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## PARTNERSHIP REVIEWS

### 1 SUMMARY

1.1 The Council has a programme to review its major partnerships with approximately five reviews each year. This report presents the results of the reviews undertaken of the following partnerships as part of the 2008/09 Audit Plan agreed by the Audit Committee at the meeting of 18 March 2008. The reviews were on the following partnerships, all of which are sub-groups of the Rochford Local Strategic Partnership (LSP):-

- Children's and Young Person's Strategic Partnership
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Economic Regeneration Group
- Health and Well Being Partnership (Formerly the Healthier Communities and Older People's Partnership)

1.2 The LSP has received a grant from Essex County Council (ECC), part of which has been used to fund the posts of two LSP Support Officers within the Corporate Policy and Partnership Unit (CPPU) at Rochford. There is a cost to Rochford in all cases associated with accommodating these officers, however this was considered as part of the recruitment process and it was decided the benefits of having officers employed to work with the LSP outweighed the costs.

1.3 There are additional costs incurred by the time of Members and officers spent on the work of the partnerships. These costs have been considered during the reviews, however any financial contribution mentioned refers to direct payments from the Council to the partnerships.

1.4 While the Review Committee is undertaking work on partnership arrangements during 2009/10, the programme of partnership reviews remains part of the Audit Plan and, as such, results will continue to be reported into the Audit Committee in the future.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The reviews consider four key components of each partnership, and these are:-

- The need for the partnership to continue
- The commitment, role and responsibilities of the various partners
- The value of the partnership to the Council and its own role and responsibilities
- The governance, performance management, financial and risk management arrangements of the partnership

2.2 The outcome of each review has been sent to the relevant partnership for their comments and details of any comments received, together with the key

findings of each review, are detailed at Appendix 1. Members have the option to see the full reports and working papers if they wish.

- 2.3 The Council's programme of reviews has been formalised for the next three years as part of the Service Review Programme (SRP) devised by the Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management. This programme forms a key part of the evidence presented for the Use Of Resources assessment, demonstrating the Council's commitment to delivering Value For Money in all aspects of its work.
- 2.4 The partnerships included within the SRP are drawn from the Major Partnership Register held by Internal Audit. For Members' information a list of those partnerships included on the Register is attached at Appendix 2, with the programme of work for the next three years detailed at Appendix 3. Any changes required to either the Register or the review programme will be reported to this Committee.

### **3 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Partnership working is becoming an increasingly important way for Local Authorities to work. It is therefore important that the Council has a risk management process that specifically considers the risks associated with significant partnerships and obtains assurance about the management of those risks. These reviews form a key part of that framework allowing the Council to demonstrate it is effectively managing risks related to partnership working.

### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) That the findings of the reviews be endorsed.
  - (2) That the programme for future partnership reviews be endorsed.
  - (3) That the partnerships listed on the Major Partnership Register be noted.

Yvonne Woodward

Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management

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**Background Papers:-**

Partnership Reviews

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## APPENDIX 1

**1 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (CDRP)**

- 1.1 The mission statement of the CDRP is:  
'Through the CDRP, we will work with service providers and the Community to create a safe environment for all those living in, working in or visiting Rochford District'.
- 1.2 The CDRP consists of a number of groups and subgroups, each with different members depending on their role. Overall management of the Partnership is performed by the Steering Group, responsible for strategy and target setting. They must, by law, produce an annual Strategic Assessment of crime and disorder priorities within the District, and from this a three year Partnership Plan, to be refreshed annually, with targets to enable them to work towards these priorities. For 2008/09 the priorities are:
- Reduce all reported crime by 5% during 2008/09
  - Engage with local communities to understand and deal with issues raised and provide reassurance regarding perception of safety in the area
  - Reducing crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour attributable to young people
  - Support measures, which enable the safeguarding of victims of domestic abuse and increase detection rates of perpetrators
  - Reduce both alcohol and substance misuse and the harm caused, especially amongst young people
  - Reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads
  - Reduce reoffending by supporting measures to facilitate the rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders

These are reviewed regularly as part of the strategic assessment process and are currently being reviewed via a robust process to identify priorities for 2009/10.

