

**REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 21 April 2010**

**PORTFOLIO: OVERALL STRATEGY & POLICY DIRECTION**

**REPORT FROM HEAD OF FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT**

**SUBJECT: STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009/10 and 2010/11**

**1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 To note the end of year position for the Strategic Improvement Plan 2009/10.
- 1.2 To adopt the Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP), as outlined in the attached appendix, to be implemented over the next 12 months with quarterly progress reports to the Executive.

**2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) reinspection in June 2008 where the Council received a 'Good' assessment, a SIP was put in place in order to continue to make progress in the areas highlighted in the CPA reinspection report. The SIP has been reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis to monitor implementation. The final report for 2009/10 is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 As part of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime introduced for 2008/09, the Council was assessed by the external auditors (PKF) on our use of resources and by the Audit Commission on managing performance.
- 2.3 The detailed results of the use of resources element were reported in full to the Audit Committee on 16 March 2010. PKF's report included a 38 point action plan and the report to the Audit Committee included officer responses.
- 2.4 The results of the managing performance assessment were reported as part of the whole CAA report.
- 2.5 The proposed SIP for 2010/11 is attached as Appendix 2 and is based on the results of the use of resources and managing performance assessments together with some matters carried forward from the current SIP. The SIP does not include service specific projects, such as the 11 priorities identified in the Corporate Plan for 2010/11, as they will be monitored through the normal quarterly reporting to the Executive.
- 2.6 The proposed SIP has been aligned under the 4 CAA themes:-
  - Managing our finances
  - Governing the business

- Managing resources
- Managing performance

2.7 The SIP has been considered by the Audit Committee and external auditors.

2.8 The Leader, relevant Executive Members and officers meet on a quarterly basis with representatives from the Audit Commission, PKF and, as appropriate, the Government Office to discuss the improvement agenda and issues evolving from the CAA process, in line with the Council's culture of continuous improvement as a learning organisation and the proposed SIP has recently been shared with that group.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

3.1 Not to produce a SIP – this is not recommended as it would suggest that the Council is not a 'learning' organisation and could impact negatively on future assessments.

### **4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There is a reputational risk associated with CAA inspections. Resource risks have been minimised by ensuring that the key actions are achievable within existing resources

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

SMT Lead Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management**

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#### **Background Papers:**

None

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.

**Rochford District Council Strategic Improvement Plan****Record of Review & Amendment**

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Review date</b>	<b>Issues/actions arising from review</b>	<b>Plan amended Y/N</b>	<b>Amendment approved by</b>	<b>Date of amendment</b>
1	22/1/09	Original	N/A	N/A	N/A
1.2	5/2/09	Additional actions proposed by SDIMT	Y	SDIMT	5/2/09
2	26.5.09	Amendments to layout proposed to GW	Y	GW	26/5/09
3	3.6.09	Quarterly Update	Y	GW	3.6.09
4	26.8.09	Quarterly Update	Y	GW	26.8.09
5	30.9.09	Completed entries deleted	Y	GW	30.9.09
6	13.11.09	Updated	Y	GW	13.11.09
7	30.3.10	Final update	Y	GW	1.4.10

**Legend:**

<b>CEX</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>
<b>CD(ES)</b>	<b>Corporate Director (External Services)</b>
<b>CPPU</b>	<b>Corporate Policy &amp; Partnership Unit</b>
<b>HCS</b>	<b>Head of Community Services</b>
<b>HFAPM</b>	<b>Head of Finance Information and Performance Management</b>
<b>HICS</b>	<b>Head of Information and Customer Services</b>
<b>HoS</b>	<b>Heads of Service</b>
<b>LSP</b>	<b>Local Strategic Partnership</b>
<b>OSO</b>	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Officer</b>
<b>PAB</b>	<b>Performance Assessment Board</b>
<b>PIO</b>	<b>Performance Improvement Officer</b>
<b>RDC</b>	<b>Rochford District Council</b>
<b>SDIMT</b>	<b>Service Development &amp; Improvement Management Team</b>
<b>SMT</b>	<b>Senior Management Team</b>
<b>SPMO</b>	<b>Senior Performance Management Officer</b>

### Scope of the Improvement plan

The plan outlines the strategic level improvements that the Council has identified following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment Re-inspection undertaken in July 2008 and covers the following key areas:-

1. Ambition and Prioritisation - The Council's Vision and Corporate Linkages
2. Capacity - Use of the Review Committee.
3. Performance Management – Development of the Council's Performance Management System.
4. Performance Management – Development of Performance Management in the Partnership Arena.

