
“LEADER” PROJECT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Member support for involvement in the “Leader” project, which, if successful, could result in some £4million worth of additional funding being available for projects within the “Leader” project area.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Leader Programme is a funding stream administered by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) of European funding. Some £20million is available for the Eastern Region. EEDA have invited bids for access to this funding stream with an upper limit of £4million for each bid submission.
- 2.2 Colchester, together with Maldon, have expressed an interest in applying for “Leader” funding for a project area identified as the Essex Coast and Rivers. They have now approached Rochford District Council to see whether we would wish to be associated with the project. Detailed bids have to be submitted by 14 March.

3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Details of the Leader programme and the criteria employed are included in the attached Appendix. From an officer viewpoint, the principal advantages of the Project are that if accepted, it would provide access to an additional funding stream for coastal projects within the District and would fit in with a number of our key aims around quality of life, thriving local economy, green and sustainable environment and heritage. The public funding element of Leader has to be matched by 50% from the private sector or similar and thus it is not so much directly targeted at Local Authorities as such, but more to the private sector and other bodies in terms of helping or pump priming any future investment plans. In this context, if Leader was successful, it might provide a useful source of additional funding in the context of the RSPB’s proposals for Wallasea Island or developments associated with Baltic Wharf, for example. It might also provide a useful funding stream for coastal tourism, leisure activities and farm diversification across the coastal part of the District.
- 3.2 In terms of Rochford’s resource obligations, there would be none at this stage other than officer time in supporting the work of any management/project board established to oversee the work around this initiative. It would fall within the working remit of the Economic Development Officer. For the opportunities outlined above, it is recommended that the Council should formally join Colchester and Maldon and support the Leader Project bid. As to whether the bid is successful or not, the outcome will be known in mid-May.

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Board **RESOLVES** to endorse support of the bid submission for Leader funding for the Essex Coast and Rivers.

Paul Warren
Chief Executive

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Paul Warren on:-

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