
REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 24 MARCH 2022**PORTFOLIO: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****REPORT FROM: CHIEF EXECUTIVE****SUBJECT: ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE BUSINESS PLAN
2020-2023****1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 To approve the form of the draft Annual Review as set out in Appendix A subject to any further minor and typographical amendments required by the Executive.
- 1.2 To recommend that the final version of the Annual Review document be completed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.

2 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Approval is sought for a new format for publication of annual performance against the Council's Business Plan.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council approved the Business Plan 2020-2023 at an extraordinary meeting on 11 February 2020. The Business Plan can be found here <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/business-plan-2020-23>
- 3.2 Since that date, the Council has published an Outcomes Based Performance Report, as part of the Annual Financial Report. The Annual Financial Report 2020/2021 can be found here [ogui \(rochford.gov.uk\)](https://www.rochford.gov.uk/ogui). Six-monthly follow-up reports are also published, with the most recent being to the Executive on 6 December 2021 <https://rochford.cmis.uk.com/rochford/Meetings/tabid/73/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/410/Meeting/4761/Committee/905/Default.aspx>
- 3.3 These reports are narrative in nature which gives a lot of useful information to members and residents regarding the performance of the Council but means the document is densely packed and lengthy to read. The draft Annual Review document at Appendix A is presented as an alternative format to present data in a more visually appealing format for residents and to inform and report to residents in a way which they will be more likely to engage with. It is proposed that going forward, the Council produces a document substantially in the style and format of the document at Appendix A.
- 3.4 The draft Annual Review document at Appendix A is based on the half year review which was reported to the Executive on 6 December 2021; with figures

updated for Quarter 3 of the current financial year. It gives, therefore, the most up to date data. Going forward, publication of the Annual Review will take place after financial year end, with the draft document updated for Q4 figures. This allows a reporting cycle which will align with budget setting and review of the Business Plan priorities for the coming financial year and is therefore suggested as being the most appropriate reporting cycle for publication.

- 3.5 However, it remains the case that performance against long term strategic aims of the Business Plan (many of which are out with the Council's direct control) will span multiple years and so the Annual Review document can only ever be a snapshot in time.
- 3.6 The Council's Business Plan is coming to the end of its specified period and the new partnership with Brentwood Borough Council means it is time for it to be refreshed. The Council must define its corporate priorities over the medium term to create a place-based set of strategic outcomes for the district. As part of that it will be important to identify synergies with the strategic priorities of Brentwood Borough Council in order to align service delivery wherever required and ensure both councils are properly serviced by officers as part of the One Team approach. This piece of work will be led by the Chief Executive in conjunction with members during 2022.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 It is possible for the Executive to consider revisions to the proposed document at Appendix A or to abandon its use altogether.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is acknowledged that by its nature, the draft Annual Review document is more broad-brush than the narrative Outcomes Based Performance Report, as part of the Annual Financial Report and therefore less detailed. Going forward, officers will look to bring both reporting forms closer together to ensure that information is captured and complete. The Chief Executive will work with the Leader of the Council and Executive members to ensure content is agreed.
- 5.2 If the Council cannot measure its performance accurately it will not know whether it is achieving its Business Plan priorities and outcomes. Ongoing financial reporting will enable the Council to ascertain progress against its priorities, and to take mitigating actions if required.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The draft Annual Review document has been created to be primarily a digital document which can be read on the Council's website and social media channels. A limited print run can be commissioned, if required and made available for those who find it difficult to access digital media.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 It has cost £276 to commission the artwork and production of the Annual Review which has been met from existing budgets. Some minor additional work will need to be commissioned to update the document for Q4 figures. Costs for a limited print run are expected to be met from within existing budgets.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None arising out of this report.

9 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- 9.1.1 To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - 9.1.2 To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - 9.1.3 To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 9.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnerships, pregnancy/maternity.
- 9.3 The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) indicates that the proposals in this report will have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic in that the format of the Annual Review is not accessible to those with visual impairment and, therefore a text only html version of the Annual Review will also be created to enable the document to be read by those with accessibility requirements. Annual Review will also be created to enable the document to be read by those with accessibility requirements.

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.



