



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

**to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
17 OCTOBER 2019**

DENGIE GATEWAY PROJECT – BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH ‘HUB’ UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the delivery of a ‘Saltmarsh Coast Hub’ in Burnham-on-Crouch.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Members consider the request of Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council for the creation of the ‘Burnham Observatory’ and instruct officers to progress this project subject to planning, liability and budget considerations.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Members will be aware that a number of Saltmarsh Coast Visitor Information Hubs have now been installed on the District’s coast line as part of the Dengie Gateway Project. This includes the instillation of three information points, and smaller signage, in Burnham-on-Crouch.
- 3.2 It was envisaged to create a larger ‘Saltmarsh Coast Hub’ in Riverside Park owing to its potential as a visitor destination.
- 3.3 In July 2017 the Community Services Committee considered ideas submitted by the public and resolved:
- (i) That Project 2 – Woodland and Sculpture Trail is progressed by Officers;
 - (ii) That Officers carry out consultation with the local community and Town Council in respect of Project 2 and feedback to the Community Services Committee.
- 3.3.1 Funding suitable for the delivery of the Woodland and Sculpture Trail, was protected. This would include tree planting to create a very young woodland, a trail or pathway through the park with clearings and plinths for sculptures or artwork and an interactive park ‘App’ that can provide visitors with a virtual art / sculpture trail along with additional information and interactive functionality.

- 3.4 Burnham Town Council have advised they would like the ‘Burnham Observatory’ located at ‘sunset point’ in preference to the Woodland and Sculpture Trail.
- 3.5 The ‘Burnham Observatory’ was shortlisted in July 2017 but owing to land ownership, ongoing ownership of the structure, planning permission (which has not been sought) and maintenance it was not recommended.
- 3.6 It is now proposed that Members consider the request of Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council for the creation of the ‘Burnham Observatory’ and instruct officers to progress this project subject the necessitated permissions, planning, liability and budget considerations.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Saltmarsh Coast Trail element of the Dengie Gateway Project has already delivered its objectives in Burnham with the instillation of innovative coastal signage.
- 4.2 The progression of the Burnham Observatory would deliver additional value for residents and visitors to the park and Town. It may require additional funding beyond that available from the remaining CCF funding which may be available from the Town Council and other partners.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 This proposal links to the Council’s strategic theme of supporting and encouraging tourism, promoting the District as a destination of choice and the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – It is hoped that the Burnham-on-Crouch Hub project will act as an attractive addition to the town and draw the local community and visitors to Riverside Park and the wider town.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – There are no corporate risks associated with this report.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The Dengie Gateway project is funded by the Coastal Communities Fund. The project identified will not significantly impact upon the existing revenue allocations.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Jack Ellum, Tourism and Events Manager.