

Subject:	Economic Development Directorate – update report March 2018	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	14 th March 2018
Report of:	Economic Development Manager	Portfolio Holder:	Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That Cabinet notes the contents of this report

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update Members on progress made on a selection of Economic Development Directorate projects.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **A connected and successful Rossendale that welcomes sustainable growth:** our priority is to ensure that we are well connected to our residents, key partners and stakeholders. We want to make the most of every pound we spend and we are always looking for new and innovative ways to make the resources we do have, work harder for us.
 - **A proud, healthy and vibrant Rossendale:** our priority is to ensure that we are creating and maintaining a healthy and vibrant place for people to live and visit.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- As this is an update no specific risks are associated with this report.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 The Economic Directorate has three main work areas:
- Economic Development
 - Planning
 - Commercial Assets / Property

5.2 Economic Development

Business Relationship Programme: The largest businesses are key to the development of the boroughs future prosperity and employment. As such we will be starting a relationship programme that will provide a point of contact within the Council if any issues arise. We will discuss the businesses future growth plans and try to ensure that expansion or relocation takes place within Rossendale. Businesses will be linked to other support available such as the Rossendale Works project, due to start in the Spring, as well as signposting to wider

Lancashire support.

Invest in Rossendale Event: Invest in Rossendale is the brand name for Economic Development and will be officially launched in Summer 2018. This high profile event will be in partnership with Valley at Work at Whitworth Civic Hall. A business guest speaker has been booked which will be followed by a question and answer session. Members will be invited to join us for this special occasion. The linked Invest In Rossendale website and brand publicity will become operational in the coming months.

Rossendale Works Event: The Rossendale Works employability project that will be starting in the Spring, is in partnership with Lancashire Sport and will be engaging with inactive residents and link them with employers. To complement the employability project we have organised with the LEP an employment event at Haslingden Grip and Go in July 2018. In the morning each of Rossendale's seven high schools have been invited to send a year group to meet employers. The afternoon is for residents who are economically inactive or on out of work benefits.

LEADER/RDPE applications and progress: Following our targeted mail out, two applications for rural funding are in the process of being submitted. This will boost rural employment and investment if they are successful.

Promoting Rossendale: Following on from the restarting of the Promoting Rossendale Group, we are now looking to hold a stakeholder event aimed at leisure and tourism businesses. The aim is to encourage inter trading and work on strategies to better promote the sector. A number of initiatives are under development to boost tourism and leisure. At the ELR a new map has been put up in Rawtenstall stations waiting hut in February. It shows visitors how to get to the attractions in Rawtenstall. The leaflet currently handed out to 200,000 visitors when they buy tickets has been changed at our request and now includes a map of Rawtenstall. Improved walking signage and posters in the carriages and at Irwell Vale and Rawtenstall stations promoting Rossendale are under development.

5.3 Planning

Spinning Point: Work is underway in respect of the first phase of the regeneration of Rawtenstall Town Centre. The refurbishment of the former town hall, to enable it to be brought back into use, is well advanced. As with any historic building which has been subject to numerous alterations and additions over the years this has not been without its problems. Internal structural issues have required significant propping solutions however all of the internal issues have now been addressed and works have now commenced on the external elements of the building.

The Local Planning Authority is working closely with the architects and developers to identify solutions to issues which have arisen during the town hall refurbishment project. The treatment of the gable end of the building was particularly challenging due to historic alterations to this gable. The identified solution is the erection of a modern glazed feature attached to the gable end which will provide an impressive feature at one of the key entrances into the town.

The refurbishment of the town hall is due to be completed in June and handed over to Together Housing who is the future tenant of the building. The next stage of Phase 1 of the Town Centre regeneration will be to construct the new bus station which is due to be completed by the end of the year. The new bus station will incorporate up to 4 new retail units

which are currently being advertised for lease and will bring new investment into the Town Centre.

Phase 1 of the regeneration of the Town Centre has been recognised regionally by winning the North West RTPI Regeneration Award. The judges recognised that the development will transform the town, its economy, connectivity and will undoubtedly encourage further investment.

