



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY**

**to
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
28 FEBRUARY 2017**

MAST AT RIVERSIDE PARK, BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Member approval to the principle of installing a land based mast in the Riverside Park, Burnham-on-Crouch.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- (i) That, subject to the necessary structural, maintenance and planning requirements being met, Members agree that a mast funded through the Dengie Gateway project be installed in the Riverside Park.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the Council was awarded around £300,000 of external funding from the Coastal Communities Fund to pay for the Dengie Gateway project.
- 3.2 The project has been operating for over 18 months and is now nearing completion. To date the project has delivered a new visitor website and social media, new district branding, a marketing strategy for the District, supported the development of the Saltmarsh Coast trail and the Saltmarsh75 event. In the near future visitor information hubs at Burnham, Bradwell, Maldon, Heybridge Basin and Tollesbury will be installed, together with improved signage at key locations. The Burnham town pontoon will also be improved.
- 3.3 The project has already met with its aim of increasing visitor numbers and tourism jobs.
- 3.4 Officers have managed the budget for the project closely and underspends have been identified against the original project estimates and a number of additional projects have been identified for Riverside Park. For example, improvement to the lower car park surface and the installation of a 'hub' feature to attract and act as a focal point for visitors. Members of Burnham Town Council and Burnham Ward Members have been consulted and it is thought that the installation of a mast is well supported and reflects Burnham's rich marine heritage.

- 3.5 The mast, if approved, will be located close to ‘sunset point’ and the yacht harbour but within Riverside Park. It is intended to display bunting and other flags during the year. For example maritime signal flags welcoming visitors to Burnham-on-Crouch. Members will be provided with a very brief presentation at the meeting to indicate the location and scale of the proposed mast.
- 3.6 Offers have submitted a planning application which will be considered, if necessary by the South East Planning Committee in due course. However, as ‘land owners’ this committee’s views are sought as to whether the principle of the mast are supported subject to the necessary consents being obtained.
- 3.7 Once installed, the mast would require a regular visual check and an annual detailed inspection of its rigging. The cost of this task could be capitalised and included in the initial purchase cost of the mast.
- 3.8 This project will sit alongside a number of other planned improvements for the 2017 season which will help improve the park’s appearance. For example, repairs to the youth shelter flooring and to the multi-use games area.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Dengie Gateway Project will deliver its original project objectives and there is a small surplus of funding available that may be reallocated to alternative projects that fit with the original project objectives.
- 4.2 It is proposed that a large mast is installed within the Riverside Park, is in keeping with the original project objectives and will act as visitor hub and be a feature / focal point for visitors and residents to enjoy for years to come.
- 4.3 This Committee’s views on whether it supports the proposal are sought.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 5.1 This activity and report supports the corporate goals of promoting the District as a destination of choice.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- i. **Impact on Customers** – The Burnham Mast and associated information panels would form part of a network of new visitor interest points and signage, known as Saltmarsh Coast Hubs, which will be installed in 5 locations on the Maldon District Coast line, with the largest amount of installations planned in Burnham-on-Crouch. The Saltmarsh Coast Hubs will promote and celebrate our beautiful and dynamic coast line and encourage people to explore more of the District’s coastal trail and Burnham’s link with the RSPB’s Wild Coast Project on Wallasea Island. Additional way marking and finger posts will also be installed in Riverside Park, the train station and Town Quay which will be in place for summer 2017 and in advance of the England Coast Path, expected

in 2018 for Burnham-on-Crouch round to Maldon and 2019/20 for the rest of the Crouch coast.

- ii. **Impact on Equalities** – None
- iii. **Impact on Risk** – None.
- iv. **Impact on Resources (financial)** – A suitable mast has been identified and will cost £20,000 to install and maintain for the first 5 years of its life. If maintenance is carried out on a regular basis then the mast will remain serviceable for many years.
- v. **Impact on Resources (human)** – None
- vi. **Impact on the Environment** – Whilst the mast is large it is thought that it will not be visually intrusive from the town as it will be close to the yacht harbour and other yacht masts.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to:

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