

3rd Quarter Performance Summary 2012-13:

Business Growth – Cllr Rook

Lead Officer: Anna Graves, Ann Marie Hawkins, Louise Gimson

Please contact the relevant officer with any queries.

APPENDIX A

Key Achievements

- HDC have put in £580k to assist the County wide broadband improvement programme. The Chief Executive sits on the board to influence local broadband activity. The Chief Executive is also setting up an internal HDC broadband group consisting of the following: Community Partnerships Manager, Parish Liaison Officer, Business Support Manager and Communications to ensure we influence developments locally within the District and keep our customers informed of progress.

Key Challenges

- Working with public and private sector partners to improve broadband connectivity in the most rural parts of the district.

Key Areas of Work in Progress

- Businesses are consistently being engaged with through the popular '3 question' online survey created by Business Support to research 'what are the needs of the local businesses'. From this we are able to positively and proactively respond to businesses needs.
- A key area is funding for business. HDC's business support is signed up to many funding alerts. These are communicated regularly, along with any other interesting business news that can affect businesses in the area. Tweeting out funding messages has been a positive way of engaging with local businesses, with retweets being picked up by East Midlands News and going out to thousands.
- The message that Harborough District Council is 'Open for Business' is beginning to spread.
- In addition to the work achieved by the Oxford Innovation Team at the Harborough Innovation Centre there is a programme of events which are all at no cost to the client, are locally based and address the business and entrepreneurial requirements of Pre Start, Start Up and Established Businesses. This will also provide excellent networking opportunities for local businesses to interact with one another and encourage local business to increase business activity and improve.
- The District Council's Network have been encouraged to hold their nationwide training seminar entitled 'Is your District Council Open for Business' at the Harborough Innovation Centre. This will ensure easier access to this workshop for HDC's senior managers and members and highlights Harborough District Council as being 'proactive' instead of 'reactive' with business activity.
- Spark @ Harborough is a dedicated, 'tried and tested', proven model of Business Support encompassing Pre-Start, Start Up and Established Businesses, providing a range of activity designed specifically to be inclusive of the whole of the District's business support needs. It will be a local programme, assisting local people with genuine help, to realise local benefits. It will provide Harborough District with a robust business support offer, therefore aiding inward investment and fostering positive

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business relations with local media. Spark@Harborough will be delivered by Oxford Innovation, supported by Business Support at HDC.

Key Performance Indicators

Harborough Innovation Centre Performance Indicators are included in the HIC Performance Report attached at Appendix C.

Further performance indicators will be developed for 2013/14 to measure performance in relation to business-related critical activities.