

## **REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2017**

I have the good fortune to be working in an area that has the benefit of a new team (our director has only been here for three weeks) and a clear plan that was agreed at Executive in December.

It has been extremely encouraging to hear that some developers have come forward with their visions for some of our key sites, and I look forward to hearing further proposals in advance of all ideas being given detailed consideration in the coming months. What is particularly welcoming is the number of local entrepreneurs that have put a lot of thought and energy into developing business cases/ideas, that they feel will aid the regeneration the Island. Having a real understanding of the local market conditions reflects in the quality of their ideas.

I attended the Solent LEP annual conference along with our Regeneration Team, which was a great opportunity to not only gain an understanding of the work of the LEP, current programmes, future direction, but also met key people from both sides of the Solent. I shall be attending their AGM and workshop for their small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) fund on the same day. They will be holding a similar workshop on the Island in the early part of the summer, where local SMEs will be able to learn about the new fund and what elements make a successful application, with some hands on experience.

While there are large projects within regeneration that will transform our communities, these will obviously take a while to come to fruition. I feel that regeneration can be the small things too, the “critical non-essentials” and I am developing a “spring clean” campaign with officers to get the Island ready for the summer season. First impressions matter and working with businesses, town/parish councils and Island Roads will be a good way to instigate this and identify any problems there may be and aim to solve them.

Another crucial piece of work that has begun in earnest is developing an Island Investment prospectus for our identified regeneration sites, so we can be clear to potential investors and developers what the opportunities are. There was a lot of interest at the “speed dating” SiteMatch event in London last week , so we need to have this information ready to be able to inform anyone interested in these sites.

Last week the Isle of Wight Council was awarded £250,000 to enable plans to be developed for the “One Public Estate”. Working with other public sector partners to create a site(s) where we can all work closely together to deliver better outcomes for residents. One such site is Camp Hill.

The skills gap is something else on the regeneration radar, ensuring that our young people are equipped with the right qualifications to enable them to go into the established and emerging industries on the Island. Continuing to work with the Isle of Wight College, schools, training providers, businesses and the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce will allow us to identify what is required and help businesses

and those training young people for the world of work to come together and improve local prospects for local young people.

**Councillor Julie Jones-Evans**  
**Executive Member for Regeneration**