

RIVER CROUCH COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAM

ECONOMIC PLAN

No.	Heading	Detail	Information
Key Information			
1	Name of CCT	N/A	The River Crouch Coastal Community Team
2	Single Point of Contact (SPOC)	Name Address Tel nos Email	Kerry Martin Economic Development Manager Maldon District Council Council Offices Princes Road Maldon Essex CM9 5DL 01621 875846 kerry.martin@maldon.gov.uk
3 (a)	CCT Membership	Names and position, e.g. resident, Local Councillor	CCT Membership will be confirmed subsequent to the initial Team meeting
3 (b)	CCT Membership	Other partners and/or stakeholders to be involved.	As above
4	Accountable Body	Local Authority Contact name & details	Maldon District Council kerry.martin@maldon.gov.uk Does the Accountable Body have a representative on the CCT membership? YES
5	Local Area	Provide brief geographical description of the locality and a brief history if relevant.	The River Crouch downstream from Battlesbridge on both banks of the river down to and including Foulness Island and Paglesham on the southern bank and out to Holliwell Point on the northern bank and northwards to Asheldham Brook. Although there are 2 exceptions, (listed in 6) generally south of the river is within Rochford Local Authority and north is within Maldon Local Authority.

6	Context – community (suggested maximum 300 words)	Description of local community with demographics.	<p>On the northern bank the major town is Burnham on Crouch (pop 7,671) and neighbouring Southminster (4,272). Moving upstream is the village of North Fambridge (835) (all of the above are within Maldon District – MD) and the town of South Woodham Ferrers (SWF) (16,629).</p> <p>On the south bank are the villages of Battlesbridge (both this village and SWF are within Chelmsford City – CC), Hullbridge (6,527), South Fambridge/Ashingdon (3,634), Canewdon (1,473) Foulness (151) and Paglesham (246) (all of the above are within Rochford District - RD).</p>
7	Context – economy	Local economy, e.g. business, tourism, manufacture, etc, 'Starting point'	<p>There is mixed arable and livestock farming on both banks with a number of vineyards being planted in recent years on the north bank as it has a microclimate found suitable for the growing of sparkling wine grapes.</p> <p>Towards the mouth of the river the land is predominantly arable. On the south bank (RD) near the mouth is the commercial port of the Baltic Wharf, Essex Marina and beyond that, the RSPB Wallasea Island reserve. There are a number of horticultural businesses which serve the South East Essex/Southend conurbation which is directly south.</p> <p>Marine leisure activities are important on both sides of the river, with 3 marinas along it and countless moorings. There are also a number of caravan and camping sites on both sides.</p> <p>On the north bank (MD) runs the Crouch Valley branch line and at peak times direct trains run to London, so this area has a number of commuters. There are small mixed industrial estates at both Burnham (MD) and SWF (CC).</p>

			<p>The south bank has some issues regarding road access to the direct commuter train line into London and the conurbation around Southend for employment purposes, particularly for those living in the rural villages of South Fambridge, Canewdon and Paglesham. Though there are a number of small businesses located in old farm buildings.</p> <p>The east of Rochford District is less accessible than the west and access to Baltic Wharf, Essex Marina and Wallasea needs improvement.</p> <p>Baltic Wharf on the south side near the mouth imports and stock holds both timber and steel for construction usage. Due to the commercial usage the buoyage and channel of the Crouch are well maintained, thus benefiting yachtsmen and leisure sailors.</p> <p>This is the responsibility of the Crouch Harbour Commissioners who are a key stakeholder within the team.</p>
8	Related initiatives	What else is going on in the community of economic importance, e.g. BID, LEP, CIC, CCF, CRF	<p>Maldon District Council currently has a Coastal Communities Fund programme, 'Dengie Gateway Project', which covers the north bank of the river.</p> <p>The area covered by the CCT is included in the Essex Rivers LEADER Local Action Group.</p> <p>EAFRD Growth Fund funding is available to rural areas via SELEP.</p> <p>Heritage Lottery Funding is also available for funding heritage projects.</p>
CCT Plan			
9	Ambition	A positive statement of the aims and objectives of the plan and a description of what it will	<p>The River Crouch Coastal Community Team will facilitate and support the growth of the local economy through developing a sustainable visitor offer by concentrating on the river users and associated businesses operating on the land adjoining the river.</p>

