


Agenda Item No:	5	
Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny	
Date:	13 July 2015	
Report Title:	Progress in Delivering the Economy Corporate Objectives 2015-2016	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

This report sets out the Council's progress in delivering the Economy related corporate objectives from April 2015 to May 2015. This is to ensure that members have the most up to date information possible.

2 Key issues

Particular successes are:

- Held discussions with several key business leaders across the district
- Occupancy rates for the Business Centres are encouraging.
- A refreshed Action Plan for Wisbech 2020 has been launched
- 255 people visited a Job and Skills fair organised in partnership with Anglian Water
- Marketing campaign to attract visitors to Fenland -mini guide produced
- Planning Performance making significant progress reflecting changes made following PAS review

3 Recommendations

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

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Ralph Butcher, Portfolio Holder for Growth Councillor Simon King, Portfolio Holder for Equalities and Transport Councillor Will Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Planning
Report Originator(s) And Contact Officer (s)	Rob Bridge - Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer robbridge@fenland.gov.uk Gary Garford - Corporate Director garygarford@fenland.gov.uk
Background Paper(s)	Corporate Plan 2015-2018

Cabinet and Corporate Management Team

Overview and Scrutiny

April to May 2015

Cabinet Members



**Councillor
John Clark**
Leader of the Council



**Councillor
Ralph Butcher**
Cabinet Member



**Councillor
Mike Cornwell**
Cabinet Member



**Councillor
Peter Murphy**
Cabinet Member



**Councillor
David Oliver**
Cabinet Member



**Councillor
Chris Seaton**
Cabinet Member



**Councillor
Will Sutton**
Cabinet Member



**Councillor
Michelle Tanfield**
Cabinet Member



**Councillor
Simon King**
Cabinet Member

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: Raise the economic profile of Fenland

Corporate Plan Action: Deliver outcomes related to the adopted Economic Development Strategy, including targeting new investment in key growth sectors of agri-tech, engineering and port and marine

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (month) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Income from wind turbine operators				
<p>April & May No current activity with Crew Transfer Vessels or Survey Vessels for the Wind Turbine industry, however the Race Bank windfarm has recently (June) received Government approval which should result in more activity from Dong Energy with regards to cable laying and eventually turbine installation work. The Council will continue to explore income and wider economic development opportunities.</p>				

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Race Bank Offshore Wind Farm development Dong Energy	Ongoing dialog with Dong Energy Race Bank export cable lay route's and Port Authorities concerns	Race bank Cable lay discussions with (Dong Energy) Offshore Renewables and King's Lynn and Boston Harbour Master's
<p>Andrew Jackson Solicitors have produced the draft legal agreement between Dong energy and Fenland district council (Port Authority) agreement to determine the safe burial of cables within the Harbour Authorities area of jurisdiction.</p>		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Sutton Bridge Marina – commercial land and leisure moorings	Agree land lease arrangements Deliver moorings project Agree management arrangements for new moorings	Wet side' design works have commenced. This will allow necessary Environment Agency (EA) and Marine Management Organisation (MMO) consents to be applied for. Lincolnshire CC (LCC) are to submit a new Planning Application to South Holland DC
<p>The contractual design works have now been commissioned by Lincs County Council, which allows the project to move forward while legal negotiations continue with respect to the lease agreements with The Henry Smith Charity and the Environment Agency. Upon their conclusion the FDC agreements with LCC and Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Agency (IFCA) can then be concluded and the project can move forward to the construction phase.</p> <p>FDC continue to progress with the various consents and preparatory works to enable the 'wet side' construction works to commence.</p>		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Greater Wash boating promotion Regeneration and Economic Development	Develop Wisbech Yacht Harbour brochure and update Web page Now exploring the potential of using social network pages (Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote the Crab Marsh Boat yard and WYH	
<p>Currently in design stage with policy and communications with updating the webpage, updating various logos etc. to modernise the Yacht Harbour</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: Provide and facilitate proactive business support through the Fenland for Business forum and Chambers of Commerce

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
FDC is active member of Chamber of Commerce, attending committee meetings and contributing to local activity.	6 meetings per year	1	1	
<p>These meetings are an important way of maintaining contact with local business representatives and keeping an awareness of how businesses are performing in the district.</p> <p>Fenland Chamber plan to be more active in Fenland during the coming year and have plans for various events and workshops in the area, in addition to the regular informal networking evenings.</p>				

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Maintaining positive relationships with key business leaders	Programme of meetings with key business leaders throughout the year	A number of meetings have been held over the first few months of the year
<p>FDC has held a number of meetings with key business leaders within the District, including: Del Monte, MM:UK and Partner Logistics these meetings have been supported by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and work towards the wider FDC aim of building and maintaining relationships with key businesses in Fenland.</p> <p>Stainless Metalcraft A high level meeting to understand an exciting new contract with the nuclear industry. FDC and CCC looking to support with training, recruitment and exploration of grant aid</p> <p>Fosters Property Development FDC held a meeting with Fosters Property Development to gain understanding of its proposals and to support their aspirations for regeneration of Fenland.</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: Proactively engage with the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to attract external funding (including European) for business, skills and infrastructure projects to Fenland

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (month) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Number of events/wider engagement activity in which FDC works with colleagues from the LEP (annual)	Support LEP activity programme			
<p>High level discussions held with LEP to enhance the Fenland economic offer and better understand funding opportunities and a shared approach to economic and housing growth.</p> <p>FDC worked with the LEP to be a pilot area for the new 'Signpost2Grow' Project, by supporting the development of the second event within the project 'Growth Hub Project' which is planned for July.</p> <p>The 'Signpost2Grow' project has seen the LEP develop and launch a website with a user-friendly system for businesses to find support and funding that may be available to them.</p> <p>FDC have launched a local 'FenlandForBusiness' network to help businesses in this area make the most of this resource and support them in their start-up/growth plans. FDC hosted the first meeting to launch the new network in March, with 14 members attending including local businesses, developers, skills providers and the Jobcentre. All members were keen to continue being involved and meet at least twice per year to review local business support initiatives and share information. Following this meeting the new 'FenlandForBusiness' website was launched in June.</p> <p>http://www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk/</p>				