- 1.3 The CDRP has a subgroup structure in place with a number of groups intended to work towards these priorities and be managed by the Steering Group and the main CDRP group. The review found that appropriate reporting procedures were in place to allow for the performance of subgroups to be managed and reviewed on a regular basis.
- 1.4 No financial contribution is made by the Council, though the Council does hold and administer the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF), a Government grant which must be used to tackle crime and disorder issues, on behalf on the Partnership. For 2008/09 this grant totalled £102,300.00. Controls over the use of this money are good, including documented procedures for urgent expenditure, dual authorising of orders and financial management by both the Corporate Policy and Partnership Unit (CPPU) and Accountancy.

- 1.5 The review found that the CDRP has performed well in recent years, having run a number of projects designed to cut crime within the District such as:
- Crucial Crew, working with year-six school children in a series of personal safety workshops.
  - The Sanctuary Scheme, providing safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse.
  - Alcohol misuse workshops in both primary and secondary schools around the District.
  - Road-Runner, a road safety course working with young people in schools across the District.
  - The Gardening service provided by Springboard to vulnerable residents across the District.

The CDRP has had a significant impact on the level of crime in Rochford District, having consistently performed as one of the best in the County, and indeed the Eastern Region, and has delivered above target reductions in crime for Rochford, receiving letters of commendation from Government Office (GO) East in 2006/07 and 2007/08 regarding the reduction in British Crime Survey (BCS) crime in the District. This has in turn contributed to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Objectives.

- 1.6 Historically, the area in which the Partnership was weakest was in terms of governance arrangements and performance management. However, the CPPU has, since its inception in September 2008, undertaken significant work to address and rectify these weaknesses such as improving the performance management framework and introducing template performance reports, introducing documented financial controls and implementing new terms of reference for all groups to better define roles and responsibilities. The review found this work had been successful and these arrangements were much improved.
- 1.7 The review concluded that the Partnership added value to the Council through access to the SSCF, which gives the Council and its partners a greater capacity to deal with the areas of crime and disorder, that the Partnership was performing well and should continue. One recommendation was raised regarding the implementation and upkeep of a risk register to further strengthen governance arrangements.
- 1.8 The report was presented to the CDRP by the Community Safety Co-ordinator and was accepted without comment.
- 1.9 CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PERSON'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (CYPSP)**
- 1.10 The CYPSP is a statutory partnership shared with Castle Point Borough Council (CPBC) and its purpose is to develop flexible, responsive and easily accessible community based services for children, young people and their families, so that they are enabled to reach their true potential in every aspect

of their lives. Also, to ensure clear and consistent care pathways and support for parents and families to ensure emotional resilience and wellbeing for all children and young people in Castle Point and Rochford.

- 1.11 The CYPSP comprises a number of groups, all charged with delivering different facets of the Partnership's work. The main body is the Executive Group, comprising the statutory partners and charged with responsibility for the working of the Partnership. This Group reports to both the RDC and CPBC LSPs but is managed by the Essex-wide CYPSP Board and the Chairman sits on all these groups. Beneath this is the wider CYPSP Stakeholder Group, consisting of all agencies and services that work with children and young people (defined as those between 0 and 19 years old) within the districts of Rochford and Castle Point. A Commissioning Group, intended to decide how funding available can best be used, is in place although this group only meets as required during the project commissioning cycle.
- 1.12 Thematic subgroups are in place, managed by the Executive Group, which are intended to support the achievement of targets within the Partnership action plan. Meetings for these groups are held as part of the Stakeholder Group meetings, allowing feedback to be given to the Group on progress and actions agreed. Terms of Reference are in place for all groups. The review found that robust arrangements were in place to allow the Executive Group to monitor and manage the performance of subgroups.
- 1.13 No financial contribution has been made by the Council. The Council previously acted as banker for a small administrative budget provided by Essex County Council, but this role is now performed by CPBC and the residual balance of £3257.98 was transferred to them during 2007/08.
- 1.14 The Partnership is responsible for allocating funding streams that RDC would otherwise not have access to, such as the Extended Services Sustainability Grant (ESSG) from ECC. Using this funding the Partnership has supported a number of projects within Rochford District including:
  - Rochford and Rayleigh family fun and sports activities (managed by Rochford Extended Schools)
  - Project to support children and families with additional needs in schools in Rochford and Rayleigh (Rochford Extended Schools)
  - Integrated Working Training and Development Officer (Rochford Team Around the School, Child and Community)
  - Family Support project for families with children under 5 (Home Start South East Essex)
  - Young Carers project in Rochford (Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association of Voluntary Services)
  - Firebreak Projects, a youth intervention scheme, in Rochford (Essex Fire and Rescue Service)

