

## **BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL**

<b>From: Deputy Chief Executive and Councillor John Hinton</b>	<b>Report Number: L65</b>
<b>To: Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 13 September 2011</b>

### **ANNUAL REPORT OF HAVEN GATEWAY PARTNERSHIP (HGP)**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide Committee with an overview of the issues tackled by the Haven Gateway Partnership (HGP) in 2010/11 and to enable Committee to scrutinise all work carried out.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the content of this report be noted subject to any comments the Committee may wish to make.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

#### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no new financial implications arising from this overview of work undertaken by HGP in 2010/11.
- 3.2 In total for an annual membership fee of £6,000 (plus officer time) over £600,000 in recent years has been levered in by HGP to fund schemes in the Babergh area; whilst a number of schemes outside of the Babergh area has delivered benefits for Babergh residents.

#### **4. Risk Management**

- 4.1 There are no risks arising from this report.

#### **5. Consultations**

- 5.1 Consultation is not applicable to this report.

#### **6. Equality and Diversity Impact**

- 6.1 Haven Gateway Partnership ensures its programmes provide equal and fair access for all groups. A number of schemes have made a positive contribution to Babergh's Fairness and Equal access agenda e.g. the scheme at Pin Mill has had a positive impact on community relations, bringing together and addressing the needs of various community groups ranging from houseboat owners, sailing clubs, Parish Council, local boatyards.

## **7. Shared Service/Partnership Implication**

- 7.1 There are no implications arising from this paper. Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk are Members of HGP and as our integration progresses we will be able to streamline and reduce, in overall terms, Officer input to HGP.

## **8. Background to Haven Gateway Partnership**

8.1 The Haven Gateway Partnership was launched in 2001. It is an economic development partnership and brings together the ports of Felixstowe, Harwich, Ipswich, Mistley and their surrounding hinterlands including the regional centres of Colchester and Ipswich. The area includes the southern part of Suffolk Coastal District, Babergh District, Ipswich and Colchester Boroughs, Tendring District and Braintree District Councils. Collectively it is known as the Haven Gateway (sub-region) which contains the UK's largest container port at Felixstowe and two of the top10 fastest growing towns in the UK in Ipswich and Colchester; overall in terms of new home and jobs it is one of the fastest growing areas in the UK.

8.2 The Haven Gateway is a formal "body" with its own constitution and terms of reference. Senior Members and officers, plus private sector representatives attend the meetings regularly. It has a clear purpose, vision and values and detailed roles and responsibilities. Although the Partnership has no formal legal standing, Essex County Council is the accountable body for its activities which is managed through a Memorandum of Agreement.

8.3 Babergh's Elected Member representative on the HGP is John Hinton and officer representatives are Mike Hammond and Rich Cooke.

## **9. Key Information**

### **9.1 The Work of the Haven Gateway Partnership (HGP) Highlights for 2010/11**

- Completion of Junction 28 on the A12
- EEDA and EDRF funding to deliver Innovation Martlesham
- Agreement to deliver Colchester Northern Approach Road and planning application submitted for Park and Ride
- Transformation changes and public realm in Colchester, Ipswich, Felixstowe
- Preparation of evidence/development briefs to release key employment sites (including Brantham)
- Completion of Pin Mill Regeneration
- Engagement in delivery of greenspace projects (including Belstead Brook and River Gipping Path).

9.2 In relation to the Babergh area the Partnership secured funding, and supported, the following schemes:-

- 'Dry Port'
- Pin Mill
- Brantham
- Sudbury Town Centre

Each of these schemes make a direct contribution to delivering Babergh priorities and are listed as targets/work to be achieved in our 3 year Medium Terms Plans. In all four cases the support of HGP was essential to the delivery of these schemes. Set out below are details of each of these schemes:-

### 9.3 Dry Port

- The Haven Gateway Partnership is a joint core partner with Babergh in a European Union Project entitled Dry Port. Dry Port's purpose is to examine the opportunities for sites close to, but not adjoining major ports, to become transport and employment hubs. The expansions underway and planned at Felixstowe and Harwich will substantially increase container traffic. Hence this project will look at the long term planning and sites required to service the needs of the ports whilst minimising carbon emissions (through greater use of rail and reducing lorry movements) and exploiting opportunities for job creation through the manufacture/assembly of goods imported and exported through the ports. Significant European funding has been secured which will fund this research which will be of direct relevance to Babergh's work in planning the future of sites at Sproughton (former Sugar Beet site) and the old Brantham industrial area.
- Babergh jointly with HGP will be hosting the 2011 European Dryport Annual General Meeting and Conference, with all costs met by HGP. The conference will bring together the worlds of politics and business to discuss ideas on how best to work together to ensure the future prosperity of the ports industry and the wealth and jobs that they create. The Dryport meeting will be an opportunity to compare and contrast different experiences in the partners' own regions.
- At the centre of the conference will be a visit to Felixstowe Port and a day of discussion and exchange of ideas at a seminar to be chaired by Cllr Hinton at Wherstead Park, in Babergh.

### 9.4 Improvements to the Hard at Pin Mill, Chelmondiston

This project is in the Council's three year plan and supports the Corporate Objective: Vibrant Places, Strong Communities.

Project Cost: £281,000, Haven Gateway contribution: £235,100.

Some years ago the Council set up a Task Group to try and regenerate the area through improving the maritime facilities, and hence the local economy. At the outset, it was recognised that for the project to succeed Babergh would need to take an active role in community leadership in harnessing the energies and skills of a very diverse and sometimes conflicting group of stakeholders.

Initially, the Task Group – facilitated and project managed by Babergh officers - carried out works such as the removal of wrecks, improved refuse collection arrangements, the introduction of a planning enforcement regime and 'clean-up' days organised with the National Trust and the Environment Agency.

