly by informing the content of the newsletter, social media, and events, which have been based on the feedback provided by respondents.

A report of the results was produced and shared with respondents and other stakeholders as well as being published online.

Planning for the 2018 Fenland Business Survey is underway and this will be launched w/c 16th April following the Easter holidays. The data gained from this survey will help to guide service provision and business engagement for the coming year as well as allowing trends to be identified through comparison with results from the previous 2 years.

Annual Economic Intelligence Report

The Fenland Economic Intelligence Report 2017 was produced and circulated to FDC stakeholders along with a report outlining recommended actions which would help to address economic development challenges.

Garden Town/Smart Town

To make the Garden Town more attractive to developers and investors, it has been suggested that officers discuss the opportunity to develop a 'Smart Town' element to the development and engage with Opportunity Peterborough's Smart City team to discuss how this can be taken forward. Ideas include partnering with a private company to develop a testbed for smart home initiatives relating to assisted living and the element of the garden Town which may focus on retirement homes.

A local developer has also expressed interest in working with FDC to bring forward a small development of modular housing aimed at the executive market. The developer has offered to broker a visit for Members and Senior Managers to the modular housing factory in Peterborough. Other housing models are also manufactured at the facility including affordable housing which could be rolled out at speed and at scale. If these were used for the Garden Town it has been suggested that a local facility could be developed in order to meet demand.

Work Experience Placements & Work Opportunities Programme

We will once again be offering work experience placements through our partnerships with local schools to enable young people to gain valuable work experience. We were able to offer 6 placements last year across the Council, and are hoping to expand this further in 2018/19.

Work with partners to deliver a programme of supported skills development across the district

We are working with other Local Authorities to both access and deliver learning and development opportunities. This approach achieves a greater economy of scale by accessing a wider pool of resources, but it is anticipated that this should also generate

some return on investment for the Council, for example the future delivery of Mental Health First Aid Training, mediation service, access to e-learning resources and so on.

Explore and expand opportunities for the Council to work in partnership with local education providers to promote employment opportunities for the local community, and raise the aspirations for people to improve their employment / life prospects

The Council attends careers fairs and events with local schools, providing advice and information on the qualification requirements for Council careers to help promote employment opportunities and raise aspirations.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland

Business Plan Action: Promote and develop our business premises at South Fens, The Boathouse and our light industrial estates to encourage investment, job creation and skills diversification

Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Mason

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
LPI BE1 % of business premises and light industrial units occupied across the estate	87%	88%	

Boathouse Business Centre:

All unoccupied offices at the Boathouse are now under offer, upon completion, The Boathouse will be 100% occupied.

The Ground and First Floor corridors have been redecorated and this has been welcomed by tenants. This is the first time the corridors have been refreshed since the building was completed in 2009. The corridor carpets have been replaced in this month.



Photographs showing the refreshed corridor areas at The Boathouse

South Fens Enterprise Park:

Has been 100% occupied since October 2017.

South Fen Business Centre:

The SFBC has seen companies move on or rationalise their operations resulting in occupation levels reduce to 58%.

Work has now been completed to divide the largest remaining office space, 1,153 ft² into two offices which are much more popular with prospective tenants.viewings have taken place for these offices.



The recently sub-divided Unit at South Fens Business Centre

Planned works have been carried out to ensure that we continue to maintain the building to a high standard. Which include the redecoration and re carpeting of the busy upstairs conference corridor.



Recently redecorated and carpeted corridor at South Fens Business Centre

Estate Occupancy April 2017: **88%** March 2018: **88%**

Current floor space occupied 7,643 sqm out of 8,660 sqm

	Available Floor Space (m2)	Occupied Floor Space (m2)	Occupancy (%)
South Fens Business Centre	1,384	797	58%
South Fens Enterprise Park	1,171	1,171	100.0%
Boathouse Business Centre	949	795	84%
Light Industrial Units	5,156	4,880	95%
Total	8,660	7,643	88%

Marketing and Promotion:

The Business Premises Team continue to review marketing options for South Fens, to ensure that we maximise opportunities to increase occupancy, activities include;

- Reviewing and refreshing our web presence
- Increased output via 'Fenland for Business' & FDC's Twitter feeds which is ongoing;
- Developing case studies of existing tenant businesses;
- Working with our Communications Team to implement a targeting marketing campaign using social media;
- Improving signage to prompt further enquiries.

Whilst particular focus is on increasing the levels of occupancy at South Fens Business Centre, these activities will extend to include the Boathouse Business Centre and South Fens Enterprise Park, if and when appropriate.

What do our customers say?

Description	Baseline	Target 17/18	No of customers who responded	No of customers satisfied	% 17/18	Variance
MPI BE2 % of satisfied tenants	100%	92%	16 (40 issued)	16	100%	

An annual tenant satisfaction survey is undertaken in October of each financial year, 40 surveys were sent out to tenants at South Fens and the Boathouse Business Centres, of which 16, (40%) took the opportunity to complete them.

100% the service as very good or excellent. Examples of which include:

- The team are helpful & quick to respond to any query I have. Also, they are

really easy to talk to and nothing seems too much trouble!

- The onsite staff are excellent and generally the building is well managed.
- Reception staff and manager are always available to assist with any anomaly. Happy to help attitude goes along way.
- Always extremely helpful.
- The team on reception are amazing; nothing is too big or small and they always have a smile for us. They really take care of us.
- The team at the business centre are; helpful and efficient

Reception staff go above expectations, they are a true asset to the site and its tenants survey also produced some very useful constructive feedback regarding the repair and maintenance at the Business Centres. Matters that officers are going to pursue and feedback to tenants at our next tenant forum meetings.

Description	Baseline	Target 17/18	No of customers who responded	No of customers satisfied	% 17/18	Variance
MPI BE2 % of satisfied conference customers	100%	92%	23 (103 issued)	22	96%	

Feedback requests are provided to conference organisers. This year we have received 23 responses all of which provided very positive feedback which included the following comments:

- Great centre in a location
- Very helpful staff – always willing to help
- Excellent facilities
- Very knowledgeable staff
- Booking process was very easy

Comments included:

- Grounds maintenance around the Boathouse and South fens. We are working with colleagues in parks and Open Spaces to improve the ongoing maintenance around the Boathouse and the planting around South Fens.
- Decoration in the small meeting rooms at Boat Centres which have commenced as part of our planned maintenance programme.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Attract new businesses and jobs and support existing businesses in Fenland

Business Plan Action: *Stimulate the delivery of mixed use development at the Nene Waterfront, alongside the delivery of our wider regeneration objectives*

Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Mason

Nene Waterfront Project

Lot 3 Development – GB Construction

The development of the Lot 3 site has made fantastic progress this year. The developers, GB Construction have indicated that they have experienced positive reception from the sales market and a number of units have already been sold prior to completion.

In September 2017, 8 properties were approved as 'wind and watertight' and the freeholds were transferred to the developer. That transfer brought the total number of completed market units to 29 and just 17 units remain to be completed.

At the end of October 2017 a further request was received from the Developer to draw down four additional plots. There are now just 13 remaining plots to be completed to wind and watertight stage.

Sales of the completed units kept pace with completion, creating a steady supply of new, good quality homes for first time buyers and those already on the housing ladder.

In January 2018 a further tranche of 4 units were 'called down', leaving just 9 remaining plots to be completed.