LT Lead Officer Signature: _____

Chief Executive

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Jonathan Stephenson

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

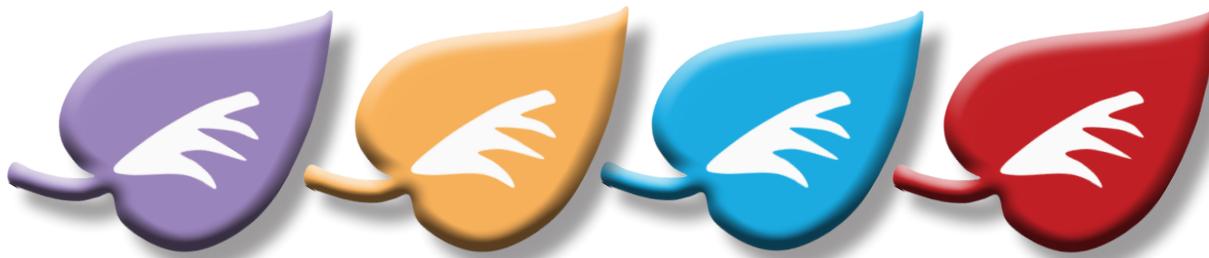
Rochford Business Plan 2020-2023



2021-2022 Annual Review

Working to help you shape your future





2021 - 2022 Annual Review

Financially Sustainable | **Early intervention** | **Maximise our Assets** | **Enable Communities**



Cllr Simon Wootton
Leader of the Council

Welcome

I'm delighted to present Rochford District Council's 2021-2022 Annual Review of performance across the Council with details of key interventions that support the Council's Business Plan 2020-2023 outcomes.

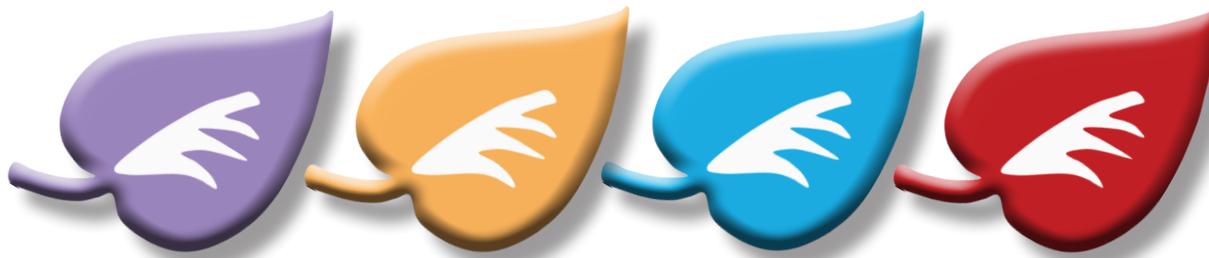
As we emerge after two years of the COVID-19 pandemic it feels right to reflect on how the Council has performed in those extreme circumstances and to consider how we might continue to improve and support communities as we move forward through recovery towards a healthier sustainable future. I am committed to ensure that the Council continues to deliver high quality services and continues its journey to becoming a 21st century organisation supporting residents, communities and businesses to thrive.

Going forward, this is a council with vision, ambition and real opportunity.

We encourage residents and businesses to take part in consultations by Rochford District Council and Essex County Council which can be found at

- Rochford District Council:
www.rochford.gov.uk/Consultations
- Essex County Council:
<https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/>

You can also sign up to the Rochford District Council Tell Me More service to keep informed of latest District News:
www.rochford.gov.uk/TellMeMore



Our Key Priorities



Financially sustainable

We are continuing our transformation into a modern, accessible and financially sustainable council



Early intervention

We are working with partners through early intervention; we are facilitating safe, healthy and active communities



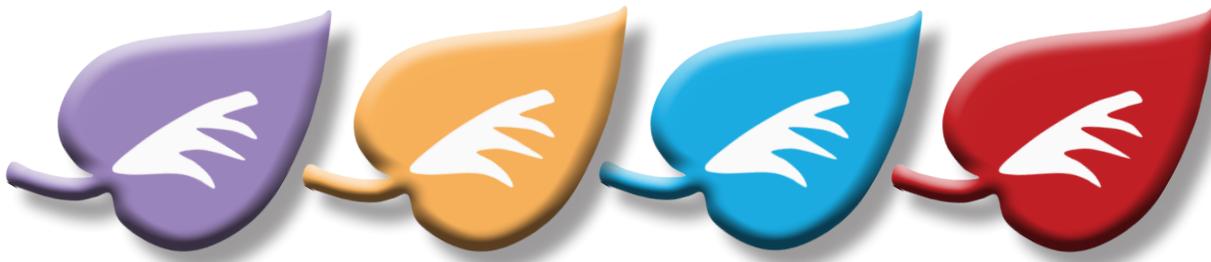
Maximise our Assets

We are playing our part to develop a thriving economy, enhancing skills and employment opportunities and maximising use of the Council's own assets



