

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEMBER MEETING – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
REGENERATION**

**7 November 2019**

Report of the Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**TOYOTA CITY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To provide a half yearly update on the work and progress of Toyota City Partnership Development Board (TCPDB) against the approved Action Plan, 2019 -20.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

**Toyota City Partnership**

During the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the relationship between Toyota City and the three councils, Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council and South Derbyshire District Council, the TCPDB was established. The TCPDB brought new partners into the international relationship with Toyota City, including further education (FE) colleges, the University of Derby, East Midlands Chamber of Commerce, Marketing Derby and Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire, the National Forest and Toyota Manufacturing UK (TMUK). The TCPDB seeks to maximise the opportunities for local people and organisations to collaborate with partners specifically in Toyota City but also Japan in general, across five themes: education, culture, the environment, the economy and sport.

The five year action plan began in 2018 and sets out planned work across each of five themes. This report provides an update on current progress.

**Economy**

Most of the activity is scheduled to be undertaken in the second half of this year when representatives from TCPDB will promote Derbyshire businesses at a Business Convention in Toyota City. Preparations for this event are well underway.

On 10 October 2019, representatives from over 50 businesses attended an “Exporting to Japan” event organised by Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DEP), in partnership with the Department for International Trade. The focus of the event was on practical support for UK and Derbyshire businesses exporting to Japan and to publicise the support available from the various sources, including the County Council.

The delegates heard from an array of speakers, including Steve Crane, CEO of Business Link Japan; Sharon McCarthy and Ian Harrison from the Department of International Trade; Rob Holmes from Nasmyth Group and Rob Gorton from Toyota Manufacturing UK.

A video showcasing three Derbyshire businesses at different stages of their Japanese exporting journey was featured, along with the opportunity for delegates to attend workshops on E-commerce and the successful freighting of goods to Japan.

The feedback from delegates was very positive with many highlighting that the culture and etiquette insight was useful, as well as the practical tips of exporting to Japan. Many commented that more and similar events were required for other trade markets.

### **Education**

The relationship between the Universities of Derby and Chukyo have been further cemented through a memorandum of understanding signed by both Vice-Chancellors. The object of mutual collaboration is to extend student experience, to develop joint research programmes and to develop joint programmes for post graduate study. The first joint PhD research will be in the area of 'nature connectedness' which links with the environmental project proposal.

The Toyota City Junior High School pupil exchange took place in September with 27 pupils aged 14/15 years visiting Derbyshire. Burton and South Derbyshire College provided leadership and oversight of the organisation of both home stay and programme and the project was judged to be a success by all participants. The two school visits were to Pingle Academy and John Port Spencer Academy; both schools are interested in a full exchange next year with Derbyshire pupils going to Toyota City.

The Derby-Japanese School has been renamed the Derbyshire-Japanese School following the longstanding support from the County Council and has now relocated to John Port Spencer Academy in Etwall where a ceremony was held on 12 October, 2019. Over 100 students attend the school on Saturdays and they come from 19 Japanese companies, mainly in the East Midlands. Marketing Derby has commented that the school massively supports Japanese inward investment and now has strong links with a Derbyshire school, the University of Derby and Burton and South Derbyshire College.

### **Culture**

The Japanese Embassy in the UK is promoting a Japanese Season of Culture in the UK between the Rugby World Cup 2019 in Japan and the Olympics/Paralympics in 2020. In March 2019, representatives of TCPDB

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visited the Embassy with a proposal to run a Season of Japanese Culture in Derbyshire and Derby which was warmly received.

Likewise, the interest in Derbyshire and Derby has been lively. The Season was opened in Derbyshire/Derby by Ambassador Tsuruoka at the Derby museum showing Japanese woodblock prints on loan from the Ashmolean museum. The local programme continues to grow and has enabled the promotion of local events, including an art installation at Belper North Mill, in the national programme.

The TCPDB had a stall at Chatsworth Country Fair for the second year running for three days in late August/early September 2019. This stall promotes Japanese culture and the relationship between Derbyshire and Toyota City. Feedback from visitors was very positive, with many people learning about the relationship for the first time. Over 2,500 postcards promoting the Season of Japanese Culture in Derbyshire were distributed.

A Derbyshire-Japan Society is being formed with over a hundred people already signed up. The aim of the Society is to promote cultural experience, foster friendship between Derbyshire and Toyota City people and generate more 'grass root' opportunities.

Toyota City Council is organising a home stay for members of Derby Hot House saxophone orchestra to visit schools in the city when they travel to Japan to play outside the Olympic Stadium.

## **Environment**

Toyota City is an environmental champion in Japan through its Ecoful Town project and the TCPDB believes much could be learned from Toyota City to inform best practice here. A project proposal is being developed, with the National Forest Company taking the lead, to create a research project on sustainable work and lifestyles based in Toyota City. The intention is to make links with the nature connectedness research in Chukyo University.

It is an ambition of the TCPDB to send a colleague to live and work in Toyota City to both work on a specific project and promote other TCPDB collaborations. A small team will work on this project proposal before it is submitted to Toyota City for consideration.

As part of the Season of Culture, the TCPDB is helping the National Forest Company to develop a Japanese theme in the next Timber festival.

As part of the Japanese Season of Culture, Japanese businesses have gifted Sakura Cherry trees to the UK. Sixty three schools in Derbyshire made successful applications for a tree and a further 100 trees will be divided between Shipley Park, Besses Recreation Park in Derby and Swadlincote. The trees will arrive in November 2020.

## **Sport**

The TCPDB ran a small campaign to create links between the Rugby World Cup 2019 in Toyota City and Rugby teams in Derby/Derbyshire. Photos of Mayor Ota's 'Try for All' banner with local teams of all ages was given to Toyota City, along with team shirts and a signed England Rugby ball. These gifts have been used in a public exhibition at Toyota City during the Rugby World Cup.

The TCPDB continues to find Olympians and Paralympians to become linked with Toyota City during the games. The Women's football team GB will invite Mayor Ota to watch a training session and other athletes, when they qualify, are prepared to visit Toyota City.

(3) **Financial Considerations** Derbyshire County Council's contribution to the work of the TCPDB is contained within the Economy and Regeneration budget. Spending on this programme has been kept to a minimum and, in the last six months, is in the region of £1,000. In the next six months, the visit to Japan has a budget allocation of up to £6,000.

(4) **Environmental Considerations** International relationships, particularly regarding tourism, create an opportunity to discuss environmental concerns with international partners.

## **Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION** That the Cabinet Member notes progress on the Toyota City Partnership Development Board's action plan for 2019-20 and receives further updates on a six monthly basis.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**