

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**POSITION STATEMENT BY THE LEADER**

**Social Impact Bond**

- I am delighted that Leicestershire is one of four local authorities invited by the Government to work with the Cabinet Office to develop a Social Impact Bond for families with complex needs, as part of the Prime Minister's commitment to tackle the 120,000 most problematic families.
- Social Impact Bonds are an innovative new way to bring about better public service outcomes for less by investing in earlier interventions using philanthropic investment from organisations such as the Big Society Bank. If a scheme produces results the providers get paid a share of the savings to the public purse. If it does not the public bodies do not pay.
- In practice the scheme is likely to have parallels to the existing Families Intervention Projects seen across the County, but with more resources and a broader scope. It would mean for the first time there would be a single external agency focussed on improving the outcomes for the whole family and aiming to reduce the need for highly expensive public services in the future.
- The scheme would be one of the first in the country, and is not without its technical challenges. However, the County Council is liaising with partners across Leicestershire Together to see whether such a prototype could be made to work in Leicestershire, using expertise from Cabinet Office and their consultants from services company A4E Insight.
- I am also keen to explore the possibility of a Local Impact Bond being developed to give an opportunity to philanthropic investors in our area. My aim is to design a scheme by the end of the calendar year. If practicable, the proposition could be taken forward next year.
- I have spoken with the Leader of the Opposition and invited him to join a new leadership group which I am setting up within the County Council to oversee our work taking forward the Total Place pilot, our Community Budget pilot and this Social Impact Bond pilot.

- I will ensure a full briefing is made available to members on the background to Social Impact Bonds shortly. The leadership group will be invaluable in offering its guidance and advice and will play a critical role in bringing this project to fruition.

### **Enterprise Zone at MIRA**

- At the July meeting of the Council I reported that the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership had agreed to submit a bid for an Enterprise Zone at MIRA near Hinckley. I am delighted to report that the bid, which was up against competition from other EZ proposals across the country, has been approved by the Government. The designation of an Enterprise Zone substantially strengthens MIRA's plans to establish a globally significant Technology Park in the County. It will also generate resources for the LLEP to invest in other economic and infrastructure projects across Leicestershire.
- This decision will further boost the development of the high performance motor engineering sector which represents a major economic opportunity for the County and I am pleased to report that the LLEP is working closely with the Northamptonshire LEP on this matter.
- There remains, however, much to do to realise fully MIRA's potential. News is expected shortly on a bid to the Government for Regional Growth Funding which will help provide essential infrastructure. It is also vital that the impact of MIRA's proposed development is properly managed, particularly in relation to flood risk, sustainable drainage and noise, and the Cabinet will, as a statutory consultee, be looking at these matters when it considers MIRA's planning application in October. In this context, I would like to state my appreciation for Ivan Ould's valuable work as a member of the MIRA Liaison Committee.

### **Big Society**

- The Big Society Grant Fund is off to a flying start with 14 projects approved at the first two Grant Panel meetings, against my target of 12 projects for 2011/12. I know that Blake Pain, the Chair of the Panel, and Nick Rushton, as Big Society Champion, are delighted at the level of interest from our local communities. Almost £70,000 has been spent to date out of the total pot of £340,000, so there is still plenty of funding available for new and innovative projects in your local area. Work is also progressing well in relation to developing a package of support for social enterprises in the County and identifying and supporting a network of community organisers - people who play an active role within their communities, helping communities to help themselves.