Description	Baseline	Target 15/16	No of customers questioned (Month - Month 15/16)	No of customers satisfied (Month - Month 15/16)	% 15/16	Variance
Number of events/wider engagement activity in which FDC works with colleagues from the LEP (annual)						
No event s held to date						

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Proactively support and promote LEP initiatives/opportunities to Fenland organisations	Regular contact with LEP colleagues	One meeting with LEP colleagues to develop Agri-tech funding bid
<p>FDC has held a meeting with LEP colleagues and a private partner to re-develop the agri-tech funding bid for an agri-skills centre in Fenland. All partners are committed to re-designing the previous bid (submitted 2014) for an industry-led skills centre in Fenland, further meetings scheduled for June/July.</p>		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Proactively support and promote the Cambridgeshire Fens LEADER Programme	Support the overall management and strategic direction of the local development strategy (LDS) for the LEADER programme through representation on the Local Action Group (LAG)	Support provided through a series of meetings to develop the LDS and secure £1.45m to deliver the LEADER programme aimed at helping local businesses, farmers, land managers and communities to create jobs and growth, mainly via small grants. Launch date Sept 15.
<p>FDC have supported the development of the LDS to secure £1.45m into the Cambridgeshire Fens LEADER Programme. Work is ongoing to develop a delivery plan to be approved by DEFRA in late July with a launch date for opening the funding in September 15.</p> <p>FDC will continue to support the programme and will be a member of the LAG to support the overall management and strategic direction of the LDS and to consider the grant applications for financial support from the programme, along with monitoring the progress of the programme by examining the reports it receives on individual projects and on the LDS as a whole.</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate 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

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Occupancy of business premises	82%	82.4%		

April

South Fens Business centre has had a very positive month in terms of interest in the Centre; Heads of Terms have been issued to a new tenant who hopes to move in 1 June 2015.

We have successfully renegotiated terms with 5 existing tenants whose leases were due to come to an end during and April and May, which is great news for the business.

The Boathouse has also had a good month; Heads of Terms have been issued to a new tenant who hopes to move in 1 June 2015.

May

A new tenant moved into South Fens Business centre on 8 May 2015 and renegotiated a further term with a tenant who is due to expire in June.

A South Fens tenants who lease was due for renewal during the first quarter of 2015 /, have agreed new terms.

We have conducted 4 viewings across the business centres this month, with 1 company coming back to South Fens for a second viewing.

A breakdown of performance by the different aspects of our estate is as follows:

Area of estate	% May 2015
South Fens Business Centre	53
South Fens Enterprise Park	65
The Boathouse Business Centre	76
Mini Factories	96

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Business centre conference income	£120,000	£9,730	£16,594	
<p>April and May April and May were busy months for conferences and events at the Business Centres with a combined external income of £16,594</p> <p>The Boathouse hosted 113 external and 6 internal conferences and South Fens hosted external 59 and 2 internal conferences.</p>				

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Manage the business premises estate	<p>Peterborough City Council engaged to provide Estate Management and Letting support</p> <p>Reviewing space and configuration options at The Boathouse to create additional revenue income opportunities from surplus space</p>	<p>Settlement of outstanding rent reviews and lease renewals across the Business Premises Estate</p> <p>Preparation of briefing note and costings, together with information regarding possible pre-letting of newly created space for consideration by Portfolio Holder in July 2015.</p>
<p>Officers continue to review the Council's business premises estate, rationalising space and identifying potential revenue income opportunities. Work includes reviewing space requirements for the operational offices of the Marine Services Team at The Boathouse and a review of the future use of space at the recently closed Café.</p> <p>The Regeneration & Estates Team are also being supported by colleagues from Peterborough City Council in connection with the estate management of the Council's assets. This is creating capacity to focus on asset management tasks, such as the re-write of the Council's Asset Management Plan</p>		

What do our customers say?

Description	Baseline	Target 15/16	No of customers questioned (Month - Month 15/16)	No of customers satisfied (Month - Month 15/16)	% 15/16	Variance
% of customers satisfied with our business premises	100%	90%	October 2015			

The annual tenant's survey will be conducted across the entire business premises estate in October 2015.

During the course of the year we receive regular feedback from conference users at the business centres, each event organiser is provided with a short satisfaction survey to complete. During April and May 23 were completed across both business centres, all of which gave excellent feedback about the facilities and services provided.

Recent tenant interactions at South Fens have provided useful feedback about the presentation of the building and a tenant's forum meeting was held at the Boathouse during April which was very positive; the new reception team are providing a good service, standards of cleanliness have improved since the introduction of a lunchtime cleaning service.

As a result of tenant feedback, Officers are currently reviewing the proactive maintenance schedule, to identify where refresh and refurbishment works can be undertaken to ensure that we present the buildings in a great condition to support the businesses that we have and continue to attract new businesses.

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: **Promote the delivery of mixed use housing / retail / leisure, maritime proposal for the Nene Waterfront, along with the delivery of our wider regeneration objectives**

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Nene Waterfront Project - Disposal of surplus residential sites - Wisbech Port Development Plan	Develop disposal strategy for Lots 1 & 2. Agree new Port Operating Agreement (POA) with Port of Wisbech Limited	Work commenced on strategy including intelligence gathering and disposal options. Draft POA prepared.

Officers have met to discuss and explore options regarding the development of Lots 1 & 2 of the NWF site. Initial actions include further consideration of options available to bring forward development on the site together with intelligence gathering and data collection regarding end user demand and development viability.

Planning Permission for part of the Nene Waterfront site (Lot 3) has now been approved by the Council's Planning Committee and the Build Lease of the site to the developer has now concluded. This followed an intensive period of work by Officers to bring matters to a successful conclusion. Initial site clearance work has already begun and it is anticipated that construction work will commence on site in July. Officers will continue to identify other opportunities for bringing forward the remaining land within the Nene Waterfront site.

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

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

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Number of Nene berth holders	85	86	86	+1
Occupancy of the Yacht Harbour is on target for April & May, Berth holder numbers remained the same 1 vessel left for America, and 1 vessel joined as a new berth holder.				

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Boat lifts at Wisbech Port <i>Please note Miscellaneous Lifts are omitted from achieved (month) Figure:- i.e ENGINE, MAST, PLOUGH, BRIDGE BUOY / OTHER</i>	150	April 16 May 12	28	
Total Number of Hoist operations shown including Boat Lifts & ENGINE, MAST, PLOUGH, BRIDGE, OTHER	250	April 27 May 24	51	
The Boatyard has been a hive of activity with berth holders preparing the craft for the summer, although quiet with boat lifting operational, the travel Hoist was busy with Engine lifts and Plough lifts.				