- 1.15 The Partnership provides added value by working collaboratively to develop local priorities and direct funding appropriately, thus avoiding both partners working at cross purposes and unnecessary duplication. The Partnership also has access to a number of funding streams, such as the ESSG detailed above, that RDC alone would not be able to utilise allowing the commissioning of projects within the District.
- 1.16 The Partnership has an action plan in place, however there does not appear to have been regular discussion or updating of previous action plans at meetings, nor is there a progress to date column within the action plan to give updates. It could be beneficial to have regular updating against targets and a progress to date column to inform future works and allow targeting of projects towards objectives and National Indicators that are performing less well than others. A recommendation has been raised to this effect.
- 1.17 Governance arrangements are managed by CPBC through their Partnership team and are mainly robust. However this does mean that some documents are centred on CPBC. To provide a greater reflection of the role of RDC in the Partnership two recommendations have been raised regarding the inclusion of RDC targets within the CYPSP action plan and RDC risks within the risk register. A further recommendation was raised regarding the inclusion of a progress to date column within the action plan to allow for regular updates.
- 1.18 The review concluded that the Partnership was performing well, there were no significant issues with this partnership and that the recommendations raised would address weaknesses identified and therefore continued membership is supported.
- 1.19 The report was presented to the CYPSP by the Head of Community Services and was accepted without comment.

## **2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP (EDG)**

- 2.1 The partnership is intended to support the LSP in working towards the economic targets within the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Specifically this means working towards the targets set under Priority 8: Essex has a strong and competitive economy.
- 2.2 Membership is comprised of Members and Officers of RDC, Officers of ECC, representatives from local business organisations such as Chambers of Commerce and representatives from individual local business, such as London Southend Airport and Dr Byte, a local IT company.
- 2.3 Terms of reference are in place for the group, dealing with a wide range of matters that have the potential to impact on the local business community. Meetings are held quarterly and chaired by the representative from the Federation of Small Businesses.

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- 2.4 The Council makes no financial contribution to the EDG, and the partnership has no access to funding. Due to its current status there is no need for robust governance to manage the finances, performance or risk of the Group.
- 2.5 The review concluded that the partnership appears to be performing as a useful liaison between the Council and the business community within the District. Meetings have resulted on input to various areas of the Local Development Framework, the Economic Development Strategy, Local Authority Business Growth Initiative funding and the Rochford in Business Initiative.
- 2.6 However, the review concluded that the partnership is not performing as effectively as it could, and identified issues with the engagement of partners, mainly due to a lack of clear understanding about the aims and focus of the Group among partners. Several suggestions were made as part of the review to develop the partnership.
- 2.7 Following the review the decision has been taken to suspend the group in the short-term while the LSP and CPPU undertake work to facilitate its development. The successful re-launch of the group with an agreed direction and purpose by March 2010 is part of the LSP Action Plan, and CPPU are consulting with the current membership on future form and function. Given this work no recommendations have been formally raised, though the scheduled 2010/11 Internal Audit review of the LSP should include a check on the progress of the Group.

### **3 HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP (HWBP)**

- 3.1 HWBP is a non-statutory partnership aiming to provide a coordinated approach to improving the health and quality of life, and to reducing health inequalities, in Rochford and Castle Point. Also to deliver the actions and targets relating to healthy communities and older people set out in the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Essex Local Area Agreement (LAA).
- 3.2 The HWBP was launched in March 2009 as a replacement for the Healthier Communities and Older People Partnership (HCOPP). HCOPP, in conjunction with the CPPU at Rochford and the NHS South East Essex, had performed an internal review of the functioning of the Partnership which concluded improvements were required to enable the Partnership to function effectively and work towards LAA targets.
- 3.3 Following this review a variety of changes were introduced to the Partnership, with the structure being amended to include an Executive and three thematic subgroups, allowing them to focus more on their areas of expertise, a wider variety of attendees from partners to ensure more specialist knowledge is present, and improved performance, financial and risk management arrangements. The Partnership was also re-named as the HWBP.
- 3.4 The Council has no financial input to the Partnership although it does act as banker in respect to monies allocated to projects that are intended to meet

HWBP objectives. These monies are grants from Essex County Council and the NHS and the HWBP is responsible for managing these projects. The review found that there were adequate procedures in place to manage both the funds available, and the projects once funding was allocated.