## Improvement Plan - Objectives and supporting action plans and milestones

Ref	Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Target/outcomes	Resource implications/ Funding	ICT Requirement Yes/No	Progress
1	Ambition & Prioritisation: Vision & Corporate Linkages							
	Section 1 Completed							
2	Capacity, Review Committee (RC)							
2.1	Develop more effective scrutiny process	<p>Further targeted member training and development around overview and scrutiny process.</p> <p>Review Committee Members to receive and consider QPRs as part of their work programme</p>	HICS/OSO	2009/10 Member Training & Development programme.	<p>Review Committee members more attuned to Overview &amp; Scrutiny process</p> <p>Review Committee Members receive QPRs and raise queries with Portfolio Holders.</p>	Within existing budgets Review Committee budget	No	<p>Training by the Centre for Public Scrutiny on influencing public service improvement through powerful scrutiny was carried out on 8 December 2009. A further session on questioning skills has been arranged for June 2010. Two Review Committee members observed an evidence gathering session at Southend BC and two Members have attended a Local Government Information Unit seminar on effective overview and scrutiny.</p>
	Sections 2.2 to 2.5 completed							

Ref	Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Target/outcomes	Resource implications/ Funding	ICT Requirement Yes/No	Progress
3	Performance Management: Performance Management Internally							
	Sections 3.1 to 3.3 completed.							
3.4	To Develop the Council's internal Performance Management Systems to further embed the performance management culture and secure effective and efficient delivery of objectives	Research, and procure if appropriate, Performance Management software, to enhance delivery and analysis of performance management information.	SPMO	May 2009	Research 2008 Procure and Implement from Jan 2009 - for use 2009/10 onwards	Existing officer time (SPMO/PIO/HoS) plus Information Technology spend  Base Budget plus £30K in the IT Reserve	Yes	Procurement and installation completed.  Performance Management software implementation underway for phased introduction 2010/11.
3.5	See above	Ensure linkage of Risk Management with Divisional plans	SPMO	March 2010	Introduce via the Performance Management software from 2009/10	See above	See above	Interim Excel based solution in place. Performance Management software to roll out in 2010/11
3.6	See above	Ensure linkage of budgets to Div plan	HFAPM	March 2010	Introduce via the PM software from 2009/10	See above	See above	Improved resource allocation developed for 2010/11 Business Planning process.

Ref	Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Target/outcomes	Resource implications/ Funding	ICT Requirement Yes/No	Progress
3.7	See above	Ensure VFM proposals reflected in Div Plans	HFAPM	March 2010	Introduce via the PM software from 2009/10	See above	See above	Value For Money (VFM) measures discussed at target challenge. VFM reporting to be carried forward to 2010/11.
3.8	See above	Ensure Data Quality inherent in Performance Management system.	SPMO	March 2010	Introduce via the Performance Management software from 2009/10	See above	See above	<p>Performance Indicators audit and Data Quality actions in place.</p> <p>Data Quality in "My Performance Review" process.</p> <p>"Performing well" Data Quality rating in 2008/09 Use of Resources Assessment.</p> <p>Interim Excel based solution in place. Performance Management software to roll out in 2010/11.</p>

Ref	Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Target/outcomes	Resource implications/ Funding	ICT Requirement Yes/No	Progress
3.9	See above	Ensure data reporting is monthly, wherever possible and appropriate, and links with relevant regular management review of performance	SPMO	March 2010	Timetabled data submissions and management reviews	Existing officer time (SPMO/PIO/HoS)  Base Budget	N	<b>Completed</b> Timetable issued  Review enabled via interim system solution, 1:1 meetings, and Performance Assessment Board (PAB)
3.10	See above	Ensure that reporting includes linkage between performance achievement and budget spend wherever possible and appropriate.	SPMO	March 2010	Reports include appropriate budget spend or cost measures.	Existing officer time (SPMO/PIO/HoS)  Base Budget	N	Quarterly Members' Finance Report includes allied performance data as appropriate.