Above & below - Units declared 'wind and watertight' in January 2018



In March 2018 a further tranche of 4 units were 'called down' and inspected leaving just 5 remaining plots to be completed to wind and watertight stage.



Above & below – Properties declared 'wind and watertight' in March 2018



Nene Waterfront Lots 1 & 2

In August 2017 Officers met with the Homes & Communities Agency to understand the potential support on offer to help the Council to better understand the potential support on offer to accelerate the development on these sites.

Officers have been investigating the potential market appetite for the sites and the potential housing mix, which has altered significantly since the Taylor Wimpey scheme.

Following the Government announcement of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), Officers developed a 'Marginally Viability' bid, which was submitted in September

2017. The proposal, for the remaining undeveloped NWF land, was aimed at closing the development viability gap and would have funded the development deficit in the form of a grant payment.

Because the HIF funding pot was heavily over-subscribed, the Homes & Communities Agency contacted all HIF bid applicants requesting further information, in an attempt to find the most competitive bids. Due to the extremely competitive nature of the bidding process, after submitting further information the Government have confirmed that the Fenland bid was unsuccessful.

After exploring various development options and funding opportunities the future development of the NWF site is to be considered by Members as part of the Property Investment & Development Strategy (PIDS).

In September 2017 some minor improvement works have been undertaken to the sites surrounding The Boathouse, which includes the removal of the old fencing and the creation of a shallow bund around the sites. Visually these minor works have made a significant improvement to the surrounding area.



Above & below – Fences removed and bunding created to secure Lots 1 & 2



The vacant Nene sites along with other key land assets proposals are being brought to Cabinet shortly to offer the sites to the market to aid housing delivery in Fenland and also provide capital income for potential investment and to fund the Council's capital programme.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Attract new businesses and jobs and support existing businesses in Fenland

Business Plan Action: Deliver a proactive and effective Marine Service to meet our statutory obligations and promote business opportunities for the River Nene environment

Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Mason

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
LPI MS1 Number of berth holders / occupancy of berths at Wisbech Yacht Harbour	90%	84 berths occupied (98%)	

Apr 17 – Mar 18 the Wisbech Yacht Harbour has seen 31 new vessels taking up full time moorings within the facility; these consisted of all different vessel types from small rigid inflatables boats, narrow boats, as well as the usual yachts and leisure craft. This will not show in the reported numbers between Apr 17 – Mar 18, the reason for this is 26 vessels left Wisbech Yacht Harbour to visit ports and harbour around the UK and Europe, the good news is that berth holder occupancy is up to 98% on this time 2016/17 where it was 94%

Wisbech Yacht Harbour has seen 27 visiting vessels between Apr 17 – Mar 18, this is down compared to Apr 16– Oct17. The majority of these visiting craft were narrow boats making the passage across the wash to Boston as a section of the grand union was closed during 2016/17 that has now been reopened for last year therefore the narrow boats didn't call at Wisbech.

Berths Occupied March – March 2017/18

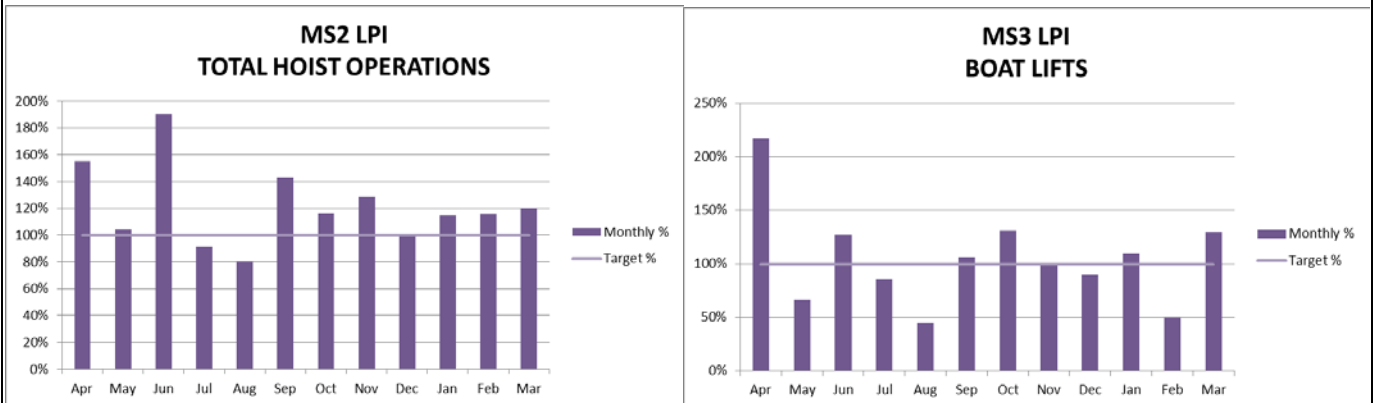
	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	AVERAGE
TOTAL VESSELS BERTHED	85	80	81	78	81	81	85	85	84	87	86	87	88	84
% of Target	100%	94%	95%	92%	95%	95%	100%	100%	99%	102%	101%	102%	104%	98%

Berths Occupied March – March 2016/17

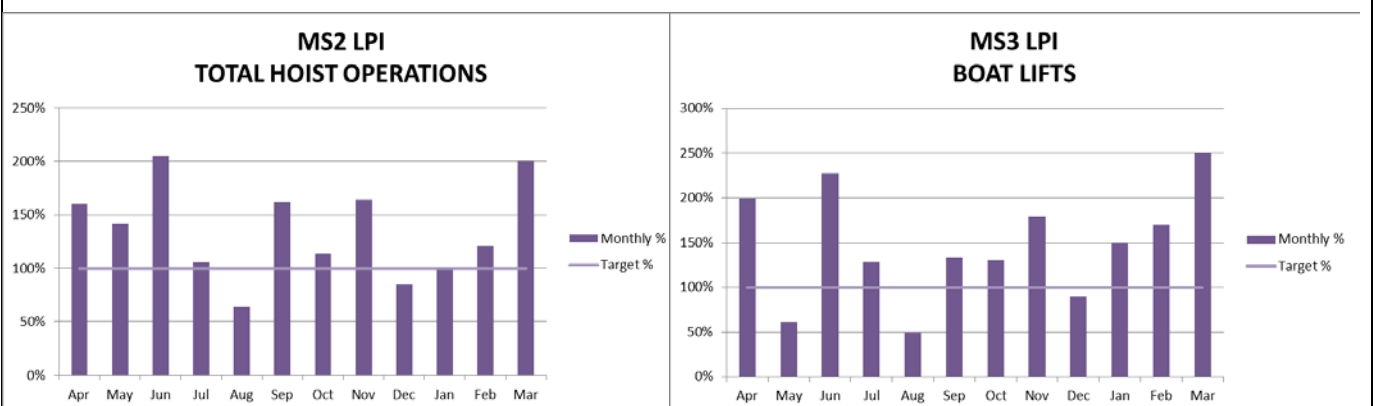
	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	AVERAGE
TOTAL VESSELS BERTHED	78	77	80	77	80	81	83	81	80	81	79	83	85	81
% of Target	92%	91%	94%	91%	94%	95%	98%	95%	94%	95%	93%	98%	100%	94%