However the key issue has been a project that will regenerate the economy of Pin Mill through increased maritime activity, and also increasing its viability as a tourist attraction through the interest generated in this maritime activity – whilst at the same time ensuring that the quality of life for residents – especially the houseboat owners is not compromised

The project has now been completed.

The project involved two main areas of construction work:

- Reinstatement works to the Hard
- Reconstruction of a repair facility capable of accommodating Thames Barges in particular, but other sailing vessels up to a similar size.

The outcomes will be:

- The establishment of a ‘company limited by guarantee’ to manage the facility in the future. The membership of this company to come from the stakeholders who have an interest and/or an expertise in the proposed operations
- Increased economic activity through the new repair facility
- Increased use of the Hard by sailors for repair and leisure purposes
- Increased economic activity for the boatyards, the public house, the sailing club and the local studio
- Increase control of activities through the Company and the planning enforcement regime
- The ability to maintain the new facility through income generated by the Company
- The involvement of the local stakeholders in all the above in contributing to a more sustainable – and cohesive community

During 2011 following discussions with proposed members of the company (including the boatyard owners and the sailing club) it became apparent that some additional works would greatly enhance the working environment and increase the income to the company.

A further £50,000 was secured from HGP and the following additional works undertaken:-

- a) Increase in the working area
- b) Improved health and safety through additional navigation posts, mooring rings and a concrete ramp at the end of the hard
- c) Protective coating to newly installed steelwork to reduce future maintenance
- d) Provision of electricity and water supplies, together with working platforms at barge deck level to improve the speed of repairs.

## 9.5 **Brantham Industrial Site – Development Feasibility Study**

Haven Gateway funding: £70,000

The industrial site is adjacent to the main railway line from Norwich to London. It is now mainly derelict with many of the old industrial buildings having been demolished.

The funding has been used to commission studies in conjunction with the developer. These studies by consultants include flood risks, contamination, cost of reclamation, ecology and highways. The results of the studies will help formulate the detailed development proposals.

This has been an important pre-requisite to enable the site to eventually be returned to productive use for the benefit of the local economy and beyond.

The project has not moved as quickly as we would have wished and this is due to the poor development climate. However, steady progress is being made which will enable the site to move towards development when circumstances do improve. The next step is to commission work to test the assumptions on which a 3 Dragons Viability Test has been carried out. When this testing/verification is done, the way will be open to the developer to begin the process of submitting a planning application, and they have confirmed their commitment to doing so. The developer expects that the application may be submitted within 6 months and this is a realistic target given the work to be done, in terms of public consultation and preparation of a formal Environmental Impact Assessment.

## 9.6 Sudbury Town Centre Redevelopment – The Hamilton Road Quarter

Haven Gateway funding: £75,000.

The funding is to help the Council secure a high quality comprehensive redevelopment of this important area of Sudbury Town Centre. The Council has approved a development brief for the area. The aim is to create a mixed-use redevelopment featuring retail, leisure or other commercial uses.

Residential development forming an integral part of a mixed-use scheme will be acceptable. The main principles will be:

- The creation of a safe continuous and attractive pedestrian route between Great Eastern Road and Market Hill, which respects the historic frontage;
- When redeveloping the surrounding area to allow for extension of the library;
- The retention and improvement of the Bus Station into the scheme, or alternatively relocating to a different, but equally suitable site in the town centre;
- Provision of car parking spaces;
- Provision of adequate cycle parking facilities;
- The implementation of associated highway improvements, as required by the Transport Authority, including the reconstruction of Francis Road, if necessary, to an adoptable standard, with the cost of such work to be borne by the developer; and proposals to be of a scale and design that are of high environmental quality and that respect the residential amenity of the nearby dwellings.

Working with the HGP, a revised set of targets with a focused timeline was agreed in June. Those targets addressed the key gaps in information which need to be provided for potential marketing of the site later in the year including;- A retail/viability study (3 stages), topographical survey, land budget, architect scheme/conceptual ideas based on findings on above. Since agreeing the detailed approach the first phase of the Retail Study has been procured and is underway. When complete this will then be reviewed prior to letting phase 2. Brief preparation for the Topographical Survey is in progress and on track.

The end result will regenerate this part of Sudbury and create jobs and a vital boost to the local economy through the private sector, but enabled by the planning policies and proactive work of the district and county councils.

## **10. Future Challenges for Haven Gateway Partnership**

- 10.1 2010/11 marked the final year of a three year programme of planned investment by the Partnership. Designation as a Growth Point has been highly beneficial in bringing almost £30m of Government Grants to the area which has levered in over £55 million of additional resources. With these resources the Partnership has made significant impact on the quality of 'place' by targeting resources on immediate physical infrastructure projects and supporting long term planning through improving the evidence base.
- 10.2 The big challenge will be the reduction in funding for partnerships such as the HGP. The HGP Board have discussed how HGP status as an EU Centre of Maritime Excellence could be used for the benefit of the area. A recent success has been the securing of nearly £3m of European funding to support the transfer of approximately 30,000 containers off the roads and onto rail transport.
- 10.3 An additional challenge is that with the abolition of EEDA and the creation of LEPs (Local Enterprise Partnerships) the HGP area now straddles both the New Anglia and the East Sussex – Essex – Kent – Medway LEPs.
- 10.4 In responding to these challenges the HGP is engaging with its partners and the new LEPs in order to evaluate those areas where it can 'add value' and deliver projects that contribute to the Government's drive for sustainable growth in jobs and homes.

## **11. Appendices**

- 11.1 None.

## **12. Background Documents**

- 12.1 None.

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