

APPENDIX

Our key priorities for 2005/2006

To provide quality, cost effective services we will

- Focus on those activities highlighted in our Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Improvement Plan. These activities include:
 - Producing a new Corporate Strategy by April 2006 - **work in progress with Members visioning underway. Report on tonight's agenda.**
 - Continuing our programme of Member training and development throughout the year to improve our decision-making process – **the first phase of the 2005/2006 programme from May-July 2005 has been completed. The second phase from September-November 2005 has started.**
 - Reviewing and implementing a new system of managing performance by March 2006 to improve transparency and accountability around the delivery of projects and services **This report represents a stage in that process.**

- Developing our workforce capacity throughout the year. Key measures for us will be the impact of our staff training and development programmes and other elements of our HR policies in terms of:
 - Performance improvement in individual services - **see key service position outlined below.**
 - Internal promotions - **end of year figure only**
 - Staff turnover - **12 leavers between April-September, compared to 29 in the same period last year**
 - Sickness rates – **will be included in Quarterly Monitoring Report**
- Reviewing the workings of our Overview & Scrutiny and Planning Committees, with changes being implemented from May 2006 – **Work around Overview and Scrutiny well advanced. Planning Committee Review progressing.**
- Securing specific service improvements in the areas of council tax/housing benefit, homelessness and recycling
- Key targets for this year are
 - Council Tax/Housing Benefit

- Reduce the time to process new claims to 30 days – **currently performance is around 24 days**
- Increase recovery of housing benefit overpayments to 55% - **currently performance is at 49%**
- Homelessness
- Reduce the number of vulnerable households in temporary accommodation by 5% **We are developing schemes to help households into private sector tenancies and working with housing associations to develop new homes for rent and trialling a scheme to provide a permanent tenancy as quickly as possible to applicants owed a full housing duty. Over the first six months of the year, the number of vulnerable households in temporary accommodation has fallen by 5.7%.**
- Increase the proportion of homelessness cases processed within 33 days, to 87% - **currently performance is at 94%.**
- Recycling
- Expand kerbside recycling to 95% of households **Currently at 86%.**
- Increase the proportion of waste recycled or composted to 18%. **Figures available show 14%. (However, this is for the final quarter of 2004/2005.)**

- Overall, we will work to increase the number of statutory indicators in the two top quartiles nationally, by 5% year on year. In 2003/2004, 59% of indicators were in the top two quartiles: for 2004/05 we are aiming to increase this to 62%, and for 2005/06 to 65%. We recognise that this is extremely challenging and we will therefore review our progress at that time. **Await year end figures.**
- Roll out an electronic records management and workflow system across the Authority from April 2005 for completion by March 2007. This will allow more flexible working and provide customers with better access to services. **Electronic Records Management has been introduced in Planning. Phase 2 of the project is now underway in Revenues and Benefits with an implementation date of January 2006.**

To provide a safer more caring environment we will

- Provide affordable homes to meet local needs

Specifically, we will complete the refurbishment of Hardwick House to provide 22 homes for rent by October 2005 and provide 30 new units for the frail elderly by February 2006 – **work on site is progressing well and on course to meet the scheduled completion dates.**

- Commence the development of 27 new-build flats for rent on the former Reads nursery site in Rawreth Lane

by October 2007 – **this scheme is still on target and there is a possibility of achieving an earlier completion date, dependent on the progress made by the private sector developer on the site.**

- Work with partners to finalise a series of detailed action plans in conjunction with the district-wide Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy by September 2005. Our key target is to secure a 13.5% reduction in crime during the period 2005-2008 – **Detailed action plans from partnership agencies have now been finalised with specific actions already underway e.g. graffiti removal, bogus callers, cold calling zone initiative, etc.**

To provide a green and sustainable environment we will

- Complete the roll out of our kerbside recycling scheme to the majority of properties in the District by December 2005 - **DEFRA Bid successful and vehicles will now be delivered in early January 2006 for the expansion to commence by 1 February 2006. Therefore, some slippage as a result of the “procurement” process.**
- Introduce a “buy-in” green waste initiative available to residents from July 2005 – **Scheme implemented by Green Recycling and collections started Monday 4th July 2005. Currently over 900 households have signed up to the scheme.**

- Implement our environment initiatives programme in relation to weed control, grass verges, rubbish dumping and graffiti from August 2005 – **Campaign launched on 12 September 2005 with press and voluntary groups attending the launch. Clean up started and by the end of September over 100 “hotspots” have been cleared and voluntary groups are undertaking clean ups in areas of Hawkwell and Ashingdon. First review set for 10 October.**

To encourage a thriving local economy we will

- Develop and evaluate options to secure additional parking in and around our main centres by November 2005 – **work now underway with report coming forward**
- Provide information and services to promote increased recycling by local businesses by December 2005 – **contact number on website – link will build up to contain fact sheets, etc when available. A business breakfast meeting held in September at the Mill by the Council. Information available at that breakfast for local businesses around best practice for green issues. Waste audit to be carried out across 50 local businesses (including a range of types of business) to analyse composition of waste. Participating businesses currently being identified.**

- Implement a street enhancement scheme covering Websters Way in Rayleigh, with completion by August 2005 – **completion now scheduled for the end of this month. This follows a delay in the start of the project.**

To improve the quality of life in the District we will

- Complete work on the new Rayleigh Leisure Centre by May 2006 – **work on site progressing to schedule and is due for completion by May 2006**
- Extend Rochford Cemetery through completing the purchase of additional land by next summer 2006 – **Soil and drainage surveys commissioned, negotiations underway with landowner for acquisition of land**
- Review an extension of decriminalised parking enforcement and residents' parking schemes, rolling out changes from February 2006 – **the Council have canvassed the views of Parish Councils and other stakeholders. This information has been transmitted to Essex County Council Highways Division and Essex Police for comment with a view to finalising this matter in November 2005.**
- Provide a replacement skateboard ramp at Clements Hall by October 2005 – **Public**

consultation undertaken and will be reported to Members on 4 October. If agreed works will be carried out by December 2005.

To maintain and enhance our local heritage we will

- Complete our renovation of the Windmill building by September 2005 – **Windmill refurbishment completed by September 2006. Open day held on 6 September to which over 400 people attended. National Trust and Rayleigh Historical Society attended open day and recruited volunteers. Further publicity events planned for November and December.**
- Complete the provision of an adjoining sensory garden area by November 2005 – **Planning permission obtained 26th May 2005. Members requested opening be delayed until end March 2006. Works being carried out to meet this programme.**