

## Review Committee – 7 July 2015

---

Minutes of the meeting of the **Review Committee** held on **7 July 2015** when there were present:-

Chairman for the meeting: Cllr D J Sperring

Cllr J C Burton

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher

Cllr R R Dray

Cllr J D Griffin

Cllr B T Hazlewood

Cllr M Hoy

Cllr G J Ioannou

Cllr J L Lawmon

Cllr Mrs C A Pavelin

Cllr Mrs M H Spencer

Cllr M J Webb

### **VISITING MEMBER**

Cllr Mrs J R Lumley – Portfolio Holder for Community

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C I Black, J H Gibson and J R F Mason.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

D Tribe	-	Assistant Director, Customer, Revenues & Benefits Services
J Bridge	-	Assistant Director, Community & Housing Services
P Gowers	-	Overview and Scrutiny Officer
M Power	-	Committee Administrator

### **134 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **135 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr G J Ioannou declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 of the Agenda, Community Safety Partnership, by virtue of being a representative on the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils.

### **136 COMPLAINTS PROCESS AT THE COUNCIL**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Customer, Revenues & Benefits Services, which provided Members with details of the Council's complaint process and the number of complaints received.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- An internal review of the Council's complaint process (logging, monitoring, managing and follow-up) is being undertaken. The Leadership Support

## Review Committee – 7 July 2015

---

Team is now responsible for the operation of the complaints process, which will provide a central, more streamlined reporting and monitoring process. Any commonly recurring complaints will be apparent and a breakdown can be fed back to the appropriate service area.

- It would be useful to show the number of complaints as a percentage of the total compliments, complaints, feedback and comments received.
- If the complaint relates to a service provided by another organisation, the Council's Customer Services will advise the complainant whom they should contact.
- The Assistant Directors and Portfolio Holder review the reports showing the number of comments, compliments and complaints to see if there are any recurring themes. A quarterly report is made to the Executive and information can be provided to Councillors on request.
- The various ways in which residents report a comment, compliment or complaint are logged and can be included in future monitoring reports.
- It was requested that a breakdown of what the actual complaints are be included in future reports and that the Council/Government Policy complaint category be shown as two separate categories. The sharp increase in complaints in 2013/14 was likely to have been due to issues around grass verges not being cut following the failure of the Grounds Maintenance contract.
- Formal complaints are logged and are separate from customers' comments and compliments. Service requests, such as 'missed bins' are dealt with as part of the contract monitoring process and are not included in the figures as there is no need to escalate these into the formal complaint process. Complainants are given details of the options they have, e.g. the ombudsman/appeal, should they not be satisfied with the response they get from the Council. All complainants have the opportunity to go through the formal complaints process if appropriate. A compliment is recorded when the service provided is over and above the norm.
- Complaints about staff attitude are relayed to the staff member and, depending on the seriousness of the allegation, can be investigated more fully.
- A process to get feedback from complainants following a complaint being dealt with will be looked at as part of the internal service review.
- A complaint from a Councillor personally or on behalf of a resident is dealt with in the same way as a complaint from a resident.

- The Council has a five-day response time, which although may not be a full response, will indicate the time frame in which a full response will be available.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the Assistant Director be invited to report to the Committee later in the year, after the internal service review has been completed, to provide an update on the processes that have been put in place.

### **137 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Community & Housing Services, which provided details of the function of the joint Castle Point and Rochford District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and an overview of the status of the Partnership since the last report.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- Sharp increases in offences, such as the 68.6% increase in shoplifting, will be looked at in detail and an action plan put in place. Shops must be encouraged to report all instances of shoplifting.
- A definition of the offences covered under the Anti-Social Behaviour heading could be included in future reports.
- The CSP team works closely with the Police. The Council's ASB officer meets regularly with the Police's ASB officer. There are a number of effective Police crime prevention initiatives including 'anti-cocaine wipes', used prior to people entering pubs and clubs, and bike tagging. The Council's internal service review will be looking at increasing publicity on crime prevention.
- Police statistics that show how offences reported are broken down by ward can be circulated to Members of the Committee.
- In terms of funding, future priorities and policy are determined by the use of data and statistics from the previous year. There is flexibility to use funding to continue existing projects if appropriate.
- In terms of partnership working, the Portfolio Holder for Community is a representative on both the CSP and the Youth Strategy Group. There may be potential for using grant money to initiate joint projects where there is a need.
- Plans for the Community Hub at Rayleigh Police station are progressing. An information sharing agreement has been finalised and when the staff

vetting process is complete officers can be relocated.