Enable Communities

We are working with communities to protect, enhance and promote our district



About Rochford

Rochford District is home to around 87,000 people living in 36,000 homes



Our cultural sights and relative greenness make us an attractive place to live

Over 15% of the district's land area is covered by biodiversity designations, including around 12,000 hectares of in-land and marine habitats that are internationally important for birds and wildlife



Our proximity to London and the Lower Thames Crossing, and our key ports at London Southend Airport and Baltic Wharf makes us an economically competitive area attractive to inward investment

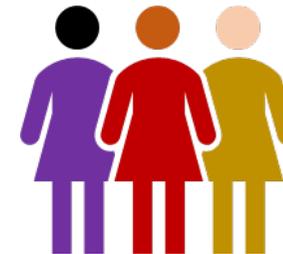
Over 70% of our land area is protected under the Metropolitan Green Belt



The district has a strong entrepreneurial spirit with one of the best survival rates in the county for small business start ups. This small-business culture and rural/urban mix makes us a resilient and attractive place to do business

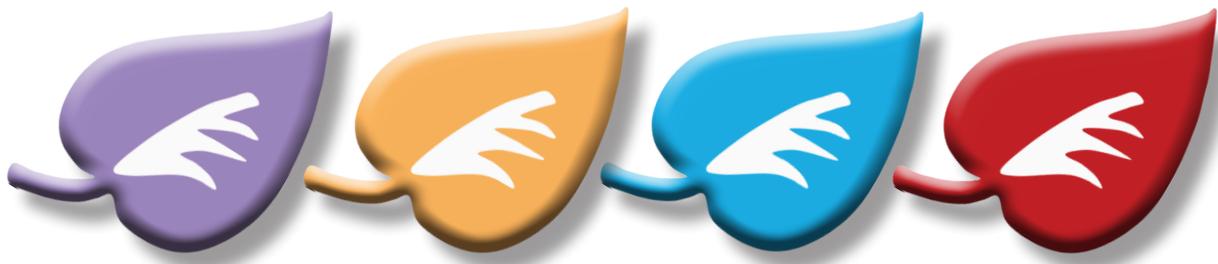


The district has a rich and diverse history with settlements dating back to the pre-medieval period, and is home to over 300 listed buildings and 10 conservation areas



The district is one of the least deprived areas of the county, with life expectancy and standards of health better than regional and national averages





What we do

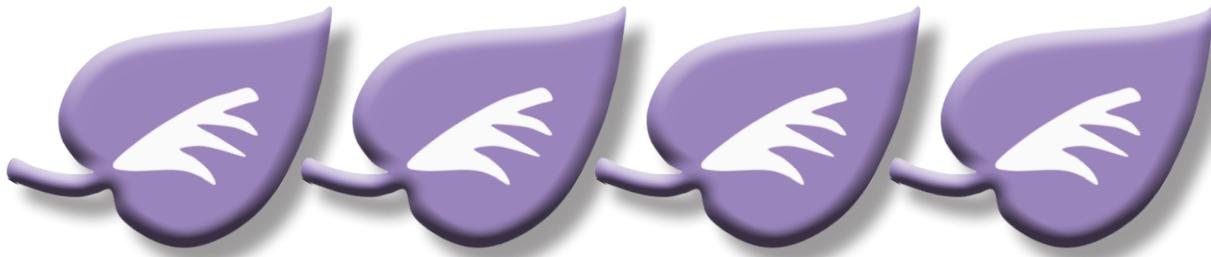
“Rochford District Council is a ‘lower-tier’ democratically elected body that provides a range of important public services such as licensing, environmental health, refuse collection, street cleansing, leisure facilities, parks and open spaces, and building control and planning.

