

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM UPDATE****20 October 2017****1. COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAMS (CCT)****1.1 Maldon and Blackwater Estuary CCT**

- 1.1.1 A meeting of the Maldon and Blackwater CCT was held on Tuesday 10th October 2017 on the Hydrogen Barge at Hythe Quay. Items discussed included developing a River Blackwater Activities Leaflet, similar to that produced by the River Crouch CCT. They will also be looking at the potential of a walking / camping route incorporating potentially shepherd huts/yrurts or something similar. A discussion was also held regarding a Historic Vessels Apprenticeship Scheme and a possible grant application for a development officer (one year) to set up the Historic Vessels Apprenticeship Scheme. Funding options to be considered include the CCF, Magnox and others that support heritage. Cllr. Prof. Lewis Schnurr also discussed the Lock Hill proposal, which seeks funding for conversion of a derelict building in Heybridge Basin into a heritage and visitor centre if suitable funding can be found.

**1.2 River Crouch CCT**

- 1.2.1 The River Crouch CCT met on 18 September 2017 at the Burnham-on-Crouch Council Chamber. The participants were informed the group about the successful display publicising the work of the CCCT at Quay Day held in Burnham-on-Crouch on Bank Holiday Monday 28 August. Assisted by great weather, the turnout from the public was good. A recent video by local school children and the coastal footpath were also discussed. A new CCCT project proposal for a second ferry crossing from North to South Fambridge (Middle Crouch crossing) was discussed which can potentially begin operating by May 2018. The ferry will be a foot ferry that can take some bikes. Planning consents are in place but financial help was requested sourcing 40% funding to make up the shortfall. The Crouch CCT Working Group is also continuing to develop a project proposal for a new, all-weather and wheelchair friendly Lower Crouch River Crossing from Burnham-on-Crouch to Wallasea Island. On 1 November a further meeting will be held to take a decision on whether to continue with the current private jetty proposal or to work with Maldon District Council to adapt their pontoon for disabled access.

**2. BRADWELL LEGACY PARTNERSHIP**

- 2.1 The Bradwell Legacy Partnership will be meeting on 23 November at Bradwell Marina. While the agenda is still being finalised, a key project for discussion is the Maldon District Enterprise Centre Feasibility Study Bid. Magnox have approved the “Magnox Application 2927 - Maldon District Enterprise Centre Business Case” project on 26 / 09, awarding £60,000 together with a £10,000 contribution from Essex County Council towards the cost of this feasibility study. The Economic Development Manager subsequently met with Haf Morris from Magnox in Southminster on 05 / 10 to discuss next steps. Once a list of milestones and outcomes has been approved by Magnox, the project can begin. A preliminary project outline is being prepared considering the following milestones:

- Prepare project brief and detailed terms for contracting service by mid-November;
- Open call for bids with closing date 30 days later, i.e. mid-December;
- Project start date early January;
- Regular updates with the consultants – fortnightly;
- Report delivered by 31 March 2018.

### **3. BUSINESS SUPPORT**

#### **3.1 BEST Growth Hub**

- 3.1.1 Economic Development(ED) continues to work closely with the BEST Growth Hub with whom we now have an engagement plan and who have agreed to take over the functions previously provided by the Dengie Enterprise Support.

#### **3.2 Dengie Enterprise Support**

- 3.2.1 A decision has been taken to end ED support for the DES website, as no further funding was forthcoming from Magnox and we have negotiated an agreement with the BEST Growth Hub to take over the functions previously performed by the DES, with no cost to MDC.

#### **3.3 The Grape and Grain Trail**

- 3.3.1 The Grape and Grain Trail (a joint project between Braintree District Council and Maldon Tourist Information Centre) promoting the great range of vineyards and breweries in the wider area has been really well received and has built momentum including receiving press coverage recently by ITV news and from another freelancer this week regarding the Crouch valley.

<http://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2017-10-06/corner-of-essex-thats-becoming-one-of-the-countrys-finest-wine-producing-areas/>

- 3.3.2 Information on the Grape and Grain Trail is also available in a well-received brochure and on the Visit Maldon District website - <http://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/eat-and-drink/grape-and-grain-trail.aspx>

- 3.3.3 The next step is to work with the TIC to better integrate the Grape and Grain Trail with other local tourist attractions in order to develop visitor itineraries that encourage visitors to stay longer in the area.

### **4. BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT**

- 4.1 **Causeway Business Forum** – The Economic Development team, assisted by Nadine Daines, Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manger, organised an event held on 5 October 2017 from 3.30 - 5pm, at Maldon Town Council, to instigate and implement the formation of a Causeway Business Forum with the hope that this will also lead to the creation of a Business Improvement District. The event included speakers from

Maldon District Council who provided updates on the Heybridge and Maldon Central Area Masterplan, Flooding Alleviation for the Causeway, Skills, Sense of Place and the Maldon District Enterprise Centre. Guest speakers provided further information on Business Improvement Districts and Superfast Broadband, as well as a discussion as to where the Causeway Businesses would like to go from here. A decision was taken to establish a formal Causeway Business Forum and a business breakfast has been scheduled for Thursday 23 November to discuss Terms of Reference for the new grouping. This meeting will be directed by local businesses and Maldon District Council (MDC) will only be present as observers and to provide administrative support.

