
KEY POLICIES AND ACTIONS FOR 2012/2013

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report formally sets out the main areas of policy development for 2012/2013. It identifies the main projects to be progressed and implemented and highlights any areas of service development/change. It also identifies issues on which the Council may wish to request consideration by the Review Committee and outlines the timetable for establishing the budget for 2013/2014.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 With the budget agreed at Full Council on 31 January and the Council Tax rate set at last week's meeting of Full Council, it is opportune for Members to formally agree the main areas of the Council's work programme for the coming year.
- 2.2 At the same time, Members can consider the programme relating to the monitoring of the 2012/2013 budget and the preparation of the 2013/2014 budget. Members' views are sought on those policy, resource and service issues which might be appropriate for examination by the Review Committee, although it will be for that Committee to determine its work programme in the next Municipal Year (2012/2013).

3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Despite the many uncertainties that exist around the 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), with the budget for 2012/2013 now agreed, it is important for the Council to focus on service delivery and key priorities for the benefit of Rochford residents.
- 3.2 Key projects for the Council in the coming year will remain the continuing work around the Local Development Framework and the progression of key planning documents, such as the Allocations Plan, the Joint Area Action Plan for the Airport and its Environs and the Town Centre Action Plans for Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh Town Centre. With the publication of the National Planning Framework guidance anticipated by the spring, the implications arising from that will also need to be factored into the planned planning work programme. There will also be major workstreams around preparing for the proposed changes to the Council Tax/Benefits system and the introduction of Universal Credit. A third major area of work will be the introduction of the new IT contract across the authority and the move to an off-site data centre.
- 3.3 The Localism Act is now in place but further details will be published in detailed regulations and guidance notes which are expected over the next few months. The implications of these will need to be considered and may need to be incorporated into work plans.

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- 3.4 The Council will continue with the capital projects at Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and will implement a Pet Memorial Park scheme for the District. There will also be initiatives in respect of introducing public car park charging regimes at Hockley Woods and the Freight House.
- 3.5 With the budget now agreed, a revised, updated version of the Corporate Plan will be produced for consideration by the Executive and approval by the Council at its meeting in April.
- 3.6 The key elements of the Council's work programme will be publicised through the press, the web and through Rochford District Matters, using other media as appropriate.
- 3.7 The attached appendices A, B and C make no attempt to cover all the Council's functions. Instead, they focus on the 'headline' areas of work for the forthcoming year. Appendix A deals with the policy and strategic framework. Appendix B covers the main projects and, Appendix C, the key areas of service development/change. In each of the appendices, the linkage is highlighted to one or more of the Council's four corporate objectives around 'Making a Difference' to:-
1. Our People
 2. Our Community
 3. Our Environment
 4. Our Local Economy
- 3.8 Given the work programme outlined and the issues coming before Council in the foreseeable future, Appendix D outlines those topics suggested for study by the Review Committee. However, in requesting subjects for consideration, Members need to take into account the capacity of the Review Committee and note that it sets its own agenda.
- 3.9 Appendix E sets out the process and timetable for monitoring the 2012/2013 budget and preparing the 2013/2014 budget for Member's information. The intention is to combine the half-yearly review of the budget with a half-yearly review of the work programme in October/November. There will continue to be regular monitoring reports covering the performance of key service areas. In this way, it is envisaged that Members can review progress on both the budget and the work programme during the financial year and make any adjustments that might be appropriate to ensure key targets are met or reassessed.
- 3.10 Finally, Appendix F sets out a list of events for Members' reference which will impact on the Authority during the year. It is not all-encompassing, but does attempt to capture the key activities which the Council will be involved in.

4 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES** that:-

- (1) The work programme for 2012/2013, as set out in Appendices A, B and C and the public notification of its content, as outlined in the report, be agreed.
- (2) Those areas of work, with or without amendments, for consideration by the Review Committee, as outlined in Appendix D, be agreed.
- (3) The programme for the monitoring of the 2012/2013 budget and the development of the 2013/2014 Budget, as outlined in Appendix E, be noted.
- (4) The main events timetable, as outlined in Appendix F, be noted.

Paul Warren
Chief Executive

Background Papers:-

None.

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Policy Development WorkCouncil's Corporate Plan (1-4)

- Produce an updated Plan in the light of 2012/2013 Budget Process – for consideration and approval by Executive and endorsement by Council

April 2012

Local Development Documents (1-4)

• Allocations DPD

- Submission Consultation
- Submission
- Public Inquiry

Autumn 2012

January 2013

Spring 2013

• Development Management DPD

- Submission Consultation
- Submission
- Public Inquiry

Summer 2012

November 2012

Spring 2013

London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Action Area Plan (1-4)

- Submission consultation
- Submission
- Public Inquiry

Autumn 2012

January 2013

Spring 2013

Hockley Town Centre Area Action Plan (1-4)

- Submission consultation
- Submission
- Public Inquiry
- Adoption

September 2012

January 2013

Spring 2013

Autumn 2013

Charging Schedule (CIL) (1 -4)

- Consultation on preliminary schedule January 2013
- Pre-submission consultation Summer 2013
- Submit schedule Autumn 2013
- Examination November 2013
- Adoption June 2014

Rochford Town Centre Area Action Plan (1-4)

- Consultation on draft final options Summer 2013
- Public Inquiry May 2014
- Adoption Autumn 2014

Rayleigh Town Centre Area Action Plan (1-4)