Description	Target 15/16	Target April / May	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure					
Total Number of ships to Nene ports	240	April 16 May 25	April 20 May 15	35	
Port Sutton Bridge Ship Numbers	200	April 18 May 17	April 14 May 11	25	
Gross Tonnage to Port Sutton Bridge GT	351,481	April 24,532 May 45,821	April 27,145 May 22,039	49,184	
Wisbech Ship Numbers	40	April 3 May 3	April 6 May 5	11	
Gross tonnage to Wisbech GT	62,190	April 4,503 May 4,691	April 9,282 May 6,700	15,982	

April

Gross tonnage is up on target for Apr however ship numbers down for PSB, this is because we are seeing a larger class of vessel call at PSB.

Port of Wisbech continues with Imports of Timber and Brick cargos reaching over target on both ship numbers and gross tonnage

May

Ship numbers to Port Sutton Bridge were down on prediction; this was mainly due to vessels being delayed due to the strong winds and heavy rain in Europe during the latter part of the month, resulting in cargos being unable to load and cancelled.

Port of Wisbech continued to exceed target numbers, with Brick cargos up due to the national shortage of bricks, Timber cargoes remained steady, with one export of scrap to Spain, and This is encouraging as the current scrap metal price globally is low.

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: Actively support the county-wide partnership project to deliver super-fast broadband across Fenland and Cambridgeshire

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Signpost funding opportunities to Fenland Businesses	Support Destination Digital activity programme 2015/16	1 activity supported	1 activity supported	

Grants award through Destination digital to date

District	No. of companies receiving Business Support	District	No. of grants awarded
Hunts	36	Hunts	166
Cambridge	33	Cambridge	111
South Cambs	34	South Cambs	105
Peterborough	14	Peterborough	95
East Cambs	12	East Cambs	57
Fenland	9	Fenland	23
SUB TOTAL	138	SUB TOTAL	563
		District	

(Last Figures from Dec 14, Awaiting more recent data)

The overall grant scheme did not include Fenland until recently, hence the support level differential.

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Support the promotion of the Destination Digital project through social media, individual contacts and wider partnership activity	FDC actively promotes all aspects of the DD project and funding available	Promotion through social networks, business groups and direct contact
<p>FDC actively promotes all aspects of the DD project and funding available:</p> <p>DD Additional Grants – Closed 31st May, was able to provide up to 40% financial support to help businesses purchase digital equipment or services. The maximum grant awarded was £4,000 per SME.</p> <p>Innovation Vouchers: Up to £5k funding for start-up, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to work with an external expert to gain the knowledge to innovate and grow Closes 21st July</p> <p>https://interact.innovateuk.org/competition-display-page/-/asset_publisher/RqEt2AKmEBhi/content/innovation-vouchers-round-12#</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

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

Partnership Activity

Wisbech 2020

The refreshed Wisbech 2020 Action Plan was launched at the June Wisbech 2020 event, at which an update on the key infrastructure projects for the town was given, along with ideas for beyond 2020. Good partnership continues within both the public sector along with key private sector partners such as Anglian Water.

A refreshed action plan has now been produced and can be found on the Wisbech 2020 Vision website or go to:

<http://www.wisbech2020vision.co.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=11795&p=0>

The action plans includes a refreshed focus on skills and education and health and wellbeing, as well as continuing to drive forward infrastructure and growth, helping to invigorate the town centre and improving the communication of our achievements.

In addition initiatives are being explored for beyond 2020 and an associated brochure can be found here:

<http://www.wisbech2020vision.co.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=11796&p=0>

These actions will be subject to further consultation with the community and local stakeholders

Recent achievements linked to the Wisbech 2020 Vision project reported in the refreshed Wisbech 2020 Vision document include:

- The 'Infrastructure for Growth' leaflet was launched in November 2014 to help drive the economic case for transport improvements, including the Wisbech to Cambridge rail link, and access in and out of Wisbech.
- £1m of funding has been received for feasibility work on improving transport in and around Wisbech, including the potential reopening of the Wisbech to Cambridge rail line
- A further £10.5m of funding has been earmarked for transport improvements in Wisbech for 2016 - 2021, subject to feasibility studies.
- £300m investment was approved for the A47, which will include improvements to the Guyhirn roundabout.

- A further £6m investment for the College of West Anglia which means that new facilities will open in September 2015, in addition to the £7.2m Technology Centre which was part funded by Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council.
- A dedicated campaign delivered in Wisbech to promote the provision and use of high speed broadband.
- £19,000 funding was received to promote and diversify the arts and culture offer in the town.
- The Wisbech Market Town Transport Strategy was developed and adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council.
- Volunteers were recruited and trained to deliver a Community Translation/Interpretation Service, and additional ESOL courses were also delivered.
- The Time Credits scheme was launched in Wisbech, and continues to be a great success.
- A successful £2m bid was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the sustained improvement of the High Street area. Development funding of £108,000 will help FDC to progress plans to apply for a full grant in the second round of bidding.
- Supported, with the Octavia Hill Birthplace Museum Trust, the National Trust and local partners, the transformation by OHBMT of a derelict site into Centenary Green, a beautiful open space for all to use and admire
- Work has started on improving Constantine House, supporting the improvement of other key derelict buildings in the town.
- The new Tesco superstore opened in Cromwell Road, along with a cinema and restaurants.
- A new retail park has opened on the old Tesco site in Cromwell Road, along with other local investment in this expanding business corridor
- A large part of the Nene Waterfront Site has been sold to local developer which will create 70 homes, including 24 affordable properties.
- Operation Pheasant was successfully delivered, positively changing the lives of many migrant workers and attracting national praise and awards for effective partnership working.
- 94 new homes have been built and let in Wisbech and surrounding villages, with a further 69 properties planned for 2015/16.
- 9 previously empty properties have been brought back into use in the Wisbech area.

Housing and business growth is at the planning stage, linked to the adoption of the Local Plan 12 months ago, which has provided a sound planning framework for growth in Fenland.