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
LPI MS2 Number of boat lift operations at Wisbech Port	300	353	
LPI MS3 Number of vessel lifts	155	150	

Graphs Below showing Total Hoist Operations MS2 and Total Boat Lifts MS3 March – March 2017/18

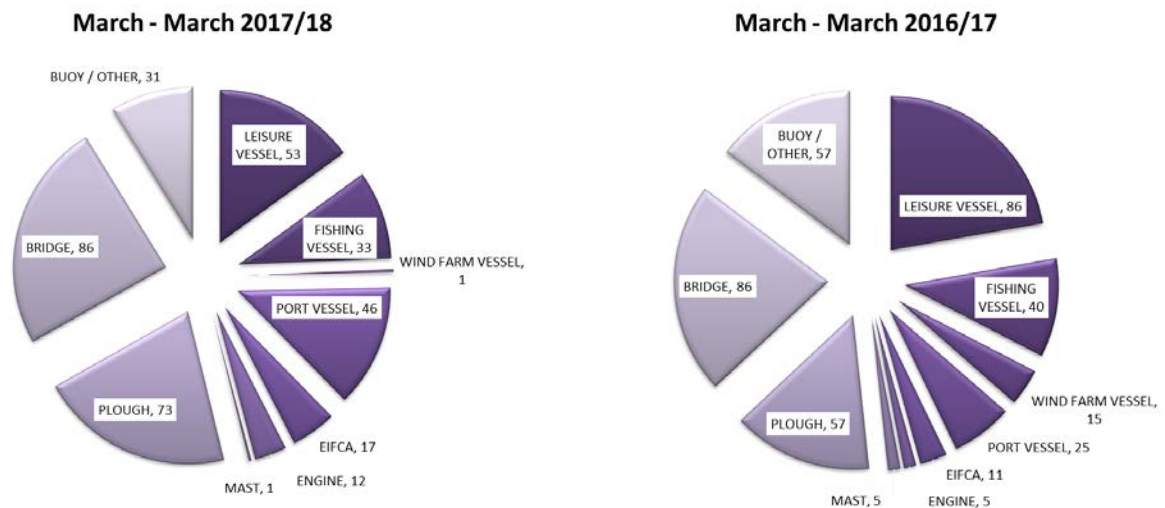


Graphs Below showing Total Hoist Operations MS2 and Total Boat Lifts MS3 March – March 2016/17



As shown above the Number of Boat lifts seems to be tracking with a pattern of boatlifts either at the start of summer with boats wanting to go back into the water or coming out for repairs in the better weather, March – April seems to remain as some of our busiest months.

Throughout Summer the boat yard remained busy with leisure craft making the most of the good weather to make repairs to their vessels. As shown below there is a real mixture of craft that use the boatyard as a facility for storage or routine repairs, year on year this proves to be a valuable asset for the Port of Wisbech Harbour Authority and Fenland District Council.



It has been a busy year for the Boat yard with the Kings Lynn fishing fleet using the facility and more recently Fishing vessels as far as Cromer making the trip to use the boatyard to undertake routine out of water inspections. In total there were 16 commercial fishing vessels to use the boatyard.

Achievements Apr 2017 – Mar 2018

- Record Number of lifts in April total 32
- Achieved target for boat lifts for the year
- Returning Customers from Kings Lynn Fishing Industry and new Fishing vessels from Cromer
- Returning Customers from the Inland waterway circuit
- Record Number of Boats stored in the yard at any one time 32 Boats

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
Gross Tonnage to Ports	447,721 GT	423,700 GT against a projection of 447,721 GT (95%)	

Port Sutton Bridge & Port of Wisbech Gross Tonnage for April 2017 – March 2018

Port Sutton Bridge Gross Tonnage GT														
Who		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
JHEM	Target no.	25101	31104	24555	36850	29810	21100	30560	26200	28252	35400	25967	29509	344408
	Actual no.	28524	21705	22999	25675	30522	20910	31711	30930	25256	32051	19001	25834	315118
	Monthly %	114%	70%	94%	70%	102%	99%	104%	118%	89%	91%	73%	88%	91%
Wisbech														
Who		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
JHEM	Target no.	7539	7190	8698	8179	9225	8780	5400	9000	9000	7950	11667	10685	103313
	Actual no.	7402	10839	10400	8128	9835	9322	7820	7293	6384	13830	11073	6276	108602
	Monthly %	98%	151%	120%	99%	107%	106%	145%	81%	71%	174%	95%	59%	105%
Combine Tonnage GT to Both Ports		110%	97%	98%	91%	94%	95%	97%	98%	97%	98%	96%	95%	95%

Port Sutton Bridge & Port of Wisbech Gross Tonnage for April 2016 – March 2017

Port Sutton Bridge Gross Tonnage GT														
Who		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
JHEM	Target no.	24532	45821	20731	37853	35903	24465	26881	31391	23051	28566	22751	29536	351481
	Actual no.	25101	31104	24555	36850	29810	21100	30560	26200	28252	35400	25967	29509	344408
	Monthly %	102%	68%	118%	97%	83%	86%	114%	83%	123%	124%	114%	100%	98%
Wisbech														
Who		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
JHEM	Target no.	4503	4691	6287	4748	6190	6287	3192	9070	4691	4748	4591	3192	62190
	Actual no.	7539	7190	8698	8179	9225	8780	5400	9000	9000	7950	11667	10685	103313
	Monthly %	167%	153%	138%	172%	149%	140%	169%	99%	192%	167%	254%	335%	166%
Combine Tonnage GT to Both Ports		112%	89%	98%	100%	98%	98%	101%	99%	102%	105%	107%	108%	108%

Ship numbers have fluctuated over the past 12 months, Gross Tonnage for Port Sutton Bridge Gross was 91% from target for the year with the last 3 months of the year falling below target and the main reason for this was as a result of either weather or contracts on cargo not being shipped.

Port of Wisbech numbers for Gross Tonnage have remained close if not on target for every month for the past year. January was the busiest month for import of cargo for some years; it was the busiest trading year ever for Port of Wisbech Ltd as a company.

Port Safety

The annual Port Safety Audit was carried out in 15th & 16th August 2017 by the Designated Person from Strategic Marine Service which found no major deficiencies and resulted in an overall score of 90.1% (90% in 2016) compliance with further recommendations which have been subsequently addressed.

Yacht Harbour Marketing Plan Update

Sail the Wash

In order to increase access and visitor numbers to the Wash ports (including those on the Nene) an innovative bid has been submitted to the Government's Coastal Communities Fund.

This proposal has been developed (and part paid for) in conjunction with Lincolnshire County Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and other local marine partners. The proposals include for increased mooring facilities, enhanced navigational aids, a joined up marketing plan and website and staffing for an initial period to establish the project.

Sutton Bridge Marina – Commercial & Leisure Moorings

The Cross Keys Marina is a collaboration between Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), Fenland District Council and Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Agency (EIFCA), which offers both provides leisure and commercial moorings, bringing together FDC's pilotage mooring and that of EIFCA into a single facility.

In September 2017 the £900,000 Cross Keys Marina at Sutton Bridge was officially unveiled. The completed marina can accommodate up to 20 leisure craft, as well as the Nene navigation pilot boat and fisheries protection vessels.

The lease agreements have been approved in principle and the respective Legal Teams are in the process of finalising these as well as preparing a sublease of 50m of the commercial moorings from FDC to EIFCA.