		<p>achieve. Description of 'what success will look like'.</p>	<p>The CCT aim to support the development of the Wallasea Island reserve, wherever possible and recognise the opportunities and additional benefits this unique resource will bring to the area, being a key destination to promote on the River Crouch.</p> <p>Wherever possible, the CCT will encourage opportunities to increase youth employment for all communities, to prevent young people from moving away out of the area.</p> <p>Success will be an improved tourism offer, a greater and more varied commercial offer for businesses and an improved infrastructure for access to the River Crouch.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Needs of the community and intentions of the team to meet them.</p>	<p>Identify the socio-economic needs of the community and the opportunities to meet them. Each element should be Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed.</p>	<p>The main issue identified is the fact that currently the river divides the two halves of the population, whereas it could unite them.</p> <p>North of the river, Burnham and other villages feel isolated despite having access to the Crouch Valley Branch line. Reaching any major conurbation by road is at least a 45 minute drive from the easterly fringes of the Dengie Peninsula.</p> <p>South of the river, it is also acknowledged, that feeling of isolation equally applies to the rural villages of both Canewdon and Paglesham. Road and rail connections need improvement and better accessibility for the people living there.</p> <p>People from both sides of the river have indicated that more and better river crossings are key to the economy of the river growing.</p> <p>The CCT will promote a green tourism offer surrounding the river to support a sustainable local and predominantly rural</p>

			economy that will increase job opportunities. The CCT will investigate ways of improving accessibility and connectivity between different settlements across the river.
11	Analysis	Describe the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats in meeting the needs at 10 (a).	<p>Strengths:</p> <p>The river itself and its natural beauty. The historical nature of the river and the attractiveness of the yachting and waterborne leisure activities.</p> <p>The fact that the Crouch is still a commercial river is important and the impact that that has upon river users.</p> <p>Near the mouth of the river is the RSPB Wallasea Island reserve, which is now approximately 1/3 open. When complete it is envisaged to be the largest intertidal habitat creation project of its type in Europe. It is accessible to communities both within RD by road and MD via ferry links and will improve the tourism potential of the river for recreation, leisure and education.</p> <p>The EU designation as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for the Crouch, as part of the Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA.</p> <p>The river is available at most states of the tide fairly well upstream.</p> <p>The river offers sailing, rowing kayaking, water-skiing, fishing and paddle-boarding and river boat/ferry trips as leisure activities.</p> <p>On shore there is an extensive network of footpaths for walking including the sea wall on both sides of the river.</p> <p>Its isolation and peacefulness, yet proximity to major population centres and within four miles of Southend Airport, which is also within Rochford District,</p>