- 4.2 **Burnham-on-Crouch Chamber of Commerce** – The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on the evening of Monday 23 October at Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council Offices. Following a year of three very successful events already since its re-launch at the beginning of April 2017, membership continues to grow as businesses see the many and varied benefits of being part of this organisation. Mention was made of the new Burnham-on-Crouch Chamber of Commerce Chairman's Member Awards, the winner of which will be announced in January 2018, as well as Maldon District Council's Business Chairman Awards, nominations of which are requested by no later than 12 noon on 18th December 2017. Members were also reminded of the Small Business Saturday bus tour, taking place between 10am and 2pm on Thursday 16 November, in Butt Lane, Maldon. An apprenticeship event will be held in January, organised by Burnham-on-Crouch Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with Orniston Rivers Academy in January (Date to be confirmed).
- 4.3 **Small Business Saturday** - The Small Business Saturday bus tour will be taking place between 10am and 2pm on Thursday 16 November, in the Butt Lane Car Park, Maldon. There is going to be a large bus (looks more like a coach) and two awnings on site that can facilitate up to eight businesses under cover. There will also be a blue couch where they will be interviewing people and publicising Live on Facebook. A couple of businesses from Burnham-on-Crouch Chamber will be acting as two of the mentors on the bus and the BEST Growth Hub and Small Business Saturday are providing some others. Secret Hamper, a Maldon District based business was chosen as one of the Top 100 businesses being highlighted as part of this year's campaign.
- 4.4 **Chairman's Visits** - The Economic Development team is working with the Chairman of MDC, Cllr. Henry Bass to accompany him on some of his visits to local businesses. The objective is to gather their views and provide advice on what initiatives could be put in place to support the growth and sustainability of local businesses. On 12 October the Economic Development Manager accompanied Cllr. Bass on his visit to Tollesbury.
- 4.5 **Business Newsletter** – On 27 October the Economic Development Team distributed a business newsletter by e-mail. Topics covered included a request to participate in our Business Skills survey, the Chairman's Business Awards, promoting use of the BEST Growth Hub, The Plume Community Academy Business Fair and to promote the Sense of Place. The Economic Development Team has received several positive public responses from readers.
- 4.6 **Superfast Broadband** – Connie Kerbst, Senior Programme Manager, Information Services, Essex County Council, presented an update on the progress of Superfast

Broadband at the Causeway Business Forum meeting on 5 October. Superfast Broadband is working with the service providers, but are ultimately dependent on these providers to deliver their stated objectives. They require feedback regarding issues to take back to the providers for solution. The emphasis of the project is now shifting to how to best use the available broadband to best effect.

- 4.7 **Engagement with Department of International Trade (DIT) and Invest Essex** – The Economic Development Manager met with the Essex DIT Partnership Manager on 13 October, together with Simon Papworth, Inward Investment Manager at Invest Essex, to discuss better integration of Maldon District Council into the work of Invest Essex. Invest Essex receives inward investment enquiries from the Department of International Trade, collected from their missions abroad, and puts forward an Essex response. The Economic Development team is putting together an inward investment offer for Maldon District for this purpose and in the meantime is forwarding information about available employment sites and other relevant information about the kinds of businesses that we would like to attract to our district.

## 5. SKILLS

- 5.1 The Economic Development Team has recently completed a draft Maldon District Skills Strategy. This document is now being revised and is awaiting data from the Maldon District Business Skills survey (currently open) to finalise the report which will be launched shortly. The Economic Development Manager will be participating in the Plume Academy Careers Fair on 8 October and making a presentation entitled: Made in Maldon - Opportunities on your Doorstep.

## 6. SENSE OF PLACE

- 6.1 The Sense of Place was presented at the Causeway Business Forum event on 5 October 2017 and was very well received by the businesses present. The Economic Development Team is working with local businesses to promote adoption of Sense of Place branding and act as ambassadors for Sense of Place on Maldon District and beyond. The new Blackwater Retail Park Ground Breaking Ceremony was held on 11 October and the developers Aquila have agreed to the erection of highly visible Sense of Place Branding on hoardings to be erected around the site. Once outstanding technical and planning issues have been resolved, these hoardings will be produced and erected.
- 6.2 Charlie Fillingham, Chairman of the Sense of Place Board, led a Board Meeting on Wednesday 25 October. The Board now has a renewed sense of purpose and has adopted a number of projects, such as support for a Christmas food and drink fair to be held at Braxted Park in 2018, linked to Sense of Place.