

COUNCIL MEETING – 20 APRIL 2004

Report of Councillor Cavill – Economic Development and Tourism

Lyons report

As many of you will know the Lyons report has confirmed that the first tranche of 20,000 jobs are to be relocated from London and the South East. A considerable amount of work has now been done by the Economic Team who have been promoting our sites and the benefits of relocation to Taunton. We have been working with the RDA and GOSW who have identified us as a major site in the South West, as such they are assisting us in promotion of Taunton.

Dualling of A358

The South West Regional assembly should be making its decision at the end of the month when it finalises its views of priorities. The debate has been well rehearsed, so this is the last call, to write to the Chairman of the Assembly. He is Mr M Hanney, SWRA, Dennett House, 11 Middle Street, Taunton, TA1 1SH. Please take the opportunity to make your views known.

Taunton Livestock Market

The construction of the planning application for the new market at Chelston is proceeding apace, with all the necessary reports being assembled. This is a slow, laborious and expensive process that is nearing its conclusion.

Agricultural Officer for Taunton Deane

Our officer has recently promoted two events; one looking at how business can keep abreast of demands, and the other to further the promotion of farmer's markets. Both have been successful, and have enabled one new landscaping business to set up and assisted expansion of another. The officer is in discussion with the Taunton Deane M5 services Road Chef to see if we can set up a 'Taste of Somerset', creating a lucrative outlet and acting as a promotion centre to thousands of M5 travellers.

Taunton TIC

As a result of negotiations and constructive action, it is business as usual, subject to the formal final agreement. This should mean no reduction in the operation of the TIC. The shortfall has been covered by our Tourism Officer restructuring his section and the staff at the TIC generating additional business. Of particular interest in this respect is the ability to book trips for a day out, short stay, theatre tickets and the like all in the one stop shop. Congratulations to all involved.

Broadband

Taunton Deane has delivered a number of road shows, promoting the benefits of Broadband, which have been very well received. In most cases, both individuals and businesses will save money and have new horizons opened to them. We are now dependent upon BT for installation times.

Councillor N P Cavill