We collect council tax and business rates for the whole district to support the services provided by Essex County Council, the Fire and Rescue Authority, the Police and the Town/Parish Councils, as well as Rochford District Council.

Essex County Council, Southend and Thurrock provide ‘upper-tier’ services across the county such as care services, education, highways and transportation, libraries and trading standards.

Within the district there are also 14 Town and Parish Councils who have responsibilities for some local open spaces, some lighting and bus shelters, smaller scale environmental schemes such as hanging baskets, some local community facilities and allotments.”





Transforming into a modern accessible & sustainable council

Our Key Priorities

- To deliver a balanced budget
- To invest in the future of the district to stimulate growth and prosperity as well as attracting investors and visitors
- To support local businesses and organisations to thrive

Our Key Objectives

- Providing best value for money for residents by delivering the services that matter most and prioritising our limited resources
- Regenerating and investing in more efficient sites for the delivery of council, community, and leisure services
- Making use of changing technology to become more efficient and ensure residents can contact us more easily and access more services on-line

Key Objectives Achieved 2021/22

Delivery of a balanced budget for 2021/22 and a Medium Term Financial Strategy which sets out the financial outlook for future years

Progression of the Asset Delivery Programme, a long-term regeneration programme that will boost the local economy and deliver enhancements in community facilities

Launched the Reopening High Streets Safely action plan and Welcome Back initiatives intended to support the safe reopening of high streets and other commercial areas following COVID-19

Delivery of the Council's digital transformation programme to enable more efficient processes, greater use of digital technology and new ways of working improving the customer experience

The Council's 2020/21 accounts were signed off by our external auditors with no matters to report

Other Achievements



We received 41,507 telephone calls into Customer Services and spoke to 4,193 people via live webchat



Residents budget consultation undertaken with 506 responses



Over **£3 million** in Business Restart Grants

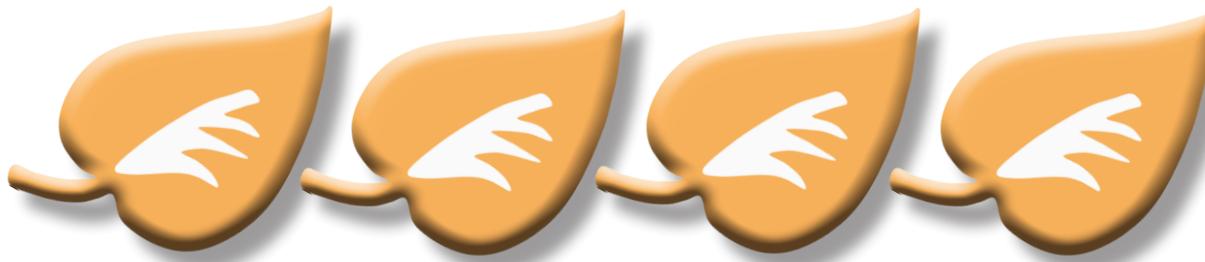
Over the pandemic period we distributed more than £30m of Government COVID-19 grants to businesses in the district

Additionally as at 31st December, we have awarded a further £3.8m in COVID-19 related reliefs to qualifying business rate payers



50,000 visits to the Council's webpage





Facilitating safe, healthy and active communities

Our Key Priorities

- We will focus on early intervention and protection for the most vulnerable
- We will support and invest in community level work which enables everyone to lead healthy, safe and fulfilling lives
- We will work with partner organisations in local and central government, health and housing associations to tackle inequalities and enable more improvements in well-being to be delivered by communities

Our Key Objectives

- Continue to work with partners and communities to ensure our most vulnerable residents have felt supported to live well
- Work together with communities and partners to prevent homelessness
- Increase the standard and availability of affordable housing within the district
- Increase the number of residents actively participating in healthier lifestyles

Key Objectives Achieved 2021/22

£10,000 of grants have been awarded to voluntary groups working across the district to enable them to deliver initiatives that support the priorities within the joint Rochford & Castle Point Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Housing Options service supported 3,263 households to meet their housing needs ranging from advice to emergency accommodation

Direct private housing interventions have supported households to live in safer and healthier homes. In total 97 housing hazards were removed, which resulted in an estimated £516,000 savings to the NHS and wider society

Between April and December 2021, 1,554 attendees took part in 68 Health Walks, organised in partnership with Walking for Health and The Ramblers