FDC is also contracted by LCC to operate the moorings and the operating agreement has been provided by LCC in draft format. Officers are currently in the process of agreeing the final draft with LCC.

The moorings are almost fully occupied and as a result works were undertaken to provide additional lighting and power points to enable additional smaller vessel to moor much more closely.



BUSINESS PLAN AREA:

Economy

Business Plan Priority:

Attract new businesses and jobs and support existing businesses in Fenland

Business Plan Action:

Further develop, proactively contribute to and deliver the Wisbech 2020 Action Plan

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Chris Seaton

Wisbech 2020

The Wisbech 2020 Vision project is now in its fifth year and continues bring together public, private and third sector representatives to address some of the issues identified in the Wisbech area.

Refreshed Wisbech 2020 Vision document

The refreshed [Wisbech 2020 Vision document](#) was reviewed by the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 31 July 2017 and approved by Cabinet on 14 September 2017. This formed part of a wider consultation process with partner organisations prior

to the final document being launched later that year.

Wisbech 2020 Vision Annual Summit

The 5th Wisbech 2020 Vision Summit was held on Friday 20 October at the Thomas Clarkson Academy to celebrate the project's successes and to update delegates on plans for the future.

In a change from the format of recent years, community groups and other organisations were invited to bring along exhibition stands to the event and engage with delegates over lunch.

Cllr John Clark opened the formal part of the event in the afternoon, and was followed by a number of speakers covering a wide variety of topics.

An update on the Wisbech Garden Town proposal was given by Paul Medd and Gary Garford of FDC, whilst Peter Simpson (Chief Executive of Anglian Water) spoke about his company's ongoing involvement with the Wisbech 2020 Vision project and their plans for the future. Peter then introduced Japp Flikweert of Royal Haskoning DHV, the recently appointed flood mitigation specialists who will be helping with the Wisbech Garden Town feasibility work.



Jaap advised the delegates that innovative thinking will be needed to address the local flood risk before potential houses are built. Part of the flood risk work will be funded by the Dutch Government and Matthijs Houët, a Senior Commercial Attaché of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, London, presented a cheque for €55,000 to the Wisbech 2020 Core Vision Group.

Sixth Form Students from the Thomas Clarkson Academy addressed the audience after the break and told them what they would like to see from a new garden town, before introducing their Principal Anne Hill. Anne gave a passionate speech highlighting just how hard pupils and staff have been working to achieve the best exam results for many years.

Combined Authority members Cllr Lewis Herbert and Cllr Peter Topping then spoke about how the Combined Authority could help with addressing some of the issues linked to the town and pledged to close the north/south divide in the Cambridgeshire/Peterborough area.

Cllr David Oliver updated delegates on the Wisbech High Street project which is helping to regenerate part of the town centre. Taleyna Fletcher, the Council's Townscape Heritage Officer, shared some of the exciting plans which may be used to turn 'The Gap' (a space where a building once stood) into a community area and visitor destination.

Members of the Wisbech 2020 Steering Group explained why the actions in the refreshed vision document were so important and urged partners to help them deliver the changes identified through research and consultation. Carrie Norman, the Head of Peckover Primary School, brought 2 year 6 pupils with her to help convey the enthusiasm of the school for learning and improving, whilst working to overcome some of the challenges they are faced with. Dr Liz Robin, Director of Health for CCC and PCC, spoke about the links between mental health and physical health, and urged



delegates to help the County Council and local health care providers to deliver bespoke services to the Wisbech area. Gary Garford updated delegates on the infrastructure improvements planned and asked delegates to wear their "I ♥ Wisbech" badges with pride and tell people they meet all about the Wisbech 2020 Vision. Finally Adrian Cannard of the GCGP LEP talked about the importance of upskilling young people in the Wisbech area before introducing the Core Vision Group to close the event.

Excellent press coverage of the event was provided by BBC Look East and the summit event was the main story on the Friday's evening news.



Other projects linked to the Wisbech 2020 Vision project

The **Fenland and East Cambridgeshire Opportunity Area Programme** which aims to help remove obstacles to social mobility and help young people to fulfil their potential. The programme will have access to £6m of funding over the next 3 years to deliver its priorities for the area (please [click here](#) to access the Opportunity Area delivery plan).

One of the plans four priorities is to "Recruit, develop and retain the best leaders and teachers in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire". This links to action 1A1 of the [Wisbech 2020 Vision](#) to recruit the best teaching talent to Wisbech.

The '**Prevention at Scale**' programme, sponsored by the Local Government Association (LGA), will help a small number of pilot areas to focus on prevention and intervention initiatives to tackle a particular health related condition or situation. The LGA is offering 20 days of expertise to groups taking part in the pilots, plus additional training, up until September 2018.

The close working relationship between all tiers of local government and other key partners, which is clearly demonstrated through the Wisbech 2020 Vision project, has helped to secure a place for Wisbech as one of the pilot areas.

A working group has been formed and discussions are currently taking place as to which health related condition will be targeted as part of the prevention at scale work.

Wisbech (along with Blackpool) has been designated a **Pride of Place** area (please [click here](#) for more information). Business in the Community (BITC) will be working with the Wisbech 2020 Vision Steering Group in considering the area as a whole, which marks a change from BITC's previous approach to support smaller programmes in multiple areas across the country. They are aiming to help activate relevant campaigns and programmes to create long-term strategic interventions in partnership with local stakeholders to achieve measurable impact.

Next steps

Looking forward, the Wisbech 2020 Vision Steering Group members plan to continue to deliver against the actions outlined in the refreshed Wisbech 2020 Vision document and hold the annual Wisbech 2020 Vision summit towards the end of the year. They will also continue to work on the other projects linked to the Wisbech 2020 Vision, with the aim of improving the quality of life for Wisbech residents.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA:	Economy
Business Plan Priority:	Promote Fenland as a tourism and visitor destination
Business Plan Action:	<i>Support the Cambridgeshire Fens Tourism Partnership to develop and deliver a comprehensive Tourism Strategy for Fenland, through 'Visit Cambridgeshire Fens' branding</i>
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Mark Buckton

Cambridgeshire Fens Tourism Partnership Update

Over the past year, promotion of Fenland as a visitor destination has continued via facebook and the website. More than 750 people follow the facebook page with posts regularly being made by a community volunteer.

The www.visitcambridgeshirefens.org website has been further improved this year, with the addition of a function allowing potential visitors to plan their visit. This planner, along with regular updates to content, has ensured that the website continues to be fresh and relevant.

In 2017 the prospect of facilitating the transformation of the Tourism Partnership into an independent community interest company, or similar, was put to the Partnership. This approach was intended to secure the long-term sustainability of the Partnership and facilitate the prospect of securing outside funding support to help deliver projects to promote tourism in Fenland. However, this proposal did not attract significant interest and has not progressed further.

The Portfolio Holder for tourism is currently working together with officers to put in place a framework for the future. This framework is expected to consist of distinct project delivery strands, working with local business and partners where required, as a replacement to a formal partnership mechanism. The key delivery strands are currently being developed and we will consult with the Tourism Partnership regarding this approach over the summer.

Key future delivery strands being developed include:

Supporting local businesses

Fenland has an economic development role and works with local businesses to provide them with support to allow them to thrive and be resilient. Local tourism related businesses will be encouraged to seek support to help with their further development.