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

Corporate Plan Priority: Raise aspirations and improve learning opportunities

Corporate Plan Action: Work with education providers to assist in improving aspirations and links to employers

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Support programme of activities to support local businesses fill the skills gap with partners including Skills Service, Job Centre Plus.	Support activity programme 2015/16	1 event supported to date	1 event supported to date	
<p>FDC organised in partnership with Anglian Water and key partners, the Jobs and Skills Fair in April, the event was a success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 255 people visited the fair – this is down on last year, however it seemed to be widely accepted (among JCP and other employers and support agencies) that this was due to the unemployment register being down on last year and more people being in work – it also didn't seem to have an influence on the quality of the event – a high proportion of employers found the event useful and have made follow up conversations 30 stallholders: including employers, skills providers and agencies that help support people moving into work 				

What do our customers say?

Description	Baseline	Target 15/16	No of customers questioned (Month - Month 15/16)	No of customers satisfied (Month - Month 15/16)	% 15/16	Variance
Number of events supported						
<p>The Jobs and Skills Fair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81% of employers said they would be following up conversations with potential applicants/candidates 86% of employers said they felt the fair was successful Great comments from employers for the Princes Trust young volunteers helping out at the event, who helped out as part of a programme to improve the life chances of disadvantaged young people in Fenland 						

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

Corporate Plan Priority: Raise aspirations and improve learning opportunities

Corporate Plan Action: Work with businesses and education providers to ensure local skills and courses support the needs of local businesses

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (month) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Support the Skills Service to deliver a programme of activities in Fenland.	Support Programme of activities			

Through partnership working with the Skills Service (procured via LEP funding across Northern Cambridgeshire), a programme of activities will develop over the year responding to local business needs to fill skills gaps and develop employability skills in young people, activities between businesses and schools, and other organisations with access to young people.

In 2014/15 the skills service exceeded its targets as follows:

KPI	Cumulative Total Apr 14 – Mar 15
Significant interactions with businesses and key partner organisations	383
Number of businesses taking part in activity with young people	61 unique business in Fenland Schools
Number of business hours	441
Number of young people with a business-led intervention	1,857
Number of young people hours	10,250
Engage with secondary schools across Fenland	100%
Engage FE Colleges across Fenland	100%
Measurement: attitude survey for young people to measure movement in aspirations	Yes
Skills workshops with business	2

This year's KPI's shows that this excellent engagement continues: (Next data available in July 15):

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Support existing and proposed skills centres in Fenland in key economic sectors	Regular contact with LEP colleagues	One meeting with LEP colleagues to develop Agri-tech funding bid
<p>FDC has held a meeting with LEP colleagues and a private partner to re-develop the agri-tech funding bid for an agri-skills centre in Fenland. All partners are committed to re-designing the previous bid (submitted 2014) for an industry-led skills centre in Fenland, further meetings scheduled for June/July.</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

Corporate Plan Priority: Promote Fenland as a tourism and visitor destination

Corporate Plan Action: *Support the Fenland Tourism Board to develop and deliver a comprehensive Tourism Strategy for Fenland through the 'Visit Cambridgeshire Fens' branding*

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (month) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Support the Fenland Tourism Board to oversee the further development of a district wide approach to encouraging and developing the tourism agenda in Fenland	Develop an Action Plan for Delivery			
The Fenland Tourism board, are currently in the process of developing a vision and action plan for delivery and moving Tourism forward which will be presented to the Portfolio Holder in July..				

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Deliver a marketing campaign to attract additional visitors and promote Fenland.	Deliver a marketing campaign to attract additional visitors and promote Fenland	Develop Events and Festival Guide to be distributed within an hour or two travel from Fenland
<p>The Fenland Tourism Board (FTB) as part of the marketing campaign for Fenland have designed a mini guide to promote Fenlands annual events and festivals that is being distributed within service stations etc. on major trunk roads within an hour or so catchment area. For a 6-month campaign.</p> <p>Using your remit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TIC ordering service for Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambs, Herts, and Beds • Chapelfield Norwich stand which is a central premium high footfall site in Norfolk • Railway stations - Norwich, Cambridge, Ely, Clacton, Colchester, Chelmsford, Shenfield, Rayleigh, Southend Victoria, Wickford, Harlow, Witham, Stansted Express, Bury St Edmunds, and bus stations Norwich and Bury St Edmunds • Motorway services and Little Chefs, which you requested, to cover Herts and Beds - Toddington (N&S), Newport Pagnell (N&S), Peterborough, Cambridge, Birchanger Green, South Mimms, Baldock, and Little Chefs on the A1 corridor <p>This will also cover various supermarkets due to the Premium outlet clusters selected to cover the railways stations.</p>		

The Fenland Tourism Board (FTB) as part of the marketing campaign for Fenland have designed Welcome to Cambridgeshire , Visitor and Accommodation Guide 2015/16 10,000 copies are distributed nationally through Take one media.



The Fenland Tourism Board (FTB) attended 'Open Farm Weekend' in Thorney, to promote the Cambridgeshire Fens as a perfect destination to visit for a relaxing break, short break or day trip, showcasing some of the amazing events organised in the Cambridgeshire Fens.

The Open Farm Weekend provided the FTB with the perfect opportunity to meet our potential visitors face to face, to promote the Cambridgeshire Fens, and assist them in preparing their events calendars for 2015/16 and beyond.

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: Deliver a proactive and effective Planning Service to enable appropriate growth and development

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved April/May 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	75%	100%	88.33%	

Significant progress has been made in ensuring that Major applications are determined within time and as noted above performance since April already exceeds the annual performance target. This continues to benefit the rolling 24 month target for major applications which is well above the Governments target of 50% in time. This high performance contributes to encouraging early site development so benefitting the local economy. This excellent start to the year continues the very strong performance enjoyed during the **2014/15 period with a year end performance of 89%**. This reflects the important changes made to planning processes following the PAS review earlier last year. Planning Advisory Service review earlier last year. Successful process changes made following the review included significant improvement and use of IT particularly the use of IDOX and the Document Management System, changes to the scheme of delegation, staff training and development, enhanced performance management and introduction of best practice employed by other high performing authorities.