Launched the [Castle Point & Rochford Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-25 | Rochford District Council](#)

Other Achievements



At the end of December 2021, we paid £88,100 to applicants who meet the criteria for extra assistance with their rent

At the end of December 2021, we made 17 awards of Exceptional Hardship, totalling **£6,793**

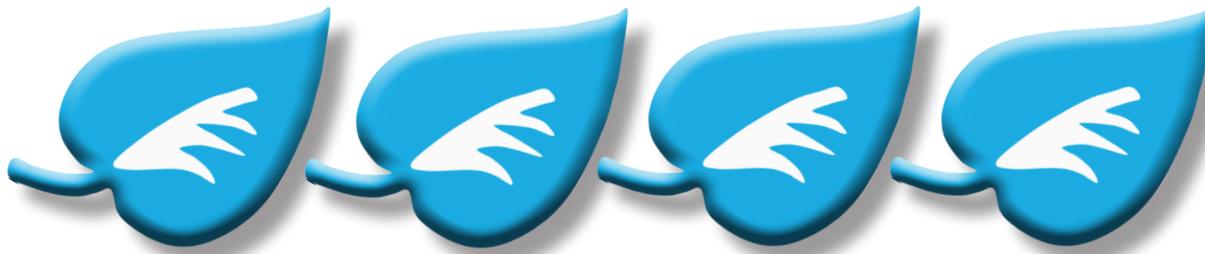
TEST
TRACE

Paid out **£257,000** in Test and Trace Support payments

Supported **47** residents to be able to live more independently at home

Between April and September 2021 135 new affordable housing units were delivered on strategic sites





Thriving economy, skills and employment opportunities

Our Key Priorities

- We will maintain, protect and enhance our many green parks, playgrounds and open spaces; creating greater opportunities for leisure and cultural enjoyment
- We will be more environmentally conscious and strive to eliminate our carbon footprint
- We will work with other councils across South Essex and Central Government to promote the district and create inward investment which will shape our landscape for the future

Our Key Objectives

- Work with neighbouring councils and Government to protect the district's built and natural environment, supporting both the local and regional economy
- Increase opportunities for residents to enjoy culture and leisure and create a strengthened visitor and business economy across the district
- Protect the district for future generations by recycling and green policies aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2030
- Invest in our green spaces and community facilities to support our growing population's health and well-being

Key Objectives Achieved 2021/22

Work has continued on the Council's Local Plan, with the Spatial Options consultation held over the summer

49 Hectares of wildflower meadow were traditionally managed and cut for hay and more than 300 square metres of woodland rides were cut and managed for the nationally rare butterfly, the Heath Fritillary. We also incepted our new Parks for Nature initiative which will plant trees and other vegetation to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and maintain meadows and plantations for habitats and wildlife to promote species resilience and biodiversity

409 Fly Tips were removed. We issued 5 warning letters, 6 Fixed Penalty Notices for Fly Tips, and Fixed Penalty Notices for Littering

Fusion Lifestyle reopened both Clements Hall Leisure Centre and Rayleigh Leisure Centre in a COVID-19 secure phased approach with participation totalling 226,415 between April and December 2021

Other Achievements

Digital #CrouchAware campaign to highlight water safety



Promotion of the River Roach and the River Crouch to highlight walking routes



We achieved 50% match funding to invest £162,000 for investment in new play facilities and recreation grounds

Held 73 weddings between April and December 2021 at the Rayleigh Windmill and the Old House, Rochford



Launch of virtual tour of the Rayleigh Windmill www.rochford.gov.uk/windmill

Rayleigh Windmill retained its Visit England Quality Assured Visitor Attraction accreditation



Over 2 million bins collected





Protecting, enhancing and promoting our district

Our Key Priorities

- We will support residents, local businesses and organisations to create a district full of great life opportunities and choices, business growth and economic security
- We will work with partners to build community resilience and public safety
- We will engage with communities to meet our priorities and shape the future of the district
- We will inspire our communities to make a difference

Our Key Objectives

- Working with the voluntary, community and faith sectors to build capacity for meeting the needs of residents. Working together to make a difference to live better, safer, healthier lives
- Working closely with residents, communities, and the police to maintain low crime levels and to improve residents' perception of safety
- Working with businesses and communities to develop plans to achieve and invest in strong, sustainable town centres and high streets
- Reducing social isolation through strengthening connections within communities

