

BDC Market Towns Quarterly Meeting June 2nd 2021

Report from Cllr Judy Anscombe & Deputy Clerk Claire Smith

1. Recovery Road Map – Sam Chapman Allen

Current vaccination rates are 70% residents have had 1 dose; 46% have had 2 doses.; lower uptake in Watton and Thetford.

In Norfolk & Waveney 8 in hospital, but zero in ICU.

In last 7 days there have been 30 cases of Covid 19 in Breckland, none of these cases required hospital treatment. Broadland and West Norfolk both have 18 cases (Bolton has 905).

It is recommended that councillors are responsible and have Rapid tests twice weekly.

Track and Trace is less engaging so needs to improve.

Breckland are working with the covid response model and are at step three, all is tracking positively to move to step 4 on 21st June. Hospitality venues should go at own pace and not rush to 100% capacity as soon as Step 4 occurs.

2. Breckland Sustainable Strategy – Greg Pearson

Sustainability Strategy in 3 Pillars:

1. Address impact on the environment in BDC.
2. Air quality, Planning powers to drive forward
3. Communities to do things for themselves

Looking at education with residents on reducing waste, as well as recycling.

Planning Policies for No Gas connections

Procurement to drive sustainability,

Drive to flexible working, looking for best practise within Breckland working environment including review member and staff travel patterns.

Additional £525K one off budget to include:

- £100K for green Grant
- £100K for Tree Planting
- Electric charging

Liaising with SEE(South Eastern Electricity) for renewable options to reduce carbon footprint. Switch and save is more difficult as we are in a rural environment with more oil fired heating.

Ward councillors obtaining feedback from residents.

The Green Grant

- a. Communities or Groups, schools to bid for £5 to £10k from July 2021, with successful bids being awarded in September. (£60K of budget)
- b. Small grant for up to £500 for bug gardens, planting, and litter picks (£40K of budget)

Questions to Greg from Swaffham:

Q. Swaffham having an historical Air Pollution problem, would like an update on the latest figures taken from the tube readings?

A. Advised that Greg would enquire with another colleague.

Q. Several tree planting initiatives, how do these collaborate?

A. It is important to liaise and involve those who know about the types of trees to plant, when and how to plant correctly for trees to survive; Woodland Trust a useful source of information.

Thetford have planted 4000 trees in last 2 years; the town has its own Conservation Officer.

Thetford have also carried out an Environmental Survey from 'Save Money & Carbon' organisation; this company calculates the carbon footprint for town councils, which can be rolled out to the community as well.

Q. Swaffham has a Green Project, could BDC support with this?

A. Separate discussion to take place.

3. Digital Boards for Towns – Andrew Holdsworth

Agenda item on Full Council meeting June 9th

Will be talking to towns individually.

Boards can be used for public service messages, advertising. External funding for 18 months, followed by yearly maintenance cost, which could be paid for from Public Sector partners and businesses contribution.

Feedback required from council on the idea.

4. Update on Hatch 'Future Breckland'- Andrew Holdsworth

External partner Hatch and We Made That, to form a project team to identify projects, priorities, and initiatives for future visions. Funding via Hatch, who have secured investment for High Streets and public sector.

Town 1- Dereham the first town to start the project

Towns 2 & 3 - not yet identified (should know in next month) but due to start in September

Questions to Andrew from JA:

Q. We are advised that the Economic Development Vision with NCC (via Ed Colman) is to tie in with Town Delivery Plan led by Breckland; we are also at the start of our HAZ project, how will these 3 initiatives come together and when?

A. The HAZ project will be included in the discussions, but there isn't a date yet for the next 2 towns. The work would be fully integrated with NCC plans.

5. Breckland MTI – Cassie Ruffell

MTI monies is £150K over 3 years starting 2020 and for each town; has been delayed because of last year pandemic.

Working with Ward councillors to produce business case for long term projects.
Recovery fund being used for shopfront grants, new start ups.

6. Town Councils reports

Swaffham – JA & CS:

- Town busy especially around Market Place with the hospitality venues.
(BDC - Licences for the venues to use highways have been given by NCC and to run until September 2022.)
- Vacancy rates in town = 4 units around the centre, but 4 long term empty units on the periphery; could BDC help with this?
- STC carrying out review of Assets
- Litter bin survey carried out resulting in 2 new bins required for town centre at cost of £1200 each, could Breckland consider procurement for bins and benches to reduce costs for the towns?
Note. Thetford Town Clerk advised that they have bins for heritage area at a cost of £450. Deputy Clerk has more research to do for bins around the Buttercross. Attleborough also raised about procurement, as did Watton.
- HAZ project at start of process
- Car rally and Christmas event planned

Watton TC

Reported on Street Antiques Fair.

Thetford TC

Starting to see events happening and have been contacted by Bruno Peak for the Queens Platinum Jubilee, which will culminate in a 4 day event at a June Bank Holiday.