			<p>make it an accessible wilderness internationally.</p> <p>Weaknesses: The isolation that is seen as a strength, is conversely seen as a weakness, as the area is not easily accessible to all, especially those using public transport.</p> <p>Both sides of the river suffer from poor transport infrastructure - especially buses, and because of the small populations, poor infrastructure in general is a major issue, including sustainable visitor access to Wallasea.</p> <p>Climate change and rising sea levels combined with poor maintenance of the sea wall raise the risk of flooding.</p> <p>Feedback suggests that river access is good, although others comment that there are a limited number of slipways and access points to the river.</p> <p>The population of both sides of the river is aging in line with general rural populations, as young people see few opportunities for the future and move to cities where opportunities are greater.</p> <p>Opportunities: Linking the north and south banks by a new ferry or series of ferries, including a vehicle carrier and a river bus, linking communities along the river has been suggested.</p> <p>Developing and enhancing the tourism/visitor offer, especially with the increased visitor numbers that the Wallasea Island project will attract. Including better accommodation and restaurant provision.</p> <p>To improve and expand the green tourism offer; walking, running, cycling and nature pursuits of outdoor activities, in addition to</p>
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		<p>the sailing and water sports, are seen as an opportunity. Particularly to increase the permissive paths and cycle routes.</p> <p>The England Coastal Path, due to open in 2020 is a major opportunity to attract new people to enjoy what the river has to offer.</p> <p>Better promotion of the Crouch's rich historical background is required. The smuggler haunts, pilgrimages, the site of the Battle of Ashingdon (Assandune), investigating HMS Beagle, Roman Red Hills, London Bridge foundations and other historical remnants abounding along the banks, as well as Burnham's rich sailing history and its importance as a yachting centre.</p> <p>The group could work with Local Authorities' planning departments in the preparation of local development plans to ensure future development remains in keeping with the area. Also any adopted or emerging planning policies that may support development in the greenbelt and acceptable green tourism opportunities.</p> <p>Chelmsford City Council, of which South Woodham Ferrers and Battlesbridge are a part of, is seen as a potential partner.</p> <p>Overall it is seen that there is huge potential but better use has to be made of the river, its coast and surrounding areas to drive the offer and economy forward.</p> <p>Threats: Climate change and rising sea levels combined with poor maintenance of the sea wall and its footpath pose a threat of both flooding and accessibility. Whilst development is going to happen, due to national housing shortages and employment opportunities, it needs to be carried out in a planned and sympathetic way without swamping local services thus destroying the unique nature of the area.</p>
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			Lack of funding to carry out access and connectivity improvements.
12	Data – <i>while an essential element of the plan, it could be included in a ‘daughter’ document.</i>	Provide evidence to support the intentions of the plan. This will include statistical data but broader data should also be included. Data used should be specific, relevant and transparent. It is sufficient to reference evidence held elsewhere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maldon and Rochford District Councils undertook an online survey and organised a workshop to gather data from interested relevant parties regarding the formation of the Coastal Community Team and its Strategy and Plans going forward. • Maldon District Tourism Strategy Research (2007) carried out by East of England Tourism • Tourism Value and Volume Report 2015 – Visit Essex • Dengie Gateway Project Report- Ingham Pinnock (2014) • Rochford District Growth Strategy 2014 & Core Strategy • Rochford District Business Plan 2016-2020 • RSPB Data. • River Crouch Celebrations Evaluation Report • Crouch & Roach Estuary Management Plan (2005)
Delivering the Plan			
13	Key projects and/or bodies of work.	High level description of discrete pieces of work showing CCT role, indicative partners and timescales.	To support the sustainable development of the area’s tourism offer and continue to identify opportunities and work positively to resolve discrete issues in liaison with other groups and pieces of work.
14	Short term goals/actions	What will the team achieve in the next 6 months? Should demonstrate ‘quick wins’.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Team will formulate, meet and set out a calendar for future meetings. • The Team will agree TOR and elect a Chair. • The Team will review agree and publish the Economic Plan. • The team will identify and liaise with key stakeholders to ensure their buy-in

			<p>to the CCT's plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team will liaise with marketing initiatives currently planned and underway, to ensure maximum promotion of the area. • The Team will discuss the carrying out of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A mapping exercise ○ Improved Signage ○ Funding local events ○ A business engagement event. • The Team will carry out a mapping exercise to identify future funding opportunities
15	Performance measures	For first 6 months – to be SMART	To be agreed at the CCT January meeting.
16	Medium term goals/actions	For 6mths to 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be agreed at future CCT meetings, but to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exploring the opportunities for greater cross river communications and travel, resulting in greater availability of cross river transport. ○ Seeking additional funding for projects, including those that involve Wallasea Island reserve.
17	Performance measures	For 6mths to 5 years – to be SMART	To have investigated the potential of upgraded cross river ferry/ferries.
18	Long term goals and actions Optional	Strategic plans beyond 5 years – include performance measures where appropriate.	To be agreed at future CCT meetings
19	Barriers	Identify any barriers to delivering the plan and if you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Sustainability of CCT • Cross river communications and travel • Planning and licensing constraints

