ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 Economic Development works towards strengthening and encouraging development of the local economy. It was agreed that a regular report would be submitted to this Committee to update Members and provide an opportunity for feedback and input.

2. AREA FOR DECISION / ACTION

2.1 This report is for Members’ information only.

3. ECONOMIC PROSPERITY STRATEGY DELIVERY

3.1 Priority One – Increase the Supply of High Quality, Flexible Premises

3.1.1 Maldon District Enterprise Centre Feasibility Study

3.1.1.1 Members will recall that the Employment Evidence and Policy Update (July 2015) commissioned by the Council as an independent review of the economic and employment growth prospects of the Maldon District, identified demand for small, flexible office units, let on flexible terms, with good broadband connectivity. The study also commented that it is unlikely that these units could be delivered by commercial developers, with no public intervention.

3.1.1.2 Funded from the Magnox socio-economic scheme, and supported by the Bradwell Legacy Partnership, a feasibility study was commissioned in January 2016. The purpose of the study is to assess the current and projected demand for a business centre, identify site options and ascertain the viability of an Enterprise Centre in terms of revenue streams and sustainability.

3.1.1.3 The content of the study is now being finalised and it is anticipated that the findings and recommendations will be published within the month.
3.2 **Priority Two – Support Diversification and Enterprise**

3.2.1 **The European LEADER Programme**

3.2.1.1 The Essex Rivers Local Action Group (LAG) received £1.8m from the European Union LEADER Programme as part of the Rural Development Programme for England. The programme will run until 2020. Full details of the programme are available on the Essex Rivers website: [www.essexriivers.co.uk](http://www.essexriivers.co.uk)

3.2.1.2 The process for applications is as follows:

- Outline Application completed by business – submitted to LAG for internal assessment.
- If approved – Invited to submit Full Application.
- Full Application then assessed internally by LAG and separately by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- If approved – Final decision responsibility of the LAG Board Members.

3.2.1.3 As of week commencing 4 April 2016 one business received approval for LEADER funding at the March board meeting. There are a further five full applications pending – all of which are from businesses within the Maldon District, and of those the approval of one is imminent.

3.3 **Bradwell Nuclear Power Station**

3.3.1 Magnox has submitted an application to Essex County Council to revise the interim storage of intermediate level waste (ILW) at Bradwell.

3.3.2 The application seeks to remove a condition on the existing planning application in place for the site’s ILW interim storage facility. This will allow for similar packages from Dungeness A Site in Kent and Sizewell A Site in Suffolk to be co-located within the existing facility, along with the site’s own waste packages, at Bradwell.

3.3.3 Further information can be found on the Magnox website: [https://magnoxsites.com/what-we-do/engagement/waste-strategy-2/plans-for-bradwell](https://magnoxsites.com/what-we-do/engagement/waste-strategy-2/plans-for-bradwell)

3.3.4 Information will also be available at the forthcoming community events:

- Bradwell Village Hall, Bradwell -on –Sea
  Tuesday 26 April 2016
  15:30 – 19:00
- St Peter’s and St Paul’s Church Hall, West Mersea.
  Wednesday 27 April 2016
  15:30 – 19:00:

3.4 **Causeway Regeneration Environmental Improvements – Signage Design Work**

3.4.1 Maldon District Council (MDC) has been awarded £10,000 of EGF Revenue Funding (2015/16) by Essex County Council (ECC) for environmental improvements, specifically relating to signage, in the Causeway Regeneration Area.
3.4.2 Members will recall that as part of the LDP process in 2015 MDC and ECC jointly commissioned BBP Regeneration to review the Causeway Regeneration Area; identify the issues which were holding it back and devise some practical and deliverable solutions to help the area fulfil its economic development potential. The final Development and Improvement Plan for the Causeway Regeneration Area report identified five key strategic objectives and also a number of proposed improvements, one of which was the following:

- Strategic Objective 4: Improving the physical environment to retain and attract growing businesses.

3.4.3 Due to the condition of the grant award funds will be used to provide temporary signage to the perimeter of the Brooks Bros. site whilst development works are taking place, to improve the visual appearance of the approach to Maldon Town Centre.

3.4.4 The signage, which will adopt the Sense of Place graphic language and imagery, will be used promote the district in its entirety. Due to the scale of the proposed coverage planning permission will be required, therefore an application by MDC will be submitted in due course.

3.5 Tourism Event

3.5.1 On Wednesday 16 March 2016 the Maldon District Tourism Event took place at the Blackwater Sailing Club, Heybridge. The event, which was opened by Councillor Mrs P A Channer CC, was attended by over 50 local people representing tourism businesses and attractions from across the District.

3.5.2 The event previewed the new Visit Maldon District website, currently under development by the Tourism team, and introduced the new place branding and place photography, prior to the formal launch at the Business Event on 11 May 2016.

3.6 Business Event: Maldon District Showcase

3.6.1 The Bradwell Legacy Partnership (BLP) is responsible for the delivery of projects to mitigate the impact of the decommissioning of Bradwell power station.

3.6.2 Recommendation 3A of the BLP Action Plan, for which funding has been allocated, refers to the delivery of a business event primarily (but not exclusively) for Dengie based businesses and those individuals considering starting their own business.

3.6.3 The business event, entitled Maldon District Showcase 2016, will take place on 11 May 2016 at the Three Rivers Golf and Country Club, Cold Norton, Purleigh between 10am and 4pm.

3.6.4 The purpose of the event is to provide new and existing businesses, sole traders, Small or Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and large enterprises with the opportunity to raise their profile locally, nationally and internationally. The event will also be of significant value to potential entrepreneurs.

3.6.5 The importance of brand will be a key theme of the event, with the formal launch of the Maldon District Place Story taking place in association with a keynote speech by
entrepreneur and TV personality Levi Roots, the creator of Reggae Reggae Sauce, who appeared on the BBC show Dragons' Den, in 2007.

3.6.6 There will be the opportunity for up to 40 businesses to have an exhibition stand at the event. Those who are interested are requested to submit an electronic Expression of Interest form on or before 12 noon on Friday 15 April 2016.

3.6.7 In addition to the exhibition stands which will be present during the day, delegates will have the opportunity to attend seminars on the following topics:

- Apprenticeships for Employers.
- Exporting opportunities.
- Social Media.
- Funding for Business.

3.6.8 The event will be promoted online and through a series of press releases. All bookings are being managed through Eventbrite as it is a 'ticket only' event due to the expected high level of interest and the capacity of the venue.

4. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

4.1 The work of the Economic Development Team and key stakeholders will help to protect and shape the District, and balance the future needs of the community.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Economic development is about improving the long-term economy of the Maldon District, by attracting new businesses, increasing skills, encouraging investment, increasing job opportunities, attracting visitors and identifying opportunities for sustainable growth and development.

(i) **Impact on Customers** – Engagement with businesses and organisations across the district as well as supporting the District at sub-region level.

(ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.

(iii) **Impact on Risk** – Capacity of the Council to deliver economic development functions arising from the sub-regional partnerships, and project initiation and implementation.

(iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Maldon District Council needs to continue to align itself with South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SE LEP) priorities and the Economic Plan for Essex (EPfE) and work in partnership with key stakeholders to attract match funding in an environment of changing economic governance.

(v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None identified.

(vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None identified.
6. **CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 This report provides Members with information on the Maldon District Showcase event.

7. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the contents of the report be noted.

Background Papers: None.

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