The planning application for Phase 2 of the Town Centre regeneration, which will include new retail and leisure development, is currently being considered. The development has been praised by the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, Miranda Baker, Chamber Chief Executive, said: *“The chamber are delighted to see new investment plans coming forward for Spinning Point in Rawtenstall town centre. This kind of council-led development has the potential to significantly increase the economic and social success of the town centre as a viable and thriving community hub, bringing new businesses across leisure, hotel commercial and retail premises and boosting quality town centre”*

Bacup Hub: The Local Planning Authority (LPA) supports the redevelopment of this site in principle as it has been vacant for some time now, it is located within a sustainable location within the Urban Boundary, and the building is in a poor state. As such the redevelopment of this site has the potential to significantly enhance one of the key routes into Bacup. Last year the LPA received an application from Euro-garages to redevelop the site with a new petrol station, retail shop and drive thru.

Given the site’s location at the entrance to Bacup Conservation Area and historic town it was considered crucial to ensure the highest quality standard of design and finish is achieved for any new development as a poor quality design could have a potentially negative and harmful impact. The original scheme submitted incorporated a standard garage design which did not complement the site or the character of the surrounding area. Even though the Council are keen to see the redevelopment of this site and the development proposed would bring new employment opportunities into the Borough, the poor quality of the originally submitted scheme was considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The application was refused for this reason.

Following the refusal the Planning Team have worked with the applicants and their agents to amend the scheme. A new application was submitted at the end of last year which now proposes a bespoke stone built building incorporating full height glazing and a simple flat roofed canopy over the petrol pumps and, as an addition, a good quality landscape scheme. The development now respects and enhances the site and the wider area and will enable the redevelopment of this previously developed site, with associated job creation, within Bacup.

5.4 Commercial Assets/property

Kay Street: Work is underway for the renovation and subsequent letting of Kay Street in Rawtenstall to complement the Spinning Point development and other town centre improvements.

Kay Street has been a problem for RBC and Rawtenstall town centre for a number of years and the current proposals for each of the properties are summarised below;

Kay Street	Status
29	The property is due a rent review but represents a stable investment on a long term lease for RBC.
31	Property has now been renovated and has been reintroduced to the residential market on a short term tenancy agreement. Works have been carried out to mitigate future spend on this property. The long term aim for the property is to be brought back into use as a commercial property to complement the rest of the street.
33-35	A long term empty property, the property has a number of interested parties the most likely business is a leisure attraction; this will attract a different type of visitor to Rossendale whilst providing revenue for RBC. Heads of Terms have been issued and are currently under discussion with a proposed user, change of use has been applied for.
37	Another long term vacant unit, this unit has been provisionally let to a financial services business with Heads of Terms issued. Anticipated occupancy is mid-March 2018 which will provide day time opening and strong branding to Kay street.
39	Once vacant possession is obtained by property services the unit will be offered to a neighbouring business supporting their ambition to expand, if they decline the offer then it will re-enter the market as an opportunity.
41-45	As with 29 this building is let long term to two stable businesses, whilst a rent review is due in the next 12 months it is unlikely to significantly alter from the current figure.

It is anticipated that by summer 2018 that all commercial units on Kay Street will be let and producing rent for RBC – this will enhance the Spinning Point offering as well as providing opportunities for businesses in the town and jobs opportunities too. It is anticipated that within 2 years the works required will have paid for themselves.



Record management: Work by the Commercial Asset Manager continues to modernise the Property Services Asset Management policy.

Procurement of a digital asset management system has resulted in an industry leading software that will go live in the middle of February 2018, this will provide a real-time picture of all of the Council's assets from Land, Plant and Machinery, property (including anticipated revenue), when rents are due to be received, as well as an accurate tenant management system. The proposed software will interact with Environmental Health, Planning and other services thereby reducing workloads in each department and providing a clear picture of land under Council ownership upon request and if required on the website.

The ongoing revenue cost has been agreed at £0 per annum with a setup fee of not more than £6,000 to cover the cost of importing data and 3 days of training for the Property Services Team ensuring that Property Services is on target to cut its expenditure and increase its revenue.

Another benefit to the revised filing system is the growth in receipts, land is currently transacting through Property Services at £44/m² which is nearly 200% increase on the financial year before (£23/m² 2016/17) representing a significant growth in capital receipts.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 Any financial matters arising are noted in the report and also noted in previous reports presented to Members.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 No legal implications arising from this report.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

8.1 As part of the development and implementation of projects outlined above, consultation and community engagement will be undertaken as appropriate.

8.2 This report provides only an update overview of new and existing regeneration projects. It is not determined therefore, the content of this report will not have any adverse or disproportionate impacts under the Council's Equality Policy or associated equality duties.

8.3 Each project will/has given consideration to equalities specifically related to that project in a relevant and proportionate manner.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 For Members to note progress made on a selection of Economic Development Directorate projects.

No background papers