- Consultation on draft final options Summer 2013
- Public Inquiry May 2014
- Adoption Autumn 2014

Asset Management Plan (1)

- Revised Asset Management Plan in place September 2012

Annual Report (1)

- Prepare 2011/12 Annual Report for Member consideration and approval July 2012

Living Landscapes (1& 3)

- Develop the Upper Roach Living Landscape Vision in partnership with Essex Wildlife Trust August 2012

Open Spaces Strategy (1 & 3)

- Prepare a strategy to sit alongside the review of the Grounds Maintenance Contract September 2012

New Homes Bonus Strategy (1, 2 & 3)

- Develop New Homes Bonus strategy to inform 2013/14 budget process November 2012

Strategic Housing (1, 2 & 3)

- Production of the new Rochford Housing Strategy covering 2012 – 2015. September 2012

Licensing Policy (2)

- Update of the Statement of Licensing Principles for Gambling January 2013

Main Projects

Hall Road Cemetery Extension (1, 2 & 3)

Following a review of the existing capacity in the Hall Road cemetery and the predicted demand for spaces, further ground work in the extension will be delayed until at least 2013/14 to avoid the maintenance costs which will arise in prematurely grassing the new areas.

Acacia House (1-4)

Develop a business case for the future use which generates best value to the authority.

July 2012

Chapel of Rest (1 &2)

As a part of the development of the Hall Road Cemetery develop a proposal for a Chapel of Rest which is viable and provides a community facility.

April 2012

Asset Review (1)

Carry out a review of the authority's assets, to identify opportunities to create revenue or capital streams and to demonstrate that they are providing best value to the authority

October 2012

Recycling Initiatives (1,2 & 3)

- Consolidate and modify the recycling scheme to maximise our recycling rates
Ongoing
- Review of the Inter Authority Agreement with ECC in respect of the long-term commitment to PFI residual waste treatment contract
Ongoing
- DCLG bid to supporting weekly collections of refuse:

Expression Of Interest

March 2012

Outline Bid

May 2012

Final Detailed Bid

August 2012

Procure long-term Grounds Maintenance solutions

- Develop options June 2012
- Test options for affordability July 2012
- Finalise specification September 2012
- OJEU Notice September 2012
- Award Contract January 2013
- New contract operational March 2013

Environmental Contracts (1, 2 & 3)

- Prepare strategy to inform the review of the Street Cleansing and Waste Management contract due in 2014/15 November 2012

Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park (1, 2 & 3)

- Grove Woods additional car parking - design brief to be developed following public consultation with delivery to commence July 2012
- Funding bid submitted to enhance access across the site and provide protection of heritage features. October 2012
- Commence works on a Pet Memorial Park Scheme October 2012

ICT Contract (1)

- Implement move to an off-site data centre. June 2012
- Contract commencement April 2013

Car Park Schemes (1&3)

- Implementation of Scheme at Freight House June 2012
- Implementation of Scheme at Hockley Woods June 2012

Areas for Service Development/Change

- Prepare and plan for the potential welfare reform changes, and in particular, the impact of the implementation of Universal Credit and the Localisation of Support for Council Tax (1 & 2) Ongoing
- Business Processing Re-engineering work across service functions (1) Ongoing
- Review of partnership arrangements with Castle Point BC in respect of the Environmental Health Services(1-4) September 2012
- Continued implementation of the Workforce Development Plan (1) Ongoing
- Review of the Council's Asset base to ensure it remains fit for purpose (1-4) Ongoing
- Continue to monitor the delivery of the District's Housing targets as outlined in the Council's Core Strategy (1,2 & 3) Ongoing
- Prepare for the implementation of Individual Electoral Registration (1&2) Ongoing

Issues for possible consideration by the Review Committee in 2012/2013

- Annual Review of key partnership arrangements.
- The emerging structures around health and wellbeing and the changing role of the District Council in this context.
- The capacity and funding support given to Voluntary and Community Groups.
- Play / Sports provision in the District.
- Provision of services for older people.

Budget Process

Closure of Accounts	June 2012
Annual Report identifying Performance over last year and main financial information of the Authority	July 2012
Completion of early review of 2012/2013 Budget	July 2012
Draft Internal Divisional Plans produced – internal bidding system	Oct 2012
Consultation with Local Chambers/Business around potential budget items/issues	Oct 2012
Community Consultation around Budget examining potential budget items/issues	Oct - Dec 2012
Member Budget Awayday – agree budget framework	Nov 2012
Half Yearly Review of Medium Term Financial Strategy, Work Programme and Key Performance Indicators	Oct - Nov 2012
Member Awayday – Finalise priorities for Budget	Jan 2013
Budget setting for the Council is agreed	Jan 2013
Council Tax Set	Feb 2013
Key Plans and Actions Report	Feb 2013
Corporate Plan Reviewed, Updated and Agreed	April 2013
Internal Divisional Actions Plan finalised	April 2013

Main Events in 2012/2013

May 2012	District/Parish/Town Council Elections
June 2012	Accounts for 2011/2012 prepared
June 2012	Wild Woods Day
July 2012	Olympic Torch Relay
November 2012	Police and Crime Commissioner Elections
November 2012	Peer Review
November 2012	First Member Budget Awayday
January 2013	Second Member Budget Awayday
January 2013	Budget Agreed
February 2013	Council Tax Set
March 2013	New Grounds Maintenance contract operational