

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director for Environment and Economy**

Report to:	<b>Economic Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>12 January 2016</b>
Subject:	<b>Coastal Town Team (including Mablethorpe)</b>

**Summary:**

This report is to brief members on the economic planning taking place in Mablethorpe.

**Actions Required:**

Members are asked to:

- i) note the locally focused schemes that are emerging in the Mablethorpe economic plan and recognise their complementarity with other schemes which have a wider impact.
- ii) discuss the potential for Lincolnshire County Council endorsement of the plan and helping the Mablethorpe team to identify key individuals across LCC

## **1. Background**

This discussion paper has been requested by Councillor MacNally, who was keen to explore issues affecting Mablethorpe. This is influenced by the need to be more targeted in approaches to satisfy funding regimes, and also the limited resource that is now available to support these activities.

The approach now needed is typified by current funding regimes. An example of this is the Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) which aims to encourage the economic development of UK coastal communities, by awarding funding to create sustainable economic growth and jobs. The UK Government has announced that the CCF will be extended in 2017/18 to 2020/21 and future funding arrangements will be confirmed, following the Government's Spending Review.

Lincolnshire needs to be prepared for when the criteria and prospectus are launched, and be in a position to develop fewer, more strategic, and larger proposals - in order to compete nationally for a higher proportion of the £90m.

With Mablethorpe highlighted as one of the Country's most deprived communities, it also needs to be supported in order to help it be in a position to bid towards these

additional resources. The government's "Coastal Town Team" approach aims to help communities to do this.

**Current Activity in and around Mablethorpe**

Recently Cllr Davie has instigated a Coastal Developers Forum in September 2015, with the private sector, councils and statutory agencies being part of a strategic forum to bring forward and discuss issues affecting the coast. Businesses from Cleethorpes to Boston, including Mablethorpe, are members. This is an important lobbying forum, which can make representations to the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and MP's.

The forum explored the following:

- **Environment:** ways of extending the season, particularly tackling some of the risks associated with evacuation procedures during the winter months.
- **Skills:** the importance of skills, ranging from customer care skills, through to making sure that staff have the specific skills, that business processes require.
- **VAT and tourism:** There was a debate with the three MPs over changes to VAT rates for tourism businesses.
- **Relationship with the rural hinterland:** Including the two perspectives of transport connections for staff, and strengthening the relationship between our market towns and the coast.

In July 2015 the Department of Communities and Local Government announced that Mablethorpe's Town Team would receive £10k towards the development of an Economic Plan, due to be completed by January 2016. A meeting was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 where stakeholders highlighted the main issues and findings from their consultation:

Issues	Projects identified
Skills – low skills base, more investment in Apprenticeships Infrastructure – Promenade and the built environment Enterprise – stimulating local entrepreneurship Employment and Work force development Community interface	Adventure playground Coastfields caravan site development Tidal pool Promenade development to include cycle path between Skegness and Mablethorpe

Examples of other funding that has been available for Mablethorpe to apply into are:

- Coastal Revival funding for coastal towns

In August 2015, DCLG announced £3m to submit applications to help fund feasibility studies, and kick start heritage projects in their towns. Mablethorpe submitted four bids.

Announcements were made on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015, and unfortunately none of the bids succeeded. There were 222 bids submitted totalling £9m, 77 bids nationally were successful for the £3m budget. A further £1m will be released shortly, but guidance is awaited.

- Big Local programme

In 2010 Mablethorpe, Sutton and Trusthorpe was also awarded £1m from the Lottery to be spent over a 10 year period in the area as the "community thought fit" (quote CCC Big Local Plan 2013), and this money was to be spent over and above existing and future statutory investment in the area. The money is to be used on community projects only. The lead organisation is the Boatshed Charity, with a steering group of local organisations to agree how on this money will be spent.

- ELDC Shop Front Grant Scheme

As part of East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) commitment to supporting the economy in communities across the District, they have launched a scheme that aims to enhance the appearance of shop frontages and ultimately increase the number of shoppers on our high streets.

The new LEADER programme also covers the coastal area.

### **Way Forward**

Meetings have been taking place to discuss the preparation of strategic bids to submit into future rounds - and the towns, including Mablethorpe, are being asked to identify how they can work together to develop proposals under the themes of tourism, training, coherence and infrastructure.

Additional strategic support for the facilitation of major schemes could be provided through the Coastal Developers Forum with targeted support from Lincolnshire County Council, to provide a firm bedrock for achieving the requisite level of support needed in this new funding environment.

With regard to community schemes, the CCT is the main forum for creating that kind of framework for Mablethorpe, given their recent consultation role in the town and the expectations of DCLG and government in awarding money to this type of activity. It would be inadvisable to duplicate the work being carried out by the Big Local team, with a two way line of communication with the Coastal Developers

Forum in place. Communication between the CCT and the LEADER programme would also be advantageous.

There are proactive private sector developers in and around Mablethorpe looking to develop (e.g. Dunes Theatre, seafront funfair, Haven Holidays and Grange Leisure) whose aspirations need to be taken into consideration. These businesses are being brought together to discuss their plans and collaboration opportunities, around strategic funding opportunities.

Proposals are already coming forward from the towns – the old St Peters Radio station at Trusthorpe as an entertainment venue, the museum for Radio and an Eco Centre for butterflies and renewable energies.

## **2. Conclusion**

Without working together and joining up initiatives in Mablethorpe there is little chance that they can capitalise on not just the Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) but all future funding. Strategic/partnership working and bidding is a powerful message of cohesion and creates a shared vision for how we see Lincolnshire thriving.

Not all identified activities will be eligible or successful, particularly in the CCF bidding process. However, by having a common goal and a strategic vision that links into the Coastal Community Teams, Lincolnshire Coastal Vision and partners/businesses ethos, there is a stronger chance of success and opportunity to grow and develop Mablethorpe for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Disparate, small, un-strategic and/or individual projects are no longer the way forward for national funders. This debate is the start of these important wider discussions that glue together everyone's thoughts and ideas, for how we can work together to help develop and sustain Mablethorpe.

In summary, in order to realise these ambitions there needs to be:

- Consensus of agreement around the town's ambitions, preferably around the recent CCT consultation activity
- Agreement of major strategic schemes being brought forward and led by the Coastal Developers Forum, given the breadth of representation outlined above – with strategic support from Lincolnshire County Council
- Big Local are invited to have a two way dialogue with the Coastal Developers Forum, in order to make sure that community led schemes are embedded in the ambitions for the town, but remain locally led and supported.

## **3. Consultation**

**a) Policy Proofing Actions Required**

n/a

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Mablethorpe diagram

**5. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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