



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

**to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
16 MARCH 2023**

**DELIVERING THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023-2027 PRIORITY - 'HELPING THE
ECONOMY TO THRIVE'**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members regarding the ongoing and new activity to deliver the Corporate Priority of 'Helping the Economy to Thrive'.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Members note further briefings will be offered regarding:
- Supporting local businesses and inward investment;
 - Tourism and the visitor economy;
 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) funded activity.
- (ii) that Members note the Council's Maldon District T23 Tourism Group has commenced;
- (iii) That Members endorse the delivery of the UKSPF year one Maldon Market recovery project and the partnership with Rural Community Council of Essex to deliver the REPF.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Members will be aware that we continue to be in a period of significant economic uncertainty. It is therefore important that the Council, in partnership with others, does what it can to support our local economy to provide clarity, representation, support, promotion and help.
- 3.2 This report is aligned with the approved Corporate Plan 2023-2027 to provide reassurance and high-level clarity on the activity being undertaken. It should be recognised it is not intended as an exhaustive list and more comprehensive Member briefings are proposed.
- 3.3 **Attract new businesses to locate, grow and thrive across the district**
- 3.3.1 Officers are pleased to announce the launch of the District's Investment Prospectus, our first investment and business facing microsite www.LocateMaldonDistrict.co.uk (Local Maldon District (LMD)).

3.3.2 LMD announces the District's ambitions for business investment, growth and support. It is a celebration of our strategic location, coastal and rural identity and quality of life offer to new and growing businesses.

3.3.3 LMD provides the Council with a co-ordinated approach to supporting inward investment and maximising business growth.

3.4 Promote the district as a quality and inclusive tourism destination

3.4.1 Tourism remains a vital part of our overall economy and it is important we continue to support this valuable sector enabling it to grow and thrive.

3.4.2 Following initial workshop events held last year, the Council has now supported the formation of the Maldon District Tourism Group (T23). This Group will assist in the development and launch of a new Tourism Framework ensuring the District is well placed to continue to grow and flourish responsibly and sustainably with a strategic approach. It is hoped the T23 will become enabling and self-supporting, with the ability to progress its own initiatives for the betterment of the sector, also positively benefitting our resident's quality of life

3.4.3 The Tourism Framework will provide clarity on the core tourism functions of the Council, aligned with the Council's Events and Concession Strategy 2023-2028.

3.5 Support growth, sustainability and skills generation

3.5.1 The Supporting Local Business Programme will build on the most successful parts of the former Sense of Place Business Network. Please note: The "Maldon District (Sense of Place) Brand" remains unaffected by this change.

3.5.2 The Supporting Local Business Programme includes, a business focused communications plan, coordinated business engagement with partners / stakeholders and officers and support good quality, 'business aware' services internally.

3.6 Help high streets and rural businesses to adapt to challenges

3.6.1 The UKSPF and REPF present a significant opportunity for the Council to support the District's economy and businesses.

3.6.2 Identified as part of the Council's UKSPF's year one Investment Plan, the Maldon Market recovery commission will explore options to revitalise the current market and increase footfall whilst being sympathetic to the existing high street offer.

3.6.3 Members will be aware Maldon District has been allocated £430,328 from the REPF on a 100% capital basis with no management or administration funding. Officers have approached the Rural Community Council of Essex and together propose a partnership bid to the Magnox Socio-Economic Fund. This additional funding will support and enhance the delivery to ensure maximum benefit to our communities.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Investment Prospectus (LMD), Tourism Framework, Supporting Local Business Programme and UKSPF / REPF investment plans demonstrate the volume and quality of work being planned and progressed to help the economy thrive.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The work identified supports the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 priority of 'Helping the Economy to Thrive'.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Aligned with the draft Corporate Plan 2023-2027 this approach will improve our understanding of how the delivery of our services effect our ability to have positive relationships with our local businesses.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – LMD has been designed to meet the internationally recognised Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The T23 is an inclusive group, open to all relevant business owners. Accessibility has already been identified as a priority for the Tourism Framework and T23. The Supporting Local Business Programme is designed to be accessible to all.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Resolves the Corporate Risk of failure to have co-ordinated approach to supporting inward investment and maximising business rate growth. Reduces the Corporate Risk of failure to develop jobs to support the growing population.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – All activity will be funded from existing budgets or grant funding.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – All activity will be undertaken by existing establishment.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – The business focused communication plan will include support for Climate Action Strategy aligned work.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – Relevant projects will seek to ensure the Council strengthens engagement with communities to shape and deliver significant benefits from outputs.

Background Papers:

The Supporting Local Business Programme

The T23 Terms of Reference

[Strategy and Resources Committee 4 July 2022 – UK Shared Prosperity and Levelling Up Funding Update](#)

[Strategy and Resources Committee 10 November 2022 - Rural England Prosperity Fund](#)

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