Continued support for the www.visitcambridgeshirefens.org website as a window on

Fenland. This website allows local businesses to let people from both inside and outside the area know what is going on. It is considered that the functionality and look and feel of the website is already good; increased content from local businesses will further increase traffic and encourage local people to get out and about in Fenland more, as well as attract inward tourism to the area.

There is also potential room for further development of activity strands on the website. Work will be commissioned with a third party, for instance a Destination Management Organisation such as [Visit Cambridge and Beyond](#), to work with local community providers to develop those strands.

‘Celebrating Fenland’ – a culture strategy for the District. This workstream is in its infancy, with community and stakeholder consultation included as future steps. It is envisaged that this strategy will focus on celebrating our community and shared history and will be focussed on how the Council can work with the community and key stakeholders to enhance life in the District. The strategy is also intended to allow for the development of bids to funding organisations to support local initiatives and events, attracting visitors to the area, whilst also improving community spirit and cohesion.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland

Business Plan Action: *Enable appropriate growth and development through the delivery of a proactive and effective shared Planning Service*

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mrs Dee Laws

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
LPI EC2 % of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks (or within extension of time)	75%	97%	

In total 31 major applications were decided, with 28 of the decisions being within target.

In 2016/17 the performance was 90% so a significant improvement has been achieved this year.

There were 2 more major applications this year compared to last.

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
LPI EC3 % of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks or within extension of time)	80%	93%	
<p>395 decisions were issued in the year of which 355 were determined within target time.</p> <p>In 2016/17 the performance was 90% and so there has been a small improvement in performance. It should be noted that there were 48 more applications than last year.</p>			

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
LPI EC4 % of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks or within extension of time)	90%	98%	
<p>In total 376 applications were decided in the year of which 369 were determined on time.</p> <p>The performance last year was 97% so a small improvement has been achieved.</p> <p>22 more applications were decided this year compared to last.</p> <p>Looking at all application types (major, minor, other) 71 more applications were determined this year compared to last. Using the LGAs Planning Advisory Service average caseload figure, this equated to 0.5fte planning officer.</p>			

Planning Policy
<p>Input has been provided to the Neighbourhood Plans (as mentioned below) and also in the preparation of the East Wisbech BCP document. In addition, work is ongoing for the finalisation of the 5 year land supply document following a recent appeal that demonstrated that despite the planning permission being granted, implementation was not taking place fast enough to meet with the requirement.</p>

Brownfield Register Update

This was published at the end of 2017 and subsequently the Council was awarded a £5484 new burden allowance by Government.

Custom & Self Build Register Update

The register rules were revised in the autumn of 2017 to reflect the new regulations and guidance published by Government. The statutory return was submitted on time and consequently a new burden allowance of £30,000 was award by Government.

Affordable Homes

The Council has a statutory requirement to enable new affordable housing in the district to meet housing needs. There are over 2400 residents on the Housing Register called Homelink wanting an affordable home in April 2018.

Officers have been tracking potential development sites where there is planning permission or there are applications for planning being considered. At the end of March 2018 we are aware of 95 potential development sites for affordable homes. As part of this process the Council:

- Comment on the policy expectations the Council has with regard to new affordable homes to assist with the planning statutory process.
- Work with Registered Providers (RP) to secure investment either through Homes England or through the new Combined Authority, by sending supportive information to the funding bodies to assist with bids.

In the last 3 years 267 new affordable homes have been completed:

2015/16 = 76

2016/17 = 169

2017/18 = 22

Whilst the delivery of new affordable homes has significantly reduced during 2017/18 an increase in the availability of funding from Homes England and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority has generated an improved appetite from RPs to build in Fenland. It is anticipated that 39 new affordable homes will complete during 2018/19.

To encourage an increase in the speed of new affordable housing supply the Council has instigated discussions with seven RPs asking them to engage with the land owners/agents with a view to acquiring sites to accelerate delivery.

From this work a number of sites are already being brought forward by RPs. This is currently forecast to secure 259 completed homes in 2019/20.

Developer & Agent Forum

The group has continued to meet on a regular basis, with a focus being on improving knowledge of the planning system, improving information resources and processes. The group has most recently worked together of improving processes relating to flood risk. The work paves the way for better quality submissions and quicker decision making and more positive outcomes on planning applications.

Training

This has continued to be provided to the planning committee through regular events and a new training programme for the year has recently been put in place and in addition an event provided by an external provider is going to be provided. Training is available to Town and Parish Council's on request as it has been in previous years.

Building Control

The service is provided to customers on behalf of the Council by CNC. In April 2018 Cabinet renewed this arrangement. The benefits of the proposal included a reduction in the yearly cost of the service compared to current cost and the income generated to the Council as CNC occupy an office at The Boathouse.

Conservation

Assistance was provided at a mud wall event in Whittlesey in 2017 and a draft Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared for the same town.

Support has been provided to the Wisbech Heritage Lottery project and the completion of the works to Constantine House following enforcement action has been secured. Grant support has been awarded to 2 projects in the district (38 West End, March and 11 North Brink, Wisbech) to help ensure that important buildings are appropriately maintained.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland

Business Plan Action: *Develop, enable and deliver economic, infrastructure and regeneration strategies / projects through Fenland's Regeneration programme*

Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Mason

Progress against Regeneration Action Plan

The Regeneration Plan is a collective programme of targeted and corporately significant projects which are the responsibility of a number of different teams across the Council, led by Officers from the Regeneration Action Plan Team and headed up by the Council's Chief Executive.

Specific projects associated with the Regeneration Action Plan are reported as separate projects within this performance report.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mrs Dee Laws