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved April/May 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	80%	88%	89.36%	
<p>As with Major applications significant progress has been made with Minor application performance with targets being exceeded since April. This has been achieved in part by regular case reviews with officers targeting cases and working with applicants to ensure adequate detail is provided as part of the application. This has also reduced time delays in completion of s106 agreements. As with Major applications this high performance continues from 2014/15 when the year end figure was 84% confirming Fenland as a high performing authority in terms of planning performance</p>				

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved April/May 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	90%	100%	100%	
<p>100% performance since April represents the highest possible performance. Although 'Other' applications tend to be more straightforward and less contentious in nature performance since April continues the strong performance of the past 12 months and represents excellent delivery of customer service. This represents an improvement on the 2014/15 year end figure of 93% to date which in itself was a significant achievement in terms of performance.</p>				

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: *Develop an effective and viable developer contribution framework via Section 106 to support associated infrastructure provision*

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Improved community benefits in terms of comprehensive S106 agreements delivering appropriate infrastructure		
<p><u>Developer Contributions SPD</u> The Council's adopted Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) came into effect on 6th April 2015. This was in line with the Government's target deadline for updating the regulations regarding S106 contributions for planning applications.</p> <p>A key element of the new regulations means that no more than five separate developments (and hence S106 contributions) will be able to be "pooled" for a single item of infrastructure. In order that it does not fall foul of the new regulations FDC is updating its Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to ensure that details of infrastructure are clearly identified from the outset. The IDP will complement the Developer Contributions SPD and is intended to be considered by Cabinet and Full Council later in the summer.</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: *Develop, enable and deliver economic, infrastructure and regeneration strategies / projects for Fenland through the Regeneration Action Plan*

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Support regeneration project work across the district, including Fenland Renaissance project and Heritage Lottery Fund bid	Increase number of derelict buildings / sites brought back into economic / environmental use	
<p>RENAISSANCE</p> <p>Since April officers have continued to liaise with prospective property owners to bring applications to fruition. Several expressions of interest in shop front repair grants have been received for MARCH town. Grant aided repair works continue to advance within the context of several longstanding dilapidated buildings District wide.</p> <p>WALKABOUT</p> <p>Officers continue active casework in relation to the walkabouts project, based on the Member agreed prioritisation approach. It is too early in the year to identify achievements in the first 2 months however to demonstrate the success of this programme the update report circulated to Members in February 2015 is attached at appendix A for consideration. Such reports will be regularly prepared and circulated to keep Members fully apprised of progress.</p> <p>Following an end to the periods of Purdah, Officers are currently working with John Carey to develop a positive focussed press release sharing successes/ positive outcomes relating to the scheme over the last year.</p> <p>Wisbech High Street Bid - HLF</p> <p>The development of the Stage 2 Heritage Lottery bid is progressing well. In recent weeks a consultant appointment has been made for the drafting of a new Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan for Wisbech. Following interview of two nationally renowned Architectural practices, Haverstock has now been appointed to undertake and lead the design team inputs, with Conservation architect Rena Pitsilli providing expert input for some buildings. The appointed design team also includes Ed Morton who is a partner of the of renowned Conservation Structural Engineering company The Morton Partnership.</p>		

Regular consultative group meetings continue to be held with a high level of attendance and enthusiastic support for the project.

In addition further community consultation is planned linked to local events such as the Rose Fair.

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Coalwharf Road Demonstration Project	Disposal of site to be considered by Cabinet in July 2015	
<p>The decision to proceed with the disposal of the Coalwharf Road project was deferred until after the May 7th Elections. A revised report is being drafted, to be submitted to Cabinet in July 2015.</p>		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
<p>Support business and workforce stimulation and create homes by utilising FDC's strategic landholdings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - South West Wisbech - Harecroft Road, Wisbech - New Road, Whittlesey - Wenny Road, Chatteris 	<p>Participation with development of Broad Concept Plans (BCP) in agreement with joint landowners and stakeholders in each respective area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption of the South West Wisbech BCP. - Continuing discussions and workshop related to developing a BCP for West Wisbech - Enabled access to Council's landholdings at East Chatteris for archaeological surveys in preparation of BCP.
<p>The work undertaken by Officers with respect to the Council strategic landholdings links very closely to the work being undertaken by Officers from Planning & Transportation Teams with the development of a Broad Concept Plan, as required under the adopted Local Plan.</p> <p>Please also refer to the following performance measures in this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against regeneration action plan • Facilitating the delivery of the Local Plan Broad Locations and specific locations for growth 		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Coordinated approach to flood risk management and local drainage issues		Support to Lead Local Flood Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) in local response to August 2014 flooding and other local flooding issues
<p>FDC continues to work closely with all local flood risk management authorities, including representation on Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership. This has included close liaison following the August 2014 flooding and supporting the subsequent mitigation actions which have followed. March was the most severely hit Fenland town and monthly updates have been prepared and shared with March Town Council.</p> <p>Further mitigation measures are being investigated by CCC including engagement of a consult to establish measures to reduce flood risk to affected properties in Morton Avenue March which is to be used to bid for Grant in Aid funding from the Environment Agency and allocation of funding to address highway drainage issues in Birchwood Avenue, March.</p> <p>CCC as LLFA (Lead Local Flood Authority) are currently updating the Cambridgeshire Strategy for Flood Risk and developing a Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD in consultation with FDC and other local Flood Risk Authorities.</p>		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Progress against Regeneration Action Plan		
<p><u>Broad Concept Plan for South Wisbech</u></p> <p>An important tranche of further regeneration across the district is the Broad Concept Plan approach for development of the main development allocations in the Local Plan. On the 19th April, Planning Committee approved a Broad Concept Plan (BCP) for South Wisbech as the basis for drawing up master plans and in determining future planning applications for the area. A BCP is required for all of the urban extensions around the market towns as specified in Policy LP7 of the Local Plan to ensure co-ordinated planning and the timely delivery of key infrastructure. This was the first to be considered and approved by the Council and was produced following extensive partnership working between agents, landowners, statutory authorities and FDC. A number of other BCPs are currently being prepared for urban extensions in the district.</p> <p>Other initiatives</p> <p>Many of the other initiatives contained in the plan are covered elsewhere in this report.</p>		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Facilitating the delivery of the Local Plan broad locations and specific locations for growth	Progress towards the Broad Concept Plans for the Wisbech sites	
<p>The South Wisbech Broad Concept Plan (BCP) was given in principal approval by Planning Committee at the meeting on 29 April 2015.</p> <p>ATLAS who is part of the Homes and Communities Agency are now part of the East Wisbech project work. ATLAS will be providing us with advice and good practice from its experience across England in developing exemplar large scale housing projects. ATLAS are currently helping FDC, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council and the other project partners to develop a complete timetable with all the tasks required so that we can submit the East Wisbech BCP to Planning Committee.</p> <p>The next meetings for East and West Wisbech will be in June 2015. The next South Wisbech meeting to be arranged will focus on infrastructure delivery and S106.</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: Promote sustainable transport (infrastructure and community) initiatives within Fenland, including rail, road and community transport

