



Councillor David Buckle, Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development - Report to Council on 19 April 2022

Regeneration

Town Centres Revitalisation Programme

The SDC Officer team are currently completing business cases for upgrading of the bus station in Tadcaster, and improvements to Market Place and the park in Selby. Once the Team has gained final Business Case approval they will appoint consultants to start full engagement with businesses and undertake technical design work.

An article this month in Selby Times highlighted the towns recent success in attracting new, small, and independent businesses. The article also covered the range of projects being led in the council to support town centre revitalisation. A new deli on Scott Rd and a new tapas restaurant opening as the latest additions to the high street, boosting the food and drink offer. Selby has shown resistance to the high number of vacancies other areas are experiencing. Data from the Financial Times showed local sales since March 2020 were up by 1.6 per cent at the beginning of the year on what might have been expected from pre-pandemic levels.

The Town Centres Revitalisation Programme Grant Award scheme has been launched with a focus on Sherburn. Two applications from Sherburn-in-Elmet Community Trust have recently been approved by the Grant Panel, and Grant Award Documents are currently being finalised.

Selby District Places and Movement Study

SDC and NYCC are reviewing the best way forward, with consultants WSP, for the next stage of the Places and Movement Study. This specifically looks at Selby and Sherburn, including modelling to assess critical junctions in each town and a further review of parking provision in Sherburn.

Selby Station Gateway Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)

Negotiations to acquire several land parcels to facilitate the scheme continue with aim to secure all required land will by end of Quarter One 2022/23. The planning application for the scheme is currently being assessed by Planning Officers. NYCC's appointed contractor, Galliford Try, have made several early site visits to understand the scope and extent of the work.

As previously highlighted, subject to Executive and West Yorkshire Combined Authority approvals, works are on target to start Autumn 2022 with completion of the main scheme in 2023 and the new plaza in 2024.

A Communications Plan, identifying the main project activity, construction phasing and related dates, is currently being produced by NYCC and SDC Communications Teams.

Welcome Back Fund

The Welcome Back Fund programme has now ended, and all funded projects are now completed. The community engagement work being undertaken by Social Vision is also complete and a summary Report outlining findings and further recommendations identifying opportunities to enhance town centre activity and vitality is currently being compiled.

Economic Development

Business Support

As part of the objective to increase engagement with large businesses across the district, Economic Development officers have continued to visit and meet with the district's larger businesses, recent discussions have been held with: Clipper, Greencore, Cranswick, Switch Mobility and Drax amongst others. The aim is to build a stronger relationship and to work together to overcome challenges, support growth and highlight good practice.

With very low unemployment in the region, a continuing challenge for many local employers has been recruitment and training. Officers have sought to help to address this by planning and delivering a series of Employment & Skills forums looking at practical ways to help resolve this pressing issue. These have proven to be extremely popular; the upcoming forum will take place at Drax Power station and will include a tour of the Drax facility and will feature presentations on employing refugees and employing care leavers. The council has also commissioned a series of 6 short videos highlighting the career opportunities available in some of the district's larger employers.

December 2021 to February 2022 saw 73 businesses supported with advice and signposting across a range of topics including: employment, skills, planning, expansion, business diversification and funding support. Selby district remains part of several Enterprise programmes accessed via both Leeds City Region LEP and York & North Yorkshire LEP. Referrals have been made into these programmes as well as working closely with York and North Yorkshire Growth Hub to enable local businesses to take advantage of the broader range of programmes and support available.

Increased energy costs, fuel prices, raw material prices and supply-chain issues as well as recruitment difficulties, are presenting a challenging environment, however, the broad consensus is optimistic about the local economy moving forward.

Inward Investment & Strategic Sites

Officers continue to work with the Department for International Trade & York and North Yorkshire LEP along with landowners and developers to facilitate inward

investment into the district, enquiry levels continue to be high. Officers continue to develop proposals to further promote the opportunities and attractions of being based in Selby District, both for inward investment and expansion of local businesses, enhancing the success of our previous place-branding work as well as developing that work.

Close working has continued with strategic site developers across the district. In particular Konect 62 (Former Kellingley colliery), Core 62 (Former Eggborough Power station) and Sherburn 2 / 42 are all planned to begin construction this year offering commercial space of different sizes for a range of employment uses.

There is a continued high level of enquiries for new investment in commercial space and this is encouraging developers to speculatively build large units to satisfy the growing demand. All the above sites are being progressed quickly to satisfy the current requirements. This demand closely reflects the Council's emphasis on prioritising well paid, skilled jobs into the district.

Selby Business Centre

As part of the TCF Selby Station Gateway project, Selby Business Centre was purchased by the council on 23rd December 2021. As part of the project, the SBC will be demolished in July / August 2023 and then replaced by a new public square, opening out to the park, and linking to the town centre and Selby Abbey. There will also be sites available for future commercial activity to the north and the south of the new plaza.

This will necessitate tenants moving to alternative premises, officers have been working closely with the Selby Business Centre tenants to mitigate the effect of the move on these businesses by utilising the council's resources, knowledge, and contacts to help find alternative premises and to minimise the effects of any disruption to their business.

Community Safety

SDC Officers and North Yorkshire Police officers and volunteers have been working together to address anti-social behaviour in the Staynor Hall area. Almost 1000 leaflets were delivered to the area and since the leaflet drop occurred, there have been no recorded incidents to North Yorkshire Police nor any incidents noted on the local social media channels. In February there were 97 ASB incidents reported to NYP with many of these involving the behaviour in the area.

In response to some growing community tensions, there will be some intensive work carried out in an area in Sherburn in Elmet. This work will involve visits to all SDC tenants in/around the Meadow View area by the SDC Neighbourhood Officers, an increase in police patrols and a drop-in session for residents on the 6th April at Harold Mills Court between 10am and 2pm. There will be a selection of our local partners attending to give out information and general advice too. It is hoped that this will be the first of a series of community events across the district as we get back to face to face working.

Member Locality Funding

The Member's Locality Funding has been completed for 2021/22. Councillors have awarded £83,287 to local projects with recent examples of support being for: preparing for the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations, enhancing village hall and community spaces and play and training equipment.

Officers will now review the application process, eligibility for project ideas and also develop an annual report of activity for Full Council.

The Member Locality Fund for 2022/23 will open on 9th May after the Elections. Officers will hold a refresher webinar to update Members on how to apply for the funding and on any new eligibility. Members will be contacted as part of the review process to understand what has worked and could be improved for this final year of funding.

Councillor David Buckle

Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development