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## **LOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT - HIGHWAYS**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress towards the preparation of the County Highways Local Service Agreement. (LSA)

### **2 UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

- 2.1 Council last considered this matter in December 2003, when it was concluded that the current arrangements for the delivery of highway services in the District should remain unchanged, but that negotiations continue with the County on their proposals.
- 2.2 Since that decision, Officers have met with the County to discuss the County's LSA proposals. There is currently no information available about the detailed workings of the LSA. However, the County has indicated that it is their intention to have LSA's in place across the County by 1st April 2005.
- 2.3 It is understood that the broad aims of the LSA are to develop closer Partnership working between the County and Districts and to devolve the responsibility for looking after local roads to each District. The County Council would continue to provide the specialist staff, but District Councils would take the decisions about what happens on local roads. The strategic road network would remain the responsibility of the County Council.

### **3 DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 It is clear from Officer discussions that the County Council is intent on seeing LSA's in place by April 2005, a year in advance of the replacement of Contract 2000.
- 3.2 There is no doubt then that an LSA for Rochford will be prepared in parallel with the other Districts. On the information available to date, it is not possible to reach a judgement as to the acceptability of the proposed arrangements: it will only be as the detail emerges that a clear picture of the implications for the District can be gauged.
- 3.3 On that basis, it is proposed that Officers continue to negotiate with the County Council and that a new Local Service Agreement Sub-Committee be formed to examine the proposals in detail as they emerge and to report their findings back to this Committee for a decision.

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**4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1 Strategic Risk**

The management and maintenance of the district's roads is a key priority, and it is essential, recognising the defects in the existing arrangements, particularly with regard to Contract 2000, that arrangements are in place to secure the long-term future of the district's road network.

**5 RECOMMENDATION**

**4.1 It is proposed that the Committee RESOLVES**

- (1) that officers continue their negotiations with the County Council on the detailed proposals for the LSA;
- (2) that a new Sub-Committee be formed to examine the LSA proposals and report back to this Committee.

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**Background Papers:**

None

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