

## Salisbury Task Group – Chairman’s Announcement, Salisbury Area Board

I recently attended a meeting chaired by John Glen with key businesses and public sector partners in Salisbury to discuss the challenges and opportunities for the South Wiltshire economy over the coming years, and the response to recent announcements affecting jobs within the Salisbury area by Aviva, HPI and Public Health England.

While there are a number of challenges, it was also acknowledged that Salisbury and South Wiltshire remains an excellent place in which to live and work and visit, with low unemployment, world class heritage assets and accolades such as being chosen by the Lonely Planet Guides as being one of the Top 10 Cities to Visit in the World in 2015.

The Council officers reported to the meeting the work that is already being undertaken to address these economic challenges, and a number of programmes are moving forward to meet these issues. These include working with the Local Enterprise Partnership to access funding from government for priority projects. The group discussed ways in which it could support reducing unemployment, increase high value jobs and identify areas for investment within the city.

You will hear from Stanhope later about the Central Car Park and Maltings Project, and subject to the timely confirmation of the final tranche of government funding, work will start on the first phase of the Porton Science Park in spring of next year. The completion of the improvements to the Market Place, Guildhall Square and New Canal have also helped to breathe new life into these important public spaces in the city centre and the recent opening of the University Technical College on Wilton Road will make an important contribution to the city’s economic future and help the coming generations enter the workforce with relevant skills to meet the needs of local employers which in turn will help the city to continue to thrive and prosper.