Description	Target 15/16	Achieved (April/May) 15/16	Cumulative for 15/16	Variance
Performance Measure				
Maintain existing use of dial a ride to 2013 figures through the concessionary fares scheme	Maintain 14/15 level 14,308 Journeys	1,380	2852	

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:

- have no access to your own car during the day
- There is no public transport available
- Public transport is limited and does not meet your needs, eg a hospital appointment
- You have difficulty using public transport due to disability or frailty

FACT currently has around 1,357 members in Fenland District (end of March 2015).

For April and May 2015 the level of use of the dial a ride services is on target.

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Rail Development Strategy 2011-2031		
<p><u>Rail Franchising</u> In March 2015 the Hereward Community Rail Partnership including FDC submitted a response to Government setting out our views and requirements for the new Greater Anglia Rail Franchise. The new franchise is due to commence in October 2016. In June 2015 the government announced the short list of bidders that will be submitting full tenders for the franchise. The Hereward CRP will be meeting with the bidders in due course, we are waiting for the Government to announce their Invitation to Tender setting out their requirements for the franchise in August 2015, this is so that we maximise the potential of any meetings.</p> <p><u>Feasibility Study for Manea & Whittlesea Stations</u> The Masterplan work for Manea and Whittlesea Stations includes the consideration for platform lengthening. The Masterplan for Whittlesea also includes the idea of a pedestrian bridge between the two platforms. A contractor has now been appointed to undertake the initial feasibility study work for these elements of the master plans. The consultants have undertaken their initial assessments and have developed some initial designs for both stations. These proposals have been discussed with key members of the Hereward CRP Steering Group. The next stage is to refine the proposals and to develop costs, set out any assumptions and work that will be required for future stages of the project. The work is on target to complete in July 2015.</p> <p><u>Manea Station Car Park</u> The brief for the land survey has been finalised with the train company as the land owner. Quotes have been received for the work and there is ongoing discussion with the Train company to agree a delivery plan and to move the project forward</p>		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Wisbech Local Sustainable transport Fund (LSTF) project - now known as Wisbech Travel Choices Project	Delivery and completion of Wisbech LSTF Project	
<p><u>Introduction to the project</u></p> <p>The Wisbech Travel Choices work is a 12 month project up to the end of March 2015, it is aimed at encouraging more people to walk, cycle and use public transport. Wisbech travel choices is being delivered, managed and monitored by the Fenland Strategic Partnership Transport and Access Group with FDC as lead body. The project is being funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).</p> <p><u>What is the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)?</u></p> <p>The LSTF is Government funding awarded to enable local authorities to increase the use of public transport, community transport and walking and cycling (sustainable transport) locally.</p> <p><u>What are the key aspects of the Wisbech Travel choices project?</u></p> <p>Over the course of the next 12 months the Wisbech travel choices project will be providing a targeted approach using the following methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing and circulating a Wisbech Travel information pack • Roadshows, meetings and events locally throughout the year • Personal Travel Planning exercise for specific streets in Wisbech and surrounding villages • Stocking key venues in Wisbech with relevant travel and transport information <p><u>Progress to date</u></p> <p>For the information packs a reprint of the existing Getting from A to B Case studies is now complete. Two new Wisbech Passenger transport information leaflets are complete. The Wisbech travel choices name and logo have now been completed. The Fenland Transport Directory has now been revamped and is waiting to be printed. The programme of events is ongoing including preparation for attending the Wisbech Festival and the Rose Fair. Baseline monitoring information about bus use and walking and cycling levels is also being prepared.</p>		

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

Corporate Plan Action: *Actively engage with partners on the feasibility and delivery of major infrastructure project across Fenland, including A47 and A605 improvements and the Wisbech-March-Cambridge rail link*

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Seek improvements to the A47 in Cambridgeshire	ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2014 – The Highways England (formally Highways Agency) completed the A47 Feasibility Study. This confirmed the requirement for improvements at the Guyhirn/A141 roundabout. December 2014 – Government announcement in the Autumn Statement to fund the Guyhirn Roundabout improvement. This scheme now forms part of the Roads Investment Strategy for Highways England. Post the General Election, the A47 Alliance is now considering how to take its campaign forward. The next meeting of the group is in June 2015. 		

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
Local Growth Funding Phase 1 – Wisbech Access Strategy & Wisbech – Cambridge Rail Line	Progress on the Wisbech Access Strategy Feasibility Study work	
<p>Wisbech Access Strategy</p> <p>The brief for the Wisbech Access Strategy has been written and was approved by the County Council Shadow Transport Body in December 2015. The procurement process has now commenced and ongoing discussion is in progress to appoint an approved contractor. This contract will focus on looking at the details and deliverability of the Wisbech Transport Mitigation Strategy. The mitigation strategy includes the Wisbech Link Road, a river crossing, an additional East – West Road, Freedom Bridge and Wisbech Bus Station. Consideration will also be given to how the work of this study links with the Wisbech to March Railway Line work and the A47 options work.</p>		

March to Wisbech Railway Line

The latest study to be completed for this project is the Strategic Outline Business Case which was completed in March 2015. Below is a link to the report on the County Council website:

http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20006/travel_roads_and_parking/68/transport_funding_bids_and_studies/3

The key information from the report states that the benefit cost ratio ranges from 1.6 to 3.7 when the wider economic benefits and impacts are taken into account, as well as the value people place on having a service available to use.

The cost estimate for reopening the line and providing a bridge for the A47 over the railway is approximately £62m. The preferred option is for two trains per hour between Wisbech and Cambridge, and further work will be carried out to see if there is the available capacity space on the network for trains to travel on the March to Cambridge line.

