

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
DATE: WEDNESDAY 10TH APRIL 2013
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
SUBJECT: DEESIDE ENTERPRISE ZONE

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of progress relating to Deeside Enterprise Zone.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 On 2nd April 2012, Deeside Enterprise Zone (DEZ) was officially launched as Wales' designated area for Manufacturing and Advanced Manufacturing. DEZ has the potential to create 7,000 new sustainable jobs, to grow Welsh GDP, to drive the economy of North Wales and to deliver an advanced manufacturing hub to underpin economic renewal in the area. DEZ is attracting new investment interest from local, national and overseas sources.

2.02 Deeside Enterprise Zone has the potential to be a catalyst not only for the revitalization of the Deeside area, but for the regional economy as a whole. DEZ adjoins the most deprived communities in Flintshire and designation of the Enterprise Zone provides a once in a generation opportunity to transform these areas. Local residents will benefit from both new job opportunities and the improved local environment. It is essential that this improvement is embedded within the community so that benefits extend beyond the five year life of the Enterprise Zone.

2.03 Progress on DEZ will be largely determined by the wider economic environment, but planning permission has been granted for the eastern part of Northern Gateway (known as 'The Airfields'), whilst an application for the western area (alongside the River Dee) is expected soon.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 DEZ now has a strategy based on securing expansion of local businesses, growing the key sectors of aerospace, automotive engineering, food, pharmaceuticals, electronics, paper and packaging and sustainable energy.

Key challenges for DEZ are;

- to create 7,000 new, sustainable jobs.
- to make Deeside an internationally recognised centre for advanced manufacturing
- to create an employment pipeline, helping local people develop the skills needed.
- to develop a new North Wales Advanced Manufacturing Centre as a focus and shop window for the sector
- to attract new inward investment.
- to strengthen links with the wider local community, ensuring that investment in DEZ helps bring new life back to Deeside.

Progress in Quarter 3, 2012/13

3.02 Jobs

122 new jobs have been created in DEZ during the third Quarter ;

- Hexagon Metrology, a Swiss-based company opened an aerospace manufacturing support operation in Sandycroft creating 4 high skilled jobs
- Argo Aviation opened an aerospace design unit creating 10 high skilled jobs
- Henrob, manufacturer of self-piercing rivet at Deeside has created 26 new jobs, with a further 34 planned for during 2013
- Ralawise, distribution depot for work and leisure wear based on Deeside has expanded, creating 12 new jobs
- Toyota has announced 70 new jobs at the Deeside plant

As a result of new investment, there has been a significant take up of property with 50,000 sq ft let in January alone on Deeside Industrial Park and a further three enquiries are expected to complete by the end of March.

3.03 Advanced Manufacturing Centre

The Minister for BETS has confirmed support for the feasibility study, taking this exciting project forward to develop a new North Wales Advanced Manufacturing Centre. This will be the skills and technology, research and development centre for the region.

3.04 Promotion and Marketing

A significant amount of promotional activity relating to the Enterprise Zone by way of planned events and high profile visits to the County as follows:-

- DEZ trade journal event will be held 20 March at WG London

offices to promote DEZ to developers, the media and interested end-users.

- A high level visit by a Chinese trade mission to Flintshire took place on 25-26 March. Chinese businesses are looking to develop trade links with local companies and to consider investment opportunities within Flintshire including DEZ.
- 'Flintshire Goes to The Senedd' has been confirmed for 14 May, this will promote DEZ and Flintshire Business Week 2013 to Welsh Government Ministers and officials.

3.05 Advanced Manufacturing

Development of DEZ is being integrated with the wider regional approach to supporting advanced manufacturing across North Wales. Nearly 50% of all manufacturing output is concentrated in Flintshire and Wrexham, but all North Wales counties have important businesses in the sector and a new joined up approach to skills, inward investment and technology support is being developed. A bid for Regional Collaboration Fund has been made to Welsh Government.

Skills within the manufacturing sector is the priority issue. Work is underway to raise the profile of the sector, increase numbers of apprenticeships and develop more integrated approaches across North Wales. Initially, this will focus on developing a new regional business network, based on the Cambridge Network model, extending the Business Entrepreneurship Network (BEN), Make It In Manufacturing and Girls in Engineering.

3.06 Governance in Deeside

Regeneration has established a new Deeside Partnership that will bring together all public sector stakeholders, to better integrate regeneration activities across the community and will include DEZ.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the progress report is noted.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

DEZ will contribute significantly to the work of the Council in the period 2012-2017 and will have a significant sustainable impact to the local economy.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

DEZ will have the potential to make a significant contribution to tackling poverty as a result of private investment encouraging local opportunities for training, skills and employment; under which DEZ will

be expected to demonstrate impact.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

DEZ will have the potential to make a significant contribution to environmental enhancement as a result of Welsh Government and private sector infrastructure investment, under which DEZ will be expected to demonstrate impact.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

DEZ has the potential to make a significant contribution to equalities and this is included as a cross cutting theme under which all investment projects will be expected to demonstrate their impact.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

Welsh Government as the lead body for all Enterprise Zones. DEZ Board as the advisory body to WG.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

Welsh Government as the lead body for all Enterprise Zones. DEZ Board as the advisory body to WG.

12.00 APPENDICES

None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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