Broad Concept Plans Update

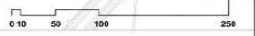
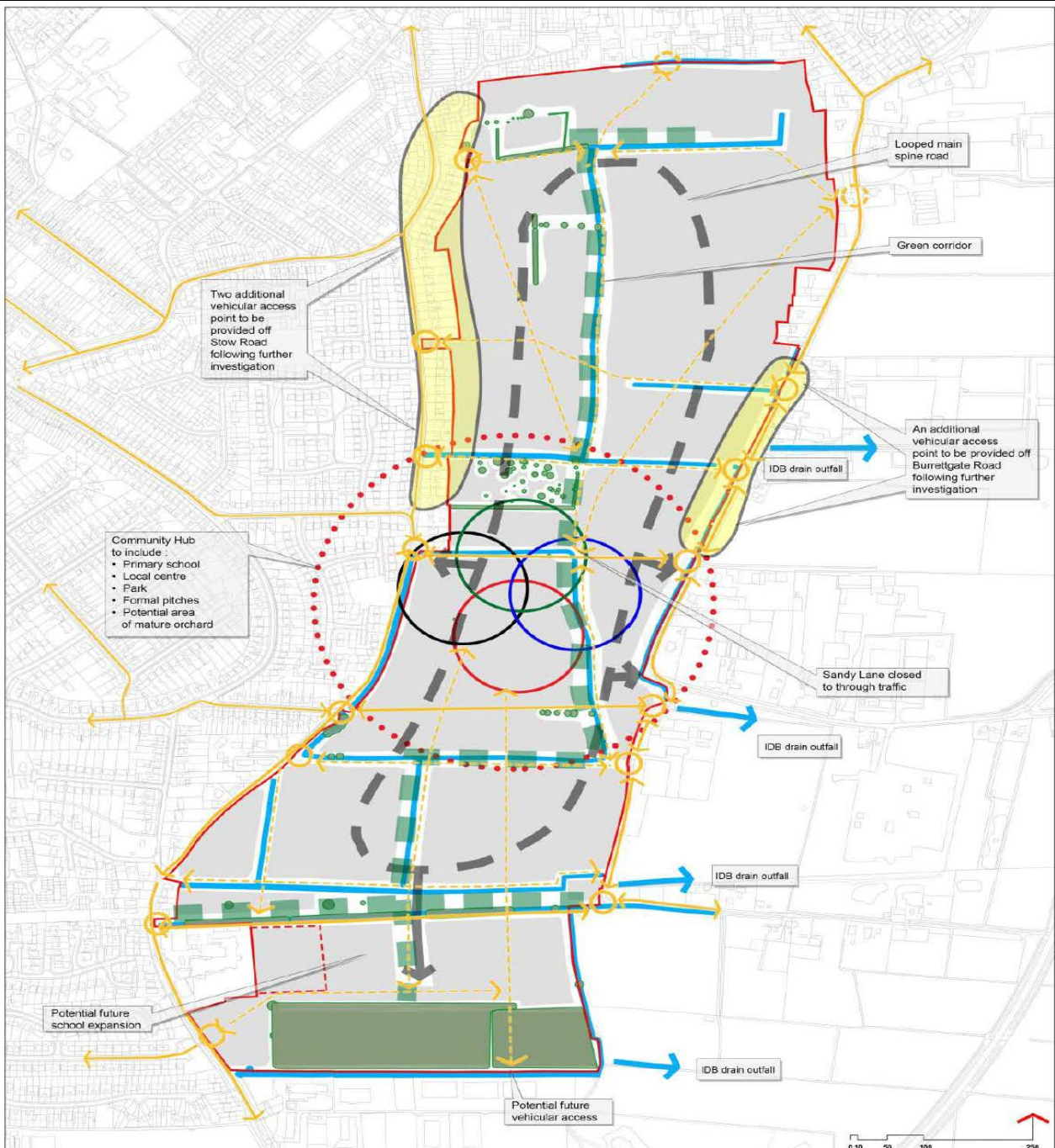
The Broad Concept Plan for the Wenny Road site (350 units) in Chatteris was presented to and approved by the Council's Planning Committee in the summer of 2017.



Contact was facilitated between site owners at South west March and a developer and this tentative progress is being made towards a BCP.

Pre-meetings have been held with a developer and site investigation work is being undertaken to prepare a BCP for the East March site.

After significant proactive works by several teams across the Council working in partnership with local agents and land owners a draft Broad Concept Plan for East Wisbech was agreed and is currently out to public consultation and will shortly be brought before Planning Committee.



GENERAL	PROPOSED - CIRCULATION	PROPOSED - LANDUSE	INDICATIVE USES WITHIN COMMUNITY HUB
Development boundary	Main access roads	Development	Primary school
CONSTRAINTS	Vehicular access point	Green corridor	Local centre
Important landscape features	Potential access point walking & cycling	Currently school land	Park
Drainage & ditches	Existing walking & cycling to be retained		Sports pitches
	New routes along drains & indicate routes through housing areas		
	Link to be explored		

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Unit 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

FCR INFORMATION		FEB 2018	
CLIENT	FERRISD DISTRICT COUNCIL	PROJECT	ESSE WOODS BCP
TITLE	Concept Masterplan	DATE	17/02/2018
SCALE	1:1000	DATE	17/02/2018
ROAD	NTS @ A1	DATE	17/02/2018
NTS @ A1	17/02/2018	PROJECT NO.	409-PA-02 B

Neighbourhood Plan

The neighbourhood plan for March was the subject of a referendum and subsequent adoption in 2017/18 and consequently the Council received a £20,000 grant for the assistance it provided. The preparation of plans is also in train for Whittlesey and Parson Drove and assistance has been already provided to the Town and Parish Council preparing these.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland

Business Plan Action: *Develop and help deliver a viable holistic regeneration and growth proposal to Government for a Wisbech Garden Town as part of the Devolution agreement*

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Chris Seaton

Wisbech Garden Town Update

Emanating from the Wisbech 2020 Vision, the idea of driving regeneration via growth was devised in the form of 10,000 additional dwellings in Wisbech to create a Garden Town and form part of the Governments Garden Town and City programme.

A great deal of feasibility work was required for such an ambitious project, which did not fit into the Government's traditional Garden Town of soaking up growth on the outskirts of the M25, but the overall social and economic benefits were recognised.

A major step on this journey was the award in June 2017 of £6.5m by the newly formed Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, which approved this funding to address the key feasibility aspects of the project which includes the following:

- Building Delivery Capacity – Garden Town programme management and links to Wisbech 2020 Vision programme
- Flood Modelling works
- Connectivity study (road, rail and digital)
- Highway modelling – A47 and local network modelling around Wisbech (this work will link to the wider A47 upgrade study which forms part of a separate

CPCA study)

- Transportation - GRIP 3 Rail study
- Comprehensive market assessment –viability, demand, market
- Acquisition Strategy
- Brand, inward investment and placemaking strategic assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Development and phasing viability assessment
- Green book appraisal
- Delivery options analysis
- Detailed technical studies including EIA, SI, etc.
- Planning work and application Phase 1
- Wider masterplan and planning work
- Accelerated delivery - modern methods of construction
- Legal and governance options and arrangements
- Offsite infrastructure assessment

Work has commenced on the 2 statutory challenges of flood mitigation and connectivity (mainly A47 capacity) which are the show stoppers for the project.

Royal Haskoning have been appointed to carry out the flood modelling work, utilising innovation Dutch flood modelling techniques and processes whilst CCC has progressed the connectivity study.

Proposals are under development for the long term governance and project management which will ensure robust member engagement at all levels along with consultation with the wider community.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA:

Economy

Business Plan Priority:

Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the district

Business Plan Action:

Promote sustainable transport (infrastructure and community) initiatives within Fenland, including rail, road and community transport

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr David Oliver

Rail Development Strategy

East Midlands Railway Franchise

The next long term East Midlands Railway Franchise is due to commence in Summer 2019.

The DfT held a workshop in Norwich during September 2017 where stakeholders could attend and ask questions or raise queries about the consultation. Representatives on behalf of the Hereward Community Rail Partnership and FDC made strong objections to railway service remapping proposals. We gave a clear indication that we would like the Liverpool – Norwich and the Birmingham to Stansted Airport services to remain. Confirmation was given from the DfT that no decisions have yet been made. They also confirmed that they regularly review services patterns and that the decision to include the remapping questions in the consultation is part of that review.

FDC and the Hereward Community Rail Partnership in partnership with others such as Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council and the Combined Authority submitted a written response to the stakeholder and public consultation in October 2017.