- 3.5 The projects have recently been launched and assessing their delivery is difficult within such a short time-frame. However, they have the potential to give great benefit to the Rochford District. Some of the projects supported are:
- Open art courses for people with mental health problems.
  - Midday lunch club and activity centre for Rayleigh Age Concern.
  - A support group for people with Lymphoma
  - A grant to Southend Carers Forum to identify and support carers within Rochford District
  - A grant to the Home Start charity to launch a project supporting 15 families with new children
- 3.6 The review found that the Partnership has had few “added value” outputs to date that would not have been delivered anyway through the work of the various constituent bodies, having previously been mainly a resource for sharing information. However the identification of its own weaknesses and the willingness to work to resolve them, grow the Partnership and work towards its potential should be seen as an important output. By performing this review and fundamentally changing the Partnership, partners have demonstrated a willingness to work collaboratively to improve outputs for service users.
- 3.7 The review concluded that, while the Partnership had not performed to its full potential in the past, partners had worked to identify and address its weaknesses and improve its function, performance and scope. Given this fact, support for the Partnership should continue, however considering how recently the Partnership was launched a further audit review of the value to the Council should be carried out as part of the 2010/11 Audit Plan to ensure the new format of the Partnership is operating effectively. Four further recommendations were raised intended to strengthen the revised governance arrangements of the Partnership, and their implementation should be checked during the 2010/11 review.
- 3.8 The review was presented to the Partnership by the Corporate Director (External Services) and was accepted without comment.

## APPENDIX 2

<b>Partnership</b>	<b>Officer Contact(s)</b>
Castle Point & Rochford Children & Young Person's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP)	Jeremy Bourne / Cheryl Milton-White
Castle Point & Rochford Domestic Abuse Panel	Melanie Yolland / Paula Chapman
Castle Point & Rochford Drug & Alcohol Reference Group	Paula Chapman / Melanie Yolland
Community Involvement Group (From June 2009)	Andrew Lowing / Cheryl Milton-White
Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership	Melanie Yolland / Cheryl Milton-White
Economic Regeneration Group	Jennifer House / Cheryl Milton-White
Essex Online Partnership	Andrew Mowbray / Sarah Fowler
Essex Waste Management Advisory Board	Alan Lovett / Richard Evans
Groundwork Trust South Essex	Jeremy Bourne / Graham Woolhouse
Health and Wellbeing Partnership (formerly Healthier Communities & Older People Partnership)	Graham Woolhouse / Cheryl Milton-White
Local Strategic Partnership	Paul Warren / Richard Whetton
Procurement Agency for Essex	Matt Petley / Dawn Tribe
Rochford Schools Partnership (From July 2008)	Paul Warren
Thames Gateway Area Waste Joint Committee	Alan Lovett / Richard Evans
Thames Gateway South Essex Housing Strategy Forum	Steve Neville / Jeremy Bourne
Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership	Paul Warren / Richard Whetton
<b>Partnerships Deleted</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Crouch & Roach Estuary Management Group	Defunct
Youth Strategy Group	Defunct (Replaced by CYPSP)
StAR Partnership	No Council involvement. Managed by Primary Care Trust.

## APPENDIX 3

<b>2009/10 PARTNERSHIP REVIEWS</b>	
Thames Gateway South Essex	First audit review.
Thames Gateway Area Waste Joint Committee	Previously reviewed in 2006/07
Essex On Line Partnership	Previously reviewed in 2006/07
The Procurement Agency for Essex	Need to review new arrangements for partnership hosted by ECC with effect from 1 April 2008
Rochford Schools Partnership	New partnership, launched July 2008. Need to review arrangements.
<b>2010/11 PARTNERSHIP REVIEWS</b>	
Local Strategic Partnership	Review processes of Corporate Policy and Partnership Unit for effectiveness.
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	Review CDRP Annual Report and Strategy
Community Involvement Group	First audit review. Review of new arrangements from June 2009.
Castle Point & Rochford Domestic Abuse Panel	Previously reviewed in 2006/07
Health and Wellbeing Partnership	Review of new arrangements from March 2009
<b>2011/12 PARTNERSHIP REVIEWS</b>	
Ground Work Trust South Essex	Previously reviewed in 2007/08
Castle Point and Rochford Drug & Alcohol Reference Group	Previously reviewed in 2007/08
Thames Gateway South Essex Housing Strategy Forum	Previously reviewed in 2007/08
Children and Young Persons Strategic Partnership	Previously reviewed in 2008/09
Economic Regeneration Group	Previously reviewed in 2008/09