Key Objectives Achieved 2021/22

Supported both Citizens Advice South Essex and Rayleigh, Rochford, and District Association for Voluntary Service (RRAVS) with annual funding of £70,000 and £15,000, respectively

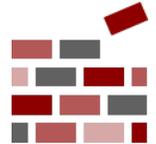
The joint Rochford and Castle Point Health and Wellbeing Board has co-produced a new draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy

We partnered with Click It Local to develop a virtual high street where local retailers and home businesses can sell their products directly to customers across Essex and beyond

We received funding from the Getting Building Fund (GBF) to finance a 'No Use Empty' scheme, which is a partnership approach to returning empty properties back into use for residential and commercial use

Other Achievements

From April to December 2021 we processed a total **611** household or minor planning applications



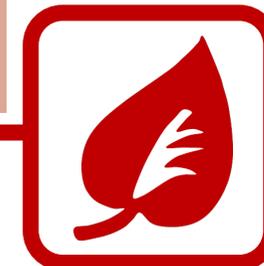
Distribution of over **£2.4m** in funding to businesses from the Additional Restrictions Grant

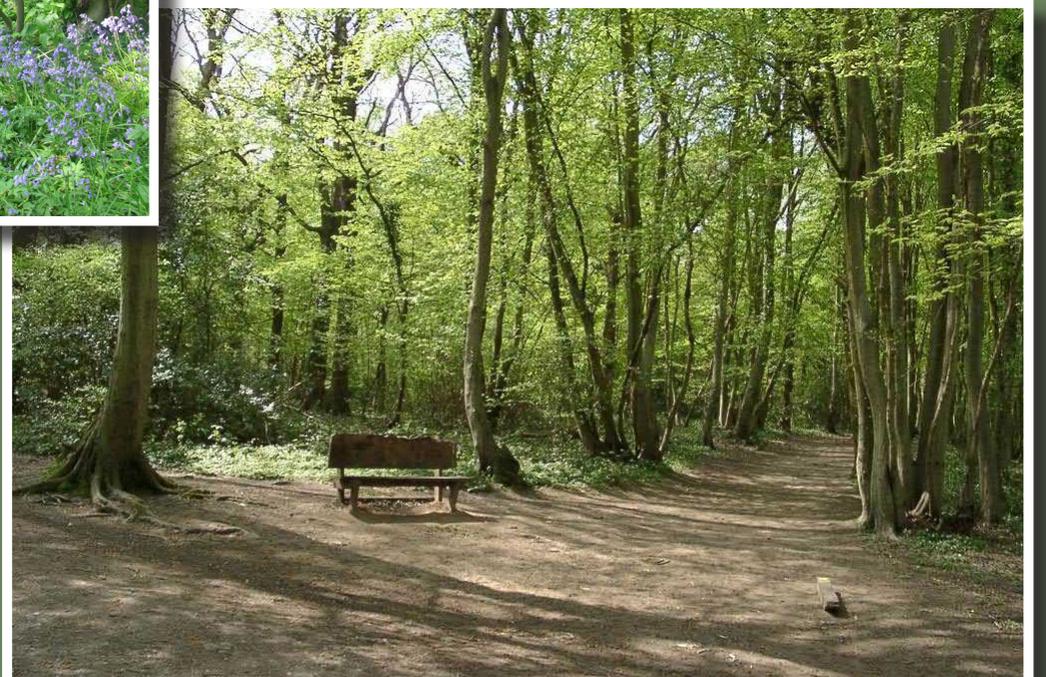
539 licensed businesses have been supported to get 'safely back to work'

