

Economic Development Team Update

1. COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAMS (CCT)

1.1 Maldon and Blackwater Estuary CCT

1.1.1 Annual General Meeting

1.1.1.1 The Team's Annual General Meeting was held on Friday 5 May 2017 at the Heybridge Plantation Hall with 17 local organisations and stakeholders in attendance. Paul Jeffries, Topsail Charters Ltd., was elected as chairman. Two positions on the Management Team, to represent the voluntary sector and local heritage interests, were not filled and local groups are being contacted with a view to engaging them in the work of the CCT.

1.1.2 Coast Path and Key Projects

1.1.2.1 The first meeting of the newly elected Management Team was held on the 23 May 2017 where the Team discussed and agreed a response to Natural England's Coast Path Report on Maldon to Salcott, and agreed a way forward with a number of key projects. The Team also agreed to focus its efforts during the coming year on developing the coastal trail. The Team would also need to review and revise its Economic Plan to reflect any new challenges and opportunities.

1.2 River Crouch CCT

1.2.1 Natural England

1.2.1.1 The recent Management Team meeting received a briefing from Natural England (NE) on progress with mapping the coast path, including beaches, paths and spits. The meeting was reminded that the coast path does not have to follow existing public footpaths, and there could be land ownership issues which may influence the final recommendations. The NE representative expressed interest in the proposal for a lower crouch crossing ferry service which supports proposals for improved footpath links. Officers understand that the project will be completed in 2018 and NE will be working with local authorities to open stretches of the path from mid-2019.

1.2.2 Visitor Guide

1.2.2.1 23,000 copies of the 'Explore the beauty of the Crouch Coast' have been printed and are now being circulated to tourist information centres, local attractions, stakeholders, and accommodation providers. Project printing and production costs have been met by contributions from the Maldon, Rochford and Chelmsford City local authorities, parish councils, local businesses, and visitor sites including the RSPB. The document will also be available in pdf format and will be promoted as widely as possible via social media. Links to the information will also be provided on council and partner/stakeholder web sites.

1.2.3 Lower Crouch Crossing

1.2.3.1 The CCT Working Group is currently developing a detailed bid for a new, all-weather and wheelchair friendly Lower Crouch River Crossing. A bid synopsis has been drafted by the Group and the project seeks to build on improvements already being undertaken in the Crouch Valley by Natural England. The project also supports the

ambitions outlined in the Burnham-on-Crouch Neighbourhood Plan. The Working Group is now meeting with representatives from Maldon and Rochford district councils and potential private sector partners with a view to submitting a funding bid to the Coastal Revival Fund.

2. BRADWELL LEGACY PARTNERSHIP

2.1 Tollesbury Marina

2.1.1 The Legacy Partnership meeting held on the 19 April 2017 at Tollesbury Marina received a presentation from the Chairman of Tollesbury Parish Council regarding siltation issues which are impacting on vessel access to their harbour area. The parish council chairman explained that two river channels had now closed because of severe siltation. The north channel was now the deepest and the south channel was getting shallower. Sailors had noticed a significant change to water depths over the past 15 years, and it was no longer possible to gain an early retreat back to the harbour. The parish council had estimated that if there was no early intervention in terms of dredging, the impact on the village could be a loss of some 40-50 jobs and the loss of up to 500 berths. There would also be a negative impact on the number of visitors participating in the courses at the FACT Sailing Centre. The Parish Council was now leading on a project to revitalise the harbour and was hoping to gain support from the District Council, public sector organisations and other stakeholders. The overall cost of the project has been estimated by the parish council as circa £78,000.00.

2.2 Magnox Socio-Economic Fund

2.2.1 The Partnership also had the opportunity to discuss a number of suggested amendments to bids to the Magnox Socio-Economic fund in respect of continuation of the Dengie Enterprise Support (DES) service, and the Maldon District Enterprise Centre project. The feedback provided by Magnox would be used to develop a number of key elements in the detailed application forms.

2.3 Power Station Update

2.3.1 The Magnox representative confirmed that there was some 300 staff (April 2017) at the power station. The last 6 months had been spent looking at ways of increasing speed of processing and reducing volumes of waste. Demolition of redundant buildings on the site was nearing completion, and remaining structures were to be clad to match the reactor buildings. The site has been programmed to enter care and maintenance some time during 2018. The Partnership hoped that Magnox would wish to enter a team for the next Saltmarsh '75 ultra-marathon event being held later during the year.

3. BUSINESS SUPPORT

3.1 Ongoing arrangements are being made to facilitate the establishment of a Business Forum for the Causeway Employment Area with the potential for a future Business Improvement District for the same.

3.2 The Economic Development team continues to work with BEST Growth Hub to provide free business support including free training workshops to the businesses of Maldon and one-to-one drop-in clinics in the Maldon District.

