

President's Notes - October 2015

Transport Conference Update

As you will have read, the recent Transport Conference brought together the leading providers. We had presentations from rail passenger service providers Virgin Trains and East Midland Trains plus Network Rail who provide the track and also a leading haulage contractor, Fresh Lincs. To start the conference we had the Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium who set an economic backdrop for the day.

The present priority for our Government is growth. There is no doubt that finances for this Parliament will be restricted and there will be little funding available for infrastructure improvements.

Transport projects take many years to come to fruition, ten years is not unusual, and the route for infrastructure investment is to persuade the Local Enterprise Partnership of the need based on sound business grounds.

In terms of route corridors the Greater Lincolnshire LEP has identified the A17 as a strategic corridor for development, alongside the A46-A158 to the coast; the A15 north of Lincoln to the ports; and the M180/A180. Supporting links are the A52 Grantham to Boston; and the A16 Peterborough to Grimsby. Therefore the initial argument for what the roads strategy should be is to an extent already accepted.

What must happen now is to assist in finding the resources in order to make some progress; and to identify the priorities (across Greater Lincolnshire as a whole) to which such resources should be applied.

For our part in South Holland, we must all take every opportunity to talk our area up. We have a vibrant produce industry and we must continue to promote ourselves as being THE PLACE for produce suppliers to do business. Already we supply 38% of fresh produce to the UK and we must live up to our title of being the "Kitchen of England".

The Chamber of Commerce have produced a report on why here is the best place to operate a fresh produce business in the United Kingdom? We have taken the old "Garden of England", Kent and compared it with the new "Kitchen of England", South Holland, to illustrate just how good South Holland is. This takes into account the most practical and best cost effective total route to the Supermarket including the processing, packing, labelling, warehousing and distribution for non UK produced goods. The report highlights the differences, benefits and why. If you would like a copy, please contact me direct at: phil.scarlett@theedgeconsultancy.co.uk

South Holland Business Awards

This years South Holland Business Awards will take place on the evening of Thursday 19th November at the Springfield's Event Centre, Spalding. Last year two hundred of South Holland's key business leaders gathered at the

Springfields Event Centre to celebrate the best in innovation, hard work, entrepreneurial spirit and customer care within South Holland. This year we again expect a full house to celebrate the success of our leading businesses and to meet the people involved.

The Awards are Business of the Year; sponsored by the Butters Group, Small Business of the Year; sponsored by Chattertons Solicitors, Supporting the Community; sponsored by Definitions Health & Fitness, Business Innovation of the Year: sponsored by Duncan & Toplis, Apprentice of the Year: sponsored by Holbeach Academy, Customer Care : sponsored by Ringrose Law and Business Person of the Year: sponsored by South Holland District Council.

To book your place at the dinner, please contact Alison Mackfall
alison.mackfall@lincs-chamber.co.uk