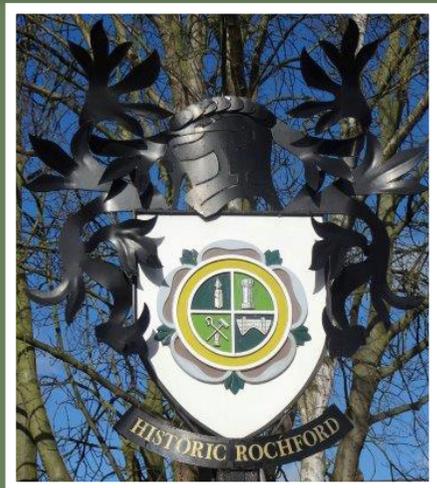
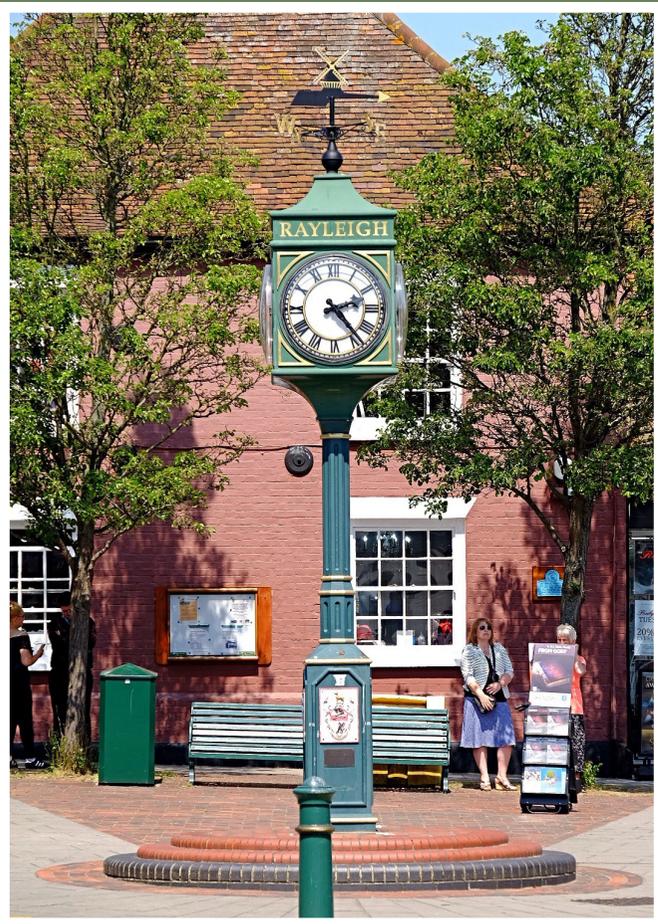
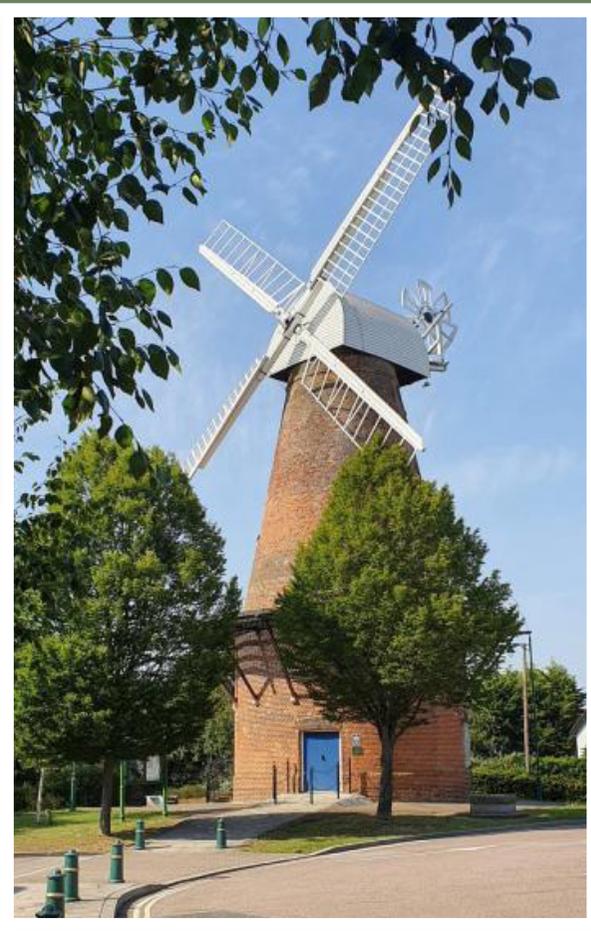
7 licensing hearings were heard by the Council's Licensing Committee



138 high risk food businesses have been made safer, by inspections, advice and enforcement







Contact us

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🌐 rochford.gov.uk

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Designed by Brentwood Borough Council