Ref	Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Target/outcomes	Resource implications/ Funding	ICT Requirement Yes/No	Progress
3.11	See above	Ensure that Performance Management systems give visibility to performance exceptions, the corrective action taken, the resultant outcomes and that the organisation learns from these examples.	SPMO	March 2010	Exceptions reports, PAB minutes, and reports to SDIMT, show exceptions, actions and outcomes. Summaries are provided to the RDC Online Learning Academy	Existing officer time (SPMO/PIO/HoS) Base Budget	N	Interim Excel based solution in place for PAB reports.  Performance Management software to roll out in 2010/11.
3.12	See above	Ensure reporting meets Members' needs and engages them appropriately	SPMO	March 2010	Periodic surveys to establish Members' requirements.  An appropriate range of reports to meet Members' expressed needs.	Existing officer time (SPMO/PIO/HoS) Base Budget	N	<b>Completed</b> Survey of Members undertaken. Interim Excel based solution in place for Quarterly Performance Report

Ref	Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Target/outcomes	Resource implications/ Funding	ICT Requirement Yes/No	Progress
3.13	See above	Improve on the presentation of performance information provided to residents to engage them in an awareness of our service standards and the performance achieved.	SPMO	March 2010	Appropriate presentation of Performance information in media and Council publications.  Performance data easily available and embedded in the publicly accessed services pages of the RDC website.	Existing officer time (SPMO/PIO/HoS) Base Budget	Y	RDM and Website include Performance Information data  Web presentation to be improved with Performance Management software roll out in 2010/11.
4	Performance Management: Performance Management in the Partnership Arena							
	Section 4 completed.							

#### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTIONS

Equality and Diversity – Having now achieved Level 4 of the Equality Standard and being classified as “Moving toward Excellence” an Action Plan will be put in place to reach “Excellence” in the new framework (formerly Level 5) by December 2010

Undertake new Diversity Impact Assessments and Service Diversity Action Plans across all service areas and complete all other objectives as detailed in the corporate action plan for achieving Level 4 by April 2009. Completed.

**Strategic Improvement Plan 2010/11**

This Plan for 2010/11 aims to deliver the internal processes and supporting mechanisms that will support the delivery and achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan. It builds on the Plan for 2009/10 and the recommendations coming out of the Organisational Assessment (Use of Resources) carried out by the Audit Commission and PKF as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment for 2008/09.

Ref No	Service objective (referenced to Use of Resources or 2009/10 Strategic Improvement Plan)	Key actions	Lead Officer	Completion date	Target/Outcomes	Resource implications
	<b><u>Managing Finances</u></b>					
1	Develop structured plans for delivering efficiency savings and monitor delivery. (Ref: UoR 1 & 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to Executive on savings</li> <li>• Set revised budgets</li> <li>• Quarterly budget monitoring</li> </ul>	HFAPM	Dec 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings delivered.</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

**Key:**

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**SPMO** Senior Performance Management Officer  
**CPPM** Corporate Policy & Partnership Manager  
**OSO** Overview and Scrutiny Officer  
**HICS** Head of Information & Customer Services

**UoR** Use of Resources  
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Ref No	Service objective (referenced to Use of Resources or 2009/10 Strategic Improvement Plan)	Key actions	Lead Officer	Completion date	Target/Outcomes	Resource implications
2	Develop VFM Service Reviews. (Ref: UoR 4, 6 7 & 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities for using costing techniques.</li> <li>Use Audit Commission VFM toolkit &amp; CIPFA benchmarking clubs to evaluate costs</li> </ul>	SPMO	Apr 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understanding of costs/performance and how they compare in order to challenge costs and identify savings</li> <li>VFM/Cost challenges embedded in operational performance management</li> <li>Efficiencies identified</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