3.3 Dengie Enterprise Support

- 3.3.1 The normal service ceases at the end of May 2017 whilst we await a decision from Magnox on the revised bid to continue the service for a further 2 years. In the mean time until we can secure external funding, a limited service is being provided as of 1 June 2017 which will divert the current phone line to the Economic Development team's phone and maintain the current website. The Economic Development team will support this small monthly cost. Colbea have also agreed to continue to see existing DES clients at their Colchester office and their advisor to respond to emails and phone calls for these clients with no cost to Maldon District Council although no new clients will be taken on from 1 June 2017. DES is also going to see if they can get sponsorship to continue the monthly Forum element of the service at the Station House from 1 June 2017 onwards. MDC will not be paying for this.

4. BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 The Economic Development Team continues to be an Executive member of the Burnham-on-Crouch Chamber of Commerce and is supporting the continued recruitment of members and arrangements for the next planned event on 20 June 2017.
- 4.2 The Economic Development team is currently in discussions with Braxted Park regarding a potential food festival in partnership with Braxted Park towards Christmas time to promote the food and drink sector in the District and is also developing a 'Grape and Grain Trail' in partnership with Braintree District Council to be launched at Essex Festival of Food and Drink on 15-16 July 2017, Cressing Temple Barns. This is to provide visitors with a pre-planned itinerary, highlighting the two districts in combination as the 'go to food and drink destination for tourists in Essex'.
- 4.3 A meeting was held on 21 May with the four main wine growers in the District wishing to set up the Crouch Valley Wine Growers to identify some common objectives in order this can be moved forward.
- 4.4 A Maritime Breakfast is proposed for later this year to discuss issues and challenges of the maritime sector and potential Maldon District Council interventions to support the sector.

5. SKILLS

- 5.1 Following the success of the Apprenticeship Event we will now be delivering this as an annual event and in the meantime are continuing to meet regularly with the local secondary schools and Directions IAG Ltd (their Careers Adviser) to discuss and implement other initiatives we can all work on to enhance links between the District's industry and the District's secondary schools. One of these initiatives is to establish whether MDC can incorporate into its Business section of the MDC website a hub where businesses can register to provide support for the schools whether that is mentoring, interview and cv writing support, work experience, availability to work on longer term projects with the schools under the Employment and Skills Board STEM project or to become a Careers and Enterprise Company Enterprise Advisor. The purpose of Enterprise Advisors is to help schools to enhance their employer engagement plan and introduce them to their own business contacts.
- 5.2 The Economic Development Team (ED) is also continuing to encourage and support the secondary schools to access STEM projects and providing assistance with

industry links with regards to the CEC Enterprise Advisor Network (mentioned above).

- 5.3 ED is also continuing to look at what interventions MDC could provide in terms of skills and recruitment support for the Care sector in the Maldon District.
- 5.4 ED arranged a recent meeting with Anglia Ruskin University and ECC Adult Community Learning for further discussion of how MDC might work in partnership on a Care Skills offer for the District and what this might look like. The ED team has also been invited to attend Colchester Borough Council's care workshop at Colchester Institute to better understand the economic growth opportunities within the sector and if and how there are potential collaborative working relationships which can be formed to take some of the theory and ideas forward into projects. The workshop is not seeking to resolve the many challenges which exist within the health and social care sector but more to focus on growth of the wider sector in terms of skills, career choices, availability of labour, new infrastructure developments and other opportunities. It is also hoped following this event that there will be a possibility to create a working group to take any arising actions and opportunities forward and find collaborations for potential pilot projects to access funding and seek to roll out successful pilots.
- 5.5 A meeting was also held on 9 May with Anita Thornberry, Executive Director of Haven Gateway, and Caroline Betts, Lead Commissioner for Employability & Skills, Education & Lifelong Learning to see how we might work in partnership with these organisations in relation to the Maldon District Skills Strategy.

6. SENSE OF PLACE

- 6.1 The Economic Development team continues to promote Sense of Place at all events and with businesses encouraging them to use its assets where appropriate.
- 6.2 The Economic Development Team will also be encouraging the use of Sense of Place assets where appropriate within MDC internal departments where appropriate particularly via the 'Open for Business' transformation project on which Economic Development is the project lead.
- 6.3 The Communications team have now created the Sense of Place assets for business which can be currently accessed via the Communications Team. Within the next 2 months these will be directly available to businesses via the Sense of Place dedicated satellite website linked to the MDC website www.wearealdondistrict.co.uk.
- 6.4 Work is still in progress regarding the installation of hoardings on the Aquila site at Fullbridge roundabout marketing the Maldon District and Sense of Place.
- 6.5 The next update meeting arranged between Charlie Fillingham, chairman of the Sense of Place Board, Maldon District Council Chief Executive and the Economic Development team is due to take place on 30 May 2017. The Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee is now receiving invitations to this monthly meeting.