

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

17 March 2023

Wisbech chosen to benefit from Government's High Street Task Force

An expert from the Government's High Street Task Force visited Wisbech this week to begin its work with local leaders, supporting their efforts to deliver long-term transformational change to the town.

Wisbech has been selected by Fenland District Council to benefit from the Task Force after the Council was one of 68 further local authorities chosen to receive its package of free expert advice and support.

The Task Force, which was appointed in 2019 as part of the Government's 'Plan for the High Street', is helping towns and cities across England to address the challenges high streets face and develop solutions and actions for positive change.

The support began in Wisbech on Tuesday 14 March, when the Task Force expert met with local authority, business and community representatives at The Boathouse Business Centre.

The group discussed potential changes to reinvent and evolve the town through rebranding and restructuring the way that local stakeholders work together. The expert shared examples of other towns who have been through the same process and the positive outcomes achieved.

Over the coming months the Task Force will work directly with local government and facilitate community involvement to explore and build local aspirations, and tackle complex barriers to change, with the aim of unlocking Wisbech's full potential.

At the moment, there is no guaranteed funding available to allow the local authority to act on the Task Force recommendations, but it is hoped there could be in the future.

Cllr Steve Tierney, town, district and county councillor for Wisbech, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for Wisbech that will not only help us to consider our own ambitious plans for long-term change, but it will also raise the profile of our town within central government.

"Hopefully the High Street Task Force will understand the challenges that exist, recognise the work we've done to address these challenges and the aspirations we have, and help to influence government to provide more funding to meet those challenges and aspirations."

Fellow town, district and county councillor for Wisbech, Cllr Samantha Hoy, added: "We are determined to ensure that Wisbech is well prepared to meet the challenges of the future, so it is important that the town receives the support necessary to enable it to fulfil its potential. I'm grateful to Fenland District Council for selecting Wisbech to benefit from this work and look forward to working with the Task Force to see what more can be done to promote the regeneration of our town.

“The first meeting this week was really positive and I’d like to thank all the local businesses that attended for their valuable input – they will be a key part of the whole process as we move forward.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk