

**ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL  
CORPORATE PLAN  
2008 – 2013**

	Page
<b>Introduction and Context</b>	2
<b>About Rochford</b>	2
<b>Vision and Values</b>	6
<b>Plans and Priorities</b>	8
<b>Key Actions for 2008/2009 and Beyond</b>	11
<b>Objective One – Provide an excellent, cost effective frontline service for all our customers</b>	12
<b>Objective Two – Work towards a safer and more caring community</b>	17
<b>Objective Three – Provide a green and sustainable environment</b>	20
<b>Objective Four – Encourage a thriving local economy</b>	23
<b>Objective Five – Improve the quality of life for people in our district</b>	27
<b>Objective Six – Maintain and enhance our local heritage</b>	32

## INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The Council's Corporate Plan outlines the Council's short and medium term priorities, ie. over the next 5 years or so, and is linked into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and budget process. It picks up the main areas of focus highlighted through the budget process in terms of areas of priority. It follows on from the Council's Key Plans and Actions 2008-2009 Report, which headlines priority actions for the year, and the Council's 'Vision to Reality' document, which seeks to give details around the Council's aspirations for the District over the period to 2021. Both these documents were agreed by Council in February.

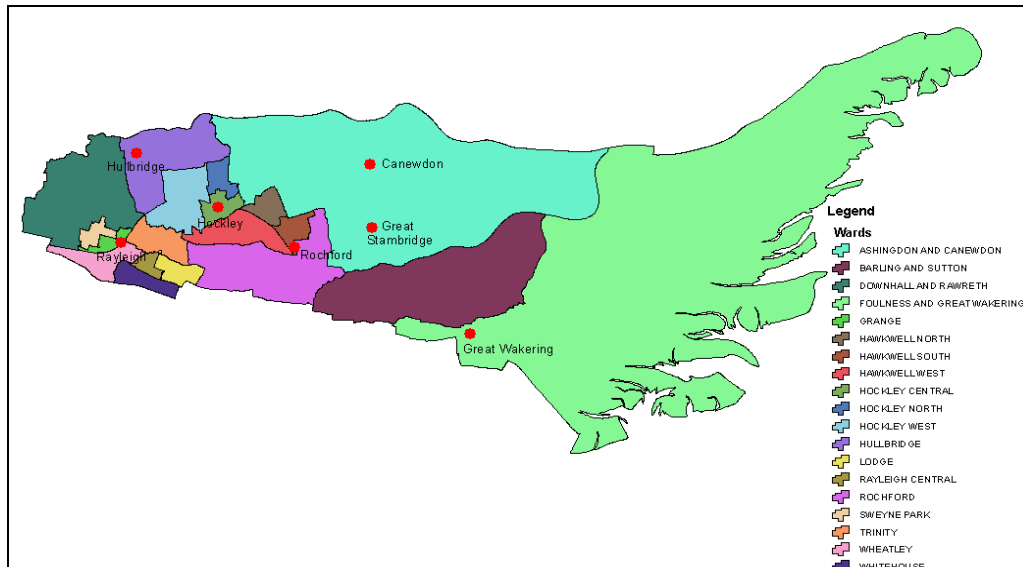
The Corporate Plan is a living document, reviewed annually. It has not been developed in isolation and has taken account of national, regional, county-wide and local priorities. To inform the Council in setting priorities we use a range of information and intelligence, including the results of public consultation exercises undertaken in the District. The plan provides the Council's linkage to the Rochford Community Strategy, produced by the Rochford Local Strategic Partnership and approved in 2004.

Internally, the Corporate Plan is underpinned by Divisional Plans and individual staff and team priorities are picked up through the Performance Development Review (PDR) process. The Corporate Plan does not set out everything the Council does. However, it attempts to focus on the 'headline' items and provides clarity around where the Council plans to concentrate its activity. The Plan should be read in association with the Council's Annual Report on performance, which is to be published in July, and gives details of how we have performed over the last year.

## ABOUT ROCHFORD

### The Place

Rochford is