		have contingencies to manage them.	
20	Resources	Who and what will be required to deliver each element of the plan. Include 'in kind' services, volunteers, etc. demonstrate how local expertise will be utilise and/or grown.	<p>Commitment from Maldon District Council, Rochford District Council, Essex County Council and key stakeholders.</p> <p>Commitment from partners and volunteers and the voluntary sector.</p> <p>Financial commitment to ensure that key projects are funded and delivered via Stakeholders</p> <p>To be agreed by CCT at January and future meetings.</p>
21	Costs	Detail of costs of each element of plan.	<p><i>All costs are indicative and subject to CCT approval:</i></p> <p>Subsequent meetings - £250</p> <p>Publish the Economic Plan - £250</p> <p>Feasibility study to address access Issues to Wallasea Island and improve green tourism – £2,000</p> <p>To design and produce a visitor leaflet for the River Crouch - £2,000</p> <p>Engagement activities - £500</p> <p>Signage/Transport review £0.</p>
22	Value	What is the value of the plan to the local economy?	The value will be an improved tourism offer, a greater and more varied commercial offer for businesses and an improved infrastructure to both access and cross the River Crouch.
23	Funding	Identification of funding streams and how costs of project(s) will or could be met.	<p>LEADER Funding could be sought for a number of different projects including discussions to develop ferry and accommodation projects.</p> <p>There is still (in the short term) funding available from Magnox' Socio-Economic Fund which is aimed at mitigating the impact of the closure of decommissioning</p>

			<p>works at Bradwell I on the northern bank of the river.</p> <p>SE LEP is the main conduit for public sector funding and EU funding such as ESF/ERDF/EAFRD</p>
24	Maximising resources and costs	Describe how this will be minimised, e.g. shared services, use of technology, avoidance of bureaucracy, etc.	<p>It is anticipated that CCT members will be able to support future meetings and offer venues. Costs are not expected to exceed £250.</p> <p>Through the use of the Councils', and other members, web presence and social media accounts, it is expected that publicising and printing the Economic Plan will not exceed £250.</p> <p>Through existing links with local schools, whereby it is hoped a project linking secondary schools in Maldon and Rochford can be developed and other stakeholder groups, future engagement activities are expected to yield a significant amount of interest and creative ideas for minimal outlays, approximately £500 will be allocated to this.</p> <p>The CCT will investigate any recommendations from previous studies and reports on the River Crouch that could form future group project work.</p> <p>It is hoped that CCT members will take responsibility for undertaking the proposed reviews. It is hoped that this will not only assist identifying opportunities in the future, but also improve the visitor information available.</p>

Communications			
25	Consultation	Describe existing results of consultations and planned consultation exercises.	<p>An on-line survey was prepared and distributed widely to a database of key stakeholders and potential partners as per the original bid. Subsequently a consultation meeting was held on 21st October 2015 for interested parties to attend.</p> <p>As a result of these consultations the main focus of the River Crouch Coastal Community Team and its plans remained on developing a stronger visitor economy based around the River.</p> <p>The draft plan was circulated for comment and feedback and the final plan (this document) will be widely distributed.</p> <p>As the work of the team progresses the plan will undergo iterative changes as the team becomes more embedded and different opportunities and projects arise.</p>
26		Describe plans to involve and inform partners and other bodies, including accountable body, CCA and DCLG.	<p>Maldon District Council as the Accountable Body will discharge their obligations in communicating the plan to DCLG within the agreed timescales. Maldon District Council is actively involved in the work of the Coastal Community Alliance and will inform the group.</p>
27	Communication with community	How will the community and stakeholders be involved and informed of progress and outcomes	<p>Maldon District Council (the accountable body) have set up a dedicated microsite on their own website to communicate issues regarding the work of the Team. Rochford District Council is also promoting this microsite via their council website, where there is a dedicated CCT page.</p>

			Regular announcements will be made by MDC and RDC through social media detailing the progress that the CCT has made, future plans and success stories.
CCT Logistics			
28	Management of team	How the team will operate, frequency of meetings, centrality of team to projects, etc. How the team is representative of the community.	The logistics and management of the Team will be discussed and ratified at the January CCT meeting.
29	Support structure	Network of support built to enable CCT to deliver the economic plan	The CCT will utilise social media to support team members to be informed and support the delivery of the economic plan.
30	Costs	Running costs of CCT itself	It is anticipated that CCT members will be able to support future meetings and offer venues. The only costs expected will be minimal.
31	Sustainability	Long term plan for team and how this will be managed.	The sustainability and long term plan for the CCT will be discussed and ratified at subsequent team meetings.
32	Areas of Specific Interest	Provide areas of on which you would wish to join a working group or network (virtual or otherwise), e.g. arts, tourism, housing, piers, sport, transport, heritage, marketing, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Green Tourism • River usage • Transport • Economic Growth <p>To be agreed at January 2016 CCT meeting.</p>

ENDS