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	<b><u>Governing the business</u></b>					
3	Review & update Procurement Strategy (PS) and action plan. (Ref: UoR 14-18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update PS to reflect KLOE best practice</li> <li>• Align PS with Corporate Plan &amp; SCS</li> <li>• Implement PS action plan</li> <li>• PS encompasses the broader commissioning process</li> <li>• Identify suitable centrally maintained commissioning &amp; procurement tool</li> </ul>	HAFPM	Mar 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of benefits</li> <li>• Realisation of savings or other benefits</li> <li>• Improved links between procurement and commissioning and strategic objectives</li> <li>• Users involved in each aspect or commissioning cycle</li> </ul>	

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4	Implement Standards Committee Action Plan. (Ref: UoR 24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See action plan for detailed list of key tasks</li> <li>• Review of presentation of standards and information on registers of interests, gifts etc on website.</li> </ul>	HLEMS	Sept 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised awareness of ethical governance agenda and work of Standards Committee</li> <li>• Promotion of higher standards of behaviour</li> <li>• Improved understanding of how the Council works</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

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5	Fully tested and robust business continuity plan. (Ref: UoR 26 & 31)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement timetable of divisional testes</li> <li>• IT recovery tested biannually</li> <li>• Ensure assurances received from key contractors and partners</li> <li>• Identify deficiencies and record in Corporate Risk Register (CRR)</li> </ul>	CPPM	Mar 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Continuity response proven to work</li> <li>• Learning from exercises incorporated into future plans and responses</li> <li>• Minimal interruption to service delivery</li> <li>• Council understands risks</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

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6	Corporate Risk Register (CRR) identifies risks to achieving strategic objectives. (Ref: UoR 33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review structure of CRR</li> <li>SMT workshop to identify risks associated with strategic objectives</li> <li>Revised CRR reported to Audit Committee</li> </ul>	SPMO	Dec 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links clearly made between risks and strategic objectives with clear understanding of strategic risks</li> <li>Actions in place to mitigate risk</li> </ul>	
7	Develop more effective scrutiny. (Ref: SIP 2.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of Members' needs following training in Dec 2009</li> <li>Review Committee Members to receive and consider QPRs as part of work programme</li> </ul>	HLEMS  OSO	May 2010  Oct 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can demonstrate improved scrutiny</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

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	<b><u>Managing Resources</u></b>					
8	Update the Workforce Development Plan (WFDP). (Ref: UoR 34,35 &36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify staffing requirements to deliver corporate plan and how they will be met</li> <li>Benchmark workforce data and use to formulate detailed workforce plan</li> <li>Improve links between the Workforce planning and Corporate/Divisional planning process</li> </ul>	HRM	May 2010       Oct 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WFDP aligned to Corporate and Divisional planning</li> <li>Corporate understanding of staffing requirements over the medium term</li> <li>Council clear about skills and training requirements and how they will be delivered</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

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9	Implement formal post implementation reviews of restructures. (Ref: UoR 38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a documented review of Environmental Services restructure</li> <li>• Undertake a review of Customer Services restructure</li> <li>• Identify impacts</li> <li>• Assess whether expected benefits have been realised</li> </ul>	HRM	Sept 2010  March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of changes evaluated</li> <li>• Learning shared for future restructures</li> <li>• Benefits identified</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

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	<b><u>Managing Performance</u></b>					
10	Implement performance management software solution. (SIP 3.14 & SIP 3.10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop regular reporting on performance indicators and projects for stakeholders</li> <li>• Develop small basket of key PIs for presentation to residents</li> <li>• Identify PIs and projects with financial implications and include in the QPRs</li> </ul>	SPMO	Mar 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fit for purpose reporting and real time access to performance information for officers, Members and other stakeholders</li> <li>• Performance information easily available to residents</li> <li>• Improved Place Survey scores</li> <li>• Members/Officers aware of financial implications of performance</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets IT Strategy

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11	Deliver Corporate Plan objectives for 2010/11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up quarterly performance reporting on key projects</li> <li>Performance Assessment Board monitor progress</li> </ul>	SPMO	Mar 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Plan 2010/11 delivered</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets
12	Develop strategy and action plan for ageing population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partners to identify requirements</li> <li>Formulate strategy and action plan</li> <li>Identify implication for MTFS and Corporate Plan</li> </ul>	CPPM	Oct 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate understanding of implications for Council and district</li> <li>Parties signed up to addressing issues.</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets

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