A website link to the public consultation materials is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-east-midlands-rail-franchise>

Cross Country Railway Franchise

The next long term Cross Country Railway Franchise is due to commence in late 2019. The Department for Transport (DfT) has not yet formally started the new franchise competition; however, during 2017 they completed some preparation work including seeking views from key stakeholders. Through this process Hereward CRP/FDC was given an opportunity to attend a stakeholder workshop in Birmingham in September 2017. The workshop discussed a range of issues about the current franchise and the following local views were given:

- Newer and longer trains are needed. The current trains are very overcrowded across the route between Peterborough and Cambridge
- The quality of the trains needs to be improved. Greater consideration needs to be given to luggage space, along with catering facilities and the toilets. On board information also needs to be improved.
- The services stopping at small and intermediate stations (such as Manea and Whittlesea) are significant to ensure that commuters have direct connections to Cambridge
- Trains are needed earlier and later in the day to ensure there is adequate access to the airports at Stansted and Birmingham. Such journeys could also support the evening economy
- The trains need to be cleaned more regularly
- Better promotion is needed about etickets and the promotion of the website where you can purchase tickets without an admin charge
- Hereward CRP and FDC do not support the remapping of the Birmingham – Stansted Airport service
- Changes to services need to reflect a balance between all the different types of users of the existing services

Station Adoption Awards

Greater Anglia held their annual Station Adopter awards in October 2017. The Friends

of March Railway Station were shortlisted in 5 categories. Max Mobius won the best personal contribution award for his role in delivering the March Station Memorial Garden Project.

Fenland Stations project

- Whittlesea Station – Significant work has been undertaken to improve the appearance of Whittlesea Station - A cabinet with a padlock has now secured the area where the live electric system could be accessed, rubbish and litter has been removed to keep the area tidy and significant cut backs of overgrown vegetation have been completed. There has also been significant removal of ballast and other materials that have been previously stored at the station.
- March Station – Greater Anglia has completed work to upgrade the lighting in and around the station, Windows have been replace on the platforms and significant painting has been completed meaning that the whole station has now returned to the heritage colours.
- Manea Station – work is continuing to find a suitable location for a car park.

Description	Target 17/18	Cumulative for 17/18	Variance
Performance Measure			
Number of journeys made by bus and rail users	Maintain 14/15 level (14,308 journeys)	19,216	

Since April 2008, FDC has provided a Concessionary Fares scheme for community transport services. This means that any Fenland resident who has a Cambridgeshire bus pass and is a member of the local Community Transport organisation, can travel free of charge on the Dial a Ride Service.

• **What is Dial a Ride?**

Dial-a-Ride (DAR) services provide door to door transport for those people who do not have access to a car, where there is no public transport, or where they cannot access public transport. These services in Fenland are operated by Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT). To use these services customers must be members of FACT. Membership is subject to meeting the eligibility criteria for Dial a Ride services.

• **FACT Membership**

To use FACT services you have to be a member. DAR is not available to the general public. To become a FACT member you pay a 12 month subscription fee of £10 and you must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- o have no access to your own car during the day
- o There is no public transport available
- o Public transport is limited and does meet your needs, e.g. a hospital appointment

- o You have difficulty using public transport due to disability or frailty

FACT currently has around 1,431 members in Fenland District (31 December 2017).

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

- Increase the number of people walking, cycling and using public transport

Fenland Transport Conference 2017

The Fenland Transport and Access Group (TAG), sponsored by CrossCountry and led by Fenland District Council held its first Transport Conference on 12 October 2017. This event was an opportunity for local people and stakeholders to come together to share views and information. There was also an opportunity to have early input into the County Council's new and emerging Fenland Transport Strategy. Strong positive feedback was provided from those who attended on the day. Actions points and feedback are currently being collated for discussion and taking forward in the coming months.

Below is a link to the press release that was issued following the event:

<http://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/12773/Debut-Transport-Conference-hailed-a-success>

Wisbech Bus Service project

The procurement for the new bus service, undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council, was completed in May 2017. The operator is Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT). The service commenced on 3 July 2017. Widespread notification across Wisbech through leaflets, emails and press notices to make people aware of the new bus service has been ongoing since that time.

A formal launch event was held on 21 July 2017. The Mayor of Wisbech presented at an event that formed part of the awareness raising of the new service. The event focused on the Horsefair Bus Station and the Tesco store and included refreshments at Tesco.

Monitoring of the service shows patronage is continuing to increase, which is encouraging. It is however, too early to give any indication of the expected sustainability of the new service. Evidence shows that it takes at least 12 months to build the patronage of any service. Monitoring information for a longer period of time is required to start making assessments about its overall viability.

In September 2017 people living in Edina Court went on the bus to Tesco. In partnership with the store they had tea and cakes in the Community rooms before purchasing shopping and travelling home. These visits are now held monthly. Other such visits are also in discussion. A press release following the first visit was produced and a link to the text is below:

<http://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/12716/All-aboard---for-tea-and-cakes>

From Friday 20 October 2017 through to Monday 20 November 2017 a promotion was held in partnership with the Light Cinema in Wisbech. Anyone who travels on the Wisbech Tesco Bus and shows their bus ticket for that day to the cinema staff can claim a free drink or popcorn. Below is a link to the press release for this promotion:

<http://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/12788/Get-on-board-for-free-cinema-goodies>

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy

Business Plan Priority: Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the district

Business Plan Action: *Engage with partners on the feasibility and delivery of major infrastructure projects across Fenland, including A47 and A605 improvements and the Wisbech-March-Cambridge rail link*

Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Oliver

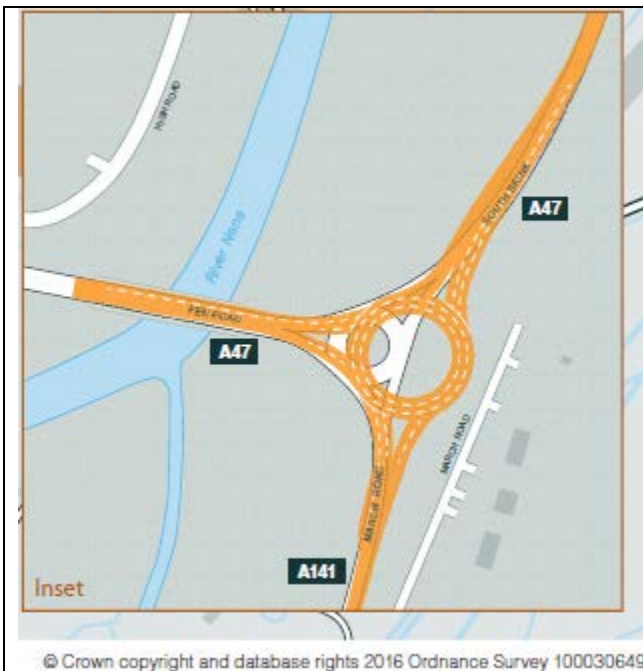
Support strategic transportation objectives

A47

Highways England made the Preferred Route Announcement for A141/Guyhirn Scheme during August 2017. The preferred scheme is an enlarged roundabout that is moved slightly east of its existing location. From Highways England information this was supported by the public. Further details about the preferred scheme and also the report of public consultation can be found from the website link below.

<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a47-guyhirn-junction-improvement/>

A diagram of the preferred scheme is below.