- The effectiveness of the Community Older Persons Events (COPE) in how well they succeed in reaching vulnerable people and how to get more people involved will be included as part of the internal service review.
- The CSP steering group sets priorities in line with both PCC priorities and the District's crime statistics. The CSP priorities are set out in an action plan which is sent to the PCC for approval. At the end of the year evidence has to be provided to the PCC that the funding has been spent as planned and has achieved a measurable outcome. The steering group has flexibility in the projects it funds as long as they meet the set priorities. If priorities shift during the course of the year, the Action Plan can be changed, with the agreement of the PCC.
- A primary advantage of being in partnership with Castle Point is that joint CSP meetings can be held with partners, with obvious time and resource savings and opportunity for information sharing. Rochford and Castle Point CSPs have separate budgets, although often priorities will be shared. Each authority has retained its own officers.
- CCTV is not used as much as previously in the District generally; however, CCTV is often in place in pubs and premises as part of the terms of the licence.
- As part of the service review, discussions will take place with Essex Police on the most effective use of funding for replacing the vacant posts in the Council's Community Safety department. Currently, the Council's Safeguarding officer can be contacted in respect of the J9 and Keep Safe initiatives: there will always be an officer available to deal with these queries. Domestic abuse issues can be referred to the Basildon Domestic Abuse outreach centre.
- The Assistant Director, Community & Housing Services would provide an update on how the Essex Messaging System works and how its effectiveness is measured.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a further report would be made to the Committee later in the year when the internal review has been completed.

## **138 KEY DECISION DOCUMENT**

The Committee considered the Key Decision Document and noted its contents.

### **8/15 Response to Essex County Council Consultation – to submit a formal response to the Waste Local Plan: Revised Preferred Options Document.**

Two potential sites have been identified as potentially suitable – land within the Aviation Way industrial estate and land at Michelins Farm.

### **139 WORK PLAN**

The Committee considered its Work Plan. The following was noted:-

- **Committee on 8 September 2015: Health – Social Care Act.** The Essex County Council Heads of Commissioning for Public Health and Vulnerable People, the accountable officer of the Castle Point/Rochford CCG and the Chairman of Rochford & Castle Point Health and Wellbeing Board will attend to give a briefing to Members. The meeting will be held in the Council Chamber and an invitation will be extended to all Members of the Council.
- **Planning enforcement project team:** Cllrs J C Burton, G J Ioannou, J L Lawmon and D J Sperring would form the project team.
- **Working with other authorities:** this review would remain on the work plan until the Council's internal service reviews had been carried out.
- **Pot holes:** this review would remain on the work plan.
- **Committee on 6 October 2015: Homelessness and the Council's Housing Strategy** reviews would be combined. There will be an opportunity to review the impact of the internal service review on the two areas.
- **Committee on 3 November 2015:** Planning conditions and scheme of delegation, RDC Planning Protocol and Building Control: A report would come to the Committee on these areas following the appointment of the new Assistant Director, Planning Services.
- **Committee on 1 December 2015: Third party software:** the review would be revisited to see what savings had been achieved since last year's review.
- **Michelins Farm:** this review would be undertaken by the Committee as a whole.
- It was requested that the following review topic would be added to the Work Plan: Review of speed limits on roads within the District;

It was agreed that the Overview & Scrutiny Officer would establish what the Council is currently doing in respect of the provision for young people not in

## Review Committee – 7 July 2015

---

education, employment or training (NEETs) and would circulate information to the Committee Members outside the meeting.

(Note: Cllr Mrs L A Butcher declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of her employment with Southend Borough Council as a Connections worker.)

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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