The Level 2 feasibility study for the railway line is now being carried out to help us understand the practicalities of reinstating the line. It will also include an Outline Business Case to provide more certainty around the costs and benefits of the scheme. This is due to complete in July 2015.

CORPORATE PLAN AREA: Economy

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

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

Description	Action	Achieved
Performance Measure		
To review Council property and land holdings and dispose of surplus assets	In preparation for the revised Asset Management Plan, review and update Asset Register. Revise list of surplus Assets. Consider additional options to maximise income and minimise revenue and capital expenditure.	A project plan has been prepared for the AMP Initial evaluation and revision of the surplus Asset register commenced.
<p>An AMP project plan has been prepared to identify key dates and actions to the delivery of a revised AMP. In addition an initial evaluation and review of the surplus asset register commenced, with the aim of reclassifying and reprogramming the disposal of surplus sites.</p> <p>Additional consideration is being given to the alternative options that surplus or underutilised assets could delivery, aside from simple disposal.</p>		

3Cs – to be included quarterly (July, October, January, April)

3Cs category	Measure	April & May 2015	April & May 2014	% Change + / -
Compliments	Total number received (over given period)	6	3	+100%
Comments	Total number received (over given period)	4	1	+300%
Correspondence	Total number received (over given period)	6	11	-45%
Complaints	Total number received (over given period)	7	12	-42%
Total contact (over given period)		23	27	-15%

3Cs Summary

April & May 2015	Service Requests	Compliments	Correspondence	Complaints	Total	Comments (Trends, action taken to resolve, etc)
Service Area						
Planning Policy		1	3		4	
Planning		5	2	6	13	
Assets & Projects			1		5	+4 comments
Total		6	6	7	23	+4 comments

Appendix A

Streetscene, Dilapidated Properties and Enforcement **Member Update – February 2015**

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In November 2013, in response to a member focus on the local streetscene, a Council-wide Streets Ahead project group was set up to bring together key services and skills in order to tackle the level of dereliction and streetscene issues escalating in the towns of Fenland.
- 1.2 Whilst the increase in these issues stemmed in part due to a downturn in the financial, property and development markets, along with local events such as fire damage, it also reflected the need for a more joined up, enforcement based strategic approach to tackling and managing emerging issues.

2. Where We Were at the Beginning

- 2.1 In August 2013, a walkabout of the towns took place in order to identify and prioritise issues which were being reported. The walkabout was supported by Portfolio Holders Councillor Murphy, Cllr Oliver and Cllr King. Cases located in prominent positions within the district's villages were also referred for inclusion. *(On the 8th May 2014, the Portfolio Holder Responsibility for Conservation/ Dilapidated Buildings transferred from Cllr King to Cllr Oliver.)*
- 2.2 The 'walkabouts' initiative generated a list of 121 issues/cases that were subsequently referred to the project group for review, prioritisation and action.
- 2.3 It was determined that 72 of the 121 raised cases related to private buildings and sites, 43 of the original cases related to environmental issues and 3 cases related to strategic planning issues.

3. Enforcement Powers

- 3.1 In early 2014 the Council's Enforcement Policy was reviewed in line with the new Regulator's Code. The content of the revised policy was appropriately informed by district-wide consultation with local businesses and organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce.
- 3.2 In developing new protocols, reference has been made to national best practice standards and advice sought from national agencies such as English Heritage.

3.3 The agreed approach followed the Council's successful PIE approach of prevention, intervention and enforcement, utilising various enforcement powers. This included Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which enables local planning authorities to take action by serving a notice on an owner or occupier if the amenity of a part of their area, or of an adjoining area, is adversely affected by the condition of land/buildings.

4. Streetscene & Environment Cases

4.1 During the walkabout, a variety of streetscene issues were identified. These were things such as:

- Damaged street furniture
- Littering / waste issues
- Unsightly fly posting/signs
- Anti-social behaviour issues - particularly within alleyways in Wisbech
- Cars for sale on the highway
- Pigeons roosting / fouling property and footpath
- Empty properties

4.2 In total, there were 43 streetscene issues initially reported. Approximately half of these were resolved within the first 8 weeks through working with owners and local businesses or by increasing littering patrols in the towns. Many were also referred to other organisations such as the County Council or Roddons. Some street furniture issues were resolved through visual enhancements delivered by probation services.

Completed Streetscene Case Study, South Brink, Wisbech



This bollard, damaged by a vehicle has now been repaired and realigned

4.3 Anti-social behaviour was tackled in partnership and in early 2014, 2 alleyways were gated either permanently or during night time hours to prevent anti-social behaviour and improve community confidence. These gating orders have been very successful.

4.4 At the end of January 2015, there were 5 streetscene issues outstanding and 4 cases that are partially resolved, which are being either monitored for compliance or re-referred back to Cambs County Council for further action.

4.5 A Consent Street Policy is currently being consulted on and will return to Licencing Committee in 2015. This policy will then require applications from

traders who wish to sell goods on pre-determined consent streets. This will include cars for sale on the highway.

5. Building/Site Cases

5.1 During the 'walkabout' a variety of building/site issues were identified:

- Generally deteriorating building fabric
- Long term dilapidated and vulnerable historic 'Buildings at Risk'
- Vacant/underused buildings/sites
- Unkempt potential development sites

Many cases identified related to Historic Buildings that constitute heritage assets (both listed and unlisted buildings of local interest) that are sited within Conservation Areas.

5.2 In total, 75 building/site issues were identified in November 2013 as having an adverse impact upon the amenity of the streetscene and wider locality.

5.3 Each of these cases was prioritised for action and thoroughly investigated by officers and to date, 26 building/site cases have been completed.

5.4 3 additional cases relate to buildings that are alternatively being addressed through the Wisbech Townscape Heritage Bid discussed later in this report.

Completed Case Study: Trident Apartments, 10 South Brink, Wisbech



January 2014



January 2015

The external appearance of this property, which is in multiple ownership, has been positively transformed over the last year following lime render reinstatement, roof repairs and windows repairs. The works undertaken benefited from Renaissance Grant Assistance.

5.5 In addition to the 26 closed building/site cases, partial compliance has been achieved to date in relation to a further 11 building/sites cases. Within the context of these sites it is expected that all of these cases will advance to full resolution within the next three months, with many anticipated to be completed sooner.

Ongoing Case Study: Bank House, West End, March



August 2014



January 2015



January 2015

An extensive and complex programme of specialist repair works commenced at Bank House in August 2014. Work continues on site and external refurbishment is expected to be completed by Autumn 2015.

Ongoing Case Study: All Saint's Church Hall, Elm



Ivy has now been removed from the building, the roof stripped and slates refixed. Rainwater goods have been repaired and all formerly boarded windows have been re-glazed and are awaiting wider refurbishment and redecoration. Underpinning, Brickwork and stonework repairs are scheduled to commence in spring 2015.

5.6 Work is also scheduled to commence on a further 5 sites, including Minstrelz in March and the former Boxing Club in Wisbech in the next 8 weeks.



**Minstrelz Former Nightclub,
High Street, March
January 2014**



**Former Boxing Club,
11 Nene Quay Wisbech
January 2014**

- 5.7 Over the last year, 3 formal Section 215 Enforcement Notices have been effectively served and remain live. The three sites where s215 Notices have been served are Constantine House, Nene Quay, Wisbech, the former ATS Site, Wisbech and a vacant cottage to the rear of the Acre Pub, March.
- 5.8 In the context of each of these three sites, works are ongoing and positively progressing towards full compliance.

Constantine House, Wisbech Case Study

- 5.9 The formal service of a S215 Notice in relation to fire damaged Constantine House, Wisbech has demonstrated how effective the service of a S215 Notice can be. Following service of the original notice in January 2014, officers have worked closely with the owner/project managers to agree details and ensure continued momentum on site.
- 5.10 Following initial clearance of debris from the site and stabilisation of the structure, refurbishment works have advanced positively. Now that all brickwork repairs have been completed the roof is currently being reinstated. Replacement windows, currently on order, are scheduled to be installed in early spring. Internal refurbishment works are also advancing at a good pace.
- 5.11 The refurbishment of Constantine House, linked to the Council's service of a S215, has also been widely featured in the press. This publicity has positively increased awareness of the Council's willingness to tackle problems in relation to derelict buildings head on, using enforcement powers where necessary.



Constantine House, October 2013



Constantine House, January 2015

6. Renaissance / Changing Views

6.1 FDC has been delivering its 'Renaissance Grant Programme' over the last four years. The programme provides landowners of heritage properties and other prominent sites district wide with small grants to undertake urgent repairs/improvement works for example:

- **Building Grants:** Up to 50% contribution towards urgent works (maximum contribution of £10,000) (Capital funded)
- **Shop Front Improvement Grants:** Up to £1,500 for refurbishment and redecoration of historic shop fronts (Capital funded)
- **Changing Views Grant:** Up to £500 for community groups wishing to affect small scale improvements to vacant and underused sites. (Revenue funded).

6.2 Over the last year, the availability of Renaissance Grants towards the cost of repairs has proved to be an effective catalyst in securing the execution of works to 13 properties identified by the 'Walkabout' initiative. The **£90,348** allocated over the last year has secured works to buildings to a value of **£665,000** throughout the district.

6.3 All grants are determined on a first come first served basis and applications are scored using an agreed matrix to determine eligibility.

7. Wisbech High Street Heritage Lottery 'Townscape Heritage' Grant Bid

7.1 Three historic 'Buildings at Risk' in Wisbech High Street were included on the original 'walkabout' list. The Council's commitment to improvement and regeneration of the built environment was evidenced through the submission of a Stage 1 Townscape Heritage Grant Bid for 'Wisbech High Street' to the Heritage Lottery in August 2014. On 10th February 2015 it was announced that the Council's grant application for the full amount of £2m received Stage 1 approval from the National Heritage Lottery Board.

7.2 The 'Stage 1' approval is a culmination of a year's hard work led by the District Council, alongside Wisbech Society, Wisbech Town Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and more than 20 community groups. The application was coordinated and overseen by Cambridge based Economic and Heritage Consultants, Ingham Pinnock Associates.

7.3 Within the next month an external consultant shall be appointed to progress the application to Stage 2 over the next year. Funding for this appointment has been secured from the Stage 1 Heritage Lottery Approval.

7.4 Officers shall continue close partnership working with the appointed consultant and community consultative groups in order that the formulated submission is both robust and deliverable. The Stage 2 bid will expand upon original proposals significantly and will require in principle, commitment from the owners of targeted buildings.

- 7.5 The 'Stage 2' bid will also further develop education and heritage engagement activities linked to the application. These activities are intended to raise the profile of Heritage and the town's historic built environment more widely, thus increasing local people's engagement with heritage.
- 7.6 A new Wisbech Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy will also be developed in connection with the bid.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 In conclusion, **71%** of cases (**86 of the original 121 referred cases**) have been closed or are approaching agreed full resolution within the next 12 weeks.
- 8.2 As evidenced in the photographs accompanying this report, the initiative has enjoyed considerable success and has resulted in significant positive enhancement to the quality of Fenland's built environment and streetscene.

9. The Way Forward

- 9.1 Officers will continue progression of casework in relation to all ongoing and 35 outstanding cases in the coming year. In respect of the 30 outstanding cases relating specifically to individual building/site cases, positive early stage discussions have been achieved with the majority of owners.
- 9.2 However, several of the outstanding 30 building/site cases do relate to complex buildings and sites that shall require significant further focussed officer input to secure resolution. To assist, members have agreed to extend the renaissance scheme with an additional £50,000 capital allocation for the coming year.
- 9.3 Progression towards the service of Section 215 Notices will be advanced where appropriate, although it should be noted that alternative strategies, such as the potential commencement of Compulsory Purchase Proceedings, or the Service of S48 Repairs Notices, may in some cases offer greater potential to secure resolution of outstanding issues, particularly in relation to long term 'Buildings at Risk' cases.
- 9.4 Over the last year a significant proportion of advanced level casework and Renaissance Grant Funding has been concentrated on Wisbech properties identified as High Priority Cases.
- 9.5 Following a revisit in January 2015 of all originally identified cases, it has been agreed that a more concentrated focus on March & Chatteris cases will be made. In particular, one localised area of Chatteris which comprises a principle gateway to the town running along Bridge Street and High Street, which needs concentrated action on 8 independent building cases.