This scheme is part of Roads Investment Strategy (RIS). For other up to date information about each scheme in RIS1 details are regularly added to the Highways England website. A link for which is below:

<http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/a47-corridor-improvement-programme/>

During October 2017, Highways England published a Delivery Plan for all the schemes in the Roads Investment Strategy, including the Guyhirn Roundabout. The scheme is expected to be delivered in the time period 2020/2021. Below is a website link to the full delivery plan document:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/653395/Highways_England_Delivery_Plan_Update_Supplementary_Annex_2017-18_.pdf

A605 King's Dyke Level Crossing Project

Kier has been appointed as the contractor to carry out the detailed engineering design of the scheme and is expecting to progress onto construction. Ground investigations work took place during February 2018 to help finalise the road construction design. Work is ongoing to finalise the design in preparation for approval in June 2018.

Copies of reports and other technical information relating to the Kings Dyke Level Crossing Project can be found on Cambridgeshire County Council website from the following link:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-projects/kings-dyke-crossing/>

Wisbech Access Strategy

In 2014 Government announced that it was awarding Local Growth Deal funding to the GCGP LEP for Wisbech. The Wisbech Local Growth Deal is £1million for feasibility study work and up to £10.5million pounds towards scheme delivery that is dependent on the satisfactory completion of the study work. The full 2014 announcement can be found using the web link below:

The Wisbech Local Growth Deal work is now known as the Wisbech Access Strategy. The Wisbech Access Strategy is a package of individual transport schemes that aim to improve the transport network in Wisbech. The schemes have been tested to make sure that they are the best solutions to address the current problems on the transport network. They will also support future housing and job growth as set out in the Fenland Local Plan. The Wisbech Access Strategy includes a number of transport schemes in a range of locations across the town. The map below shows the transport scheme locations:



The Public Consultation for the Wisbech Access Strategy from late October 2017 to the end of November 2017. All the information that formed part of the public consultation is available on FDC website at:

www.fenland.gov.uk/wisbechaccess

Wider regional schemes

Fenland has lobbied for and is benefiting from the commissioning of wider regional transport schemes by the Combined Authority. These include feasibility studies for the upgrade of the A47 from Thorney to Walton Highway and an M11/A47 link. Both studies are in progress and are expected to report in Summer 2018.

BUSINESS PLAN AREA: **Economy**

Business Plan Priority: **Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland**

Business Plan Action: ***Use the Council's assets to support and deliver sustainable economic and residential growth across the district***

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr David Mason**

Support business and workforce stimulation and create homes by utilising FDC's strategic landholdings:

- South West Wisbech
- Harecroft Road, Wisbech
- New Road, Whittlesey
- Wenny Road, Chatteris

The Council owns a number of strategically significant landholdings across the District. Many of these sites are located within areas allocated within the Local Plan as 'Broad Locations for Growth' or 'Strategic Allocations'. Other sites are considered strategic due to the location or prominence.

Where the Council's land is located within a Broad Locations for Growth or Strategic Allocation, the Council is a participant in the Broad Concept Plan groups that meet to advance the development of these sites. Examples of these sites include land at Wenny Road in Chatteris, industrial land at Boleness Road and Halfpenny Lane in Wisbech and Harecroft Road in Wisbech.

East Chatteris

The Council owns approximately 8.60 acres (3.48 Ha) of the overall 55.7 acres (22.54 Ha) site known as Wenny Road in East Chatteris. The site has an adopted Broad Concept Plan and the landowners are in negotiations with a developer to progress a Planning application for the delivery of between 250-300 new homes, together with associated parkland and open space.

South Wisbech

The Council owns approximately 41.5 acres (16.79 Ha) of existing agricultural land

located off of Boleness Road, Newbridge Lane and Halfpenny Lane in Wisbech. The land is located within in the adopted South Wisbech Broad Concept Plan area and will be developed over the next 10-15 years as commercial and industrial development land.

West Wisbech

Approximately 2.2 acres (0.89 Ha) of land is owned by the Council off of Harecroft Road in Wisbech and is located within the West Wisbech Broad Location for Growth area. The site is the least advanced of the Wisbech allocations. The a proportion of the allocation sits within flood-prone areas and modelling work being undertaken in connection with the Wisbech Garden Town proposal will provide extremely accurate flood modelling data which can be used to maximise the developable area, whilst accommodating sustainable drainage into the design of the area.

Surplus Asset Disposal Programme

The Council maintains a Surplus Asset Register, which comprises a schedule of sites and buildings which are no longer required for direct service delivery or have been purposely retained because of a potential for future strategic regeneration or redevelopment purposes.

The Surplus Asset Register classifies the surplus assets based upon an initial assessment of the likelihood of securing planning permission for an enhanced use against any potential site impediments that are known to exist. This classification includes identifying sites with difficulties where the cost of resolving the problem/issue outweighs the benefit; these sites are considered suitable for auction disposal. As part of the first tranche of approved auction disposals, Officers have sold 9 of the initial 10 sites approved by Cabinet and maintain the 100% sales record at each auction.

The remaining lot of the first tranche will be auctioned shortly, with a further tranche of sites is being worked up for potential auction disposal. These sites include some where anti-social activities are taking place and it is hoped that such sites can be re-purposed to prevent such activities and reduce the cost and burden to the public purse, whilst also producing a capital receipt for the Council.

A refined list of disposal sites and a programme to bring forward such sales has been developed by the Business & Economy Team. The programme has also identified opportunities for sites to be offered for 'Self Build' development and includes a list of low value sites for sale by auction and higher value sites that could be included within the scope for the Property Investment & Development Strategy (PIDS) which Officers are currently creating.

Officers are also currently working on bringing a significant area of commercial/industrial development land to the market in Wisbech in response to

demand from local businesses seeking to acquire land to expand their existing businesses, it is anticipated that the land will be offered to the market during the summer of 2018.

A comprehensive report outlining a planned land disposal programme is to be submitted to cabinet in May/June 2018, which will seek authorisation to dispose of key sites in the next 1-2 years to bring in income to help fund the Councils capital programme and support future investment opportunities.

Wisbech Port Estate Review

The Wisbech Port Estate Review originated as a project from the Council's Comprehensive Spending Review. The project team, consisting of the Business & Economy, Assets & projects and the Marine Services Team developed an action plan which seeks to maximise commercial opportunities, whilst securing additional revenue income and reducing liabilities within the Port estate.

Over the course of 2017/18 Officers have sought to rationalise and regularise occupancy at the Port and investigate opportunities to drive further value from the Council's port-related assets.



Above - Crab Marsh Boat yard



Above - General view of Wisbech Port – looking south

In July 2017 Officers from the Business & Economy, Assets & projects and the Marine Services Team met with the incumbent port operating company. This meeting enabled both parties to gain a greater understanding and insight into each other's needs and to help plan for the future. The continued engagement and ensuring dialogue will enable the Council to ensure a more sustainable port operation, whilst seeking to improve regulation, operational efficiencies and increase income generation.

During the summer Officers from the project team worked closely with the incumbent port stevedoring company and external structural engineers to establish the loading limits of the quayside in order to inform their acquisition of new machinery in a bid to improve efficiency and handle a large new contract for Baltic timber.

In addition to the structural assessment work, the project team established which areas of the port estate are required by the stevedoring company to accommodate its potential business growth.

The final stage of the works with the stevedoring company is to develop a Port Operating Agreement and Operational Handbook to ensure that each party is working cooperatively and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all port users. Officers have submitted heads of terms for discussion and subject to agreement; this will allow the creation of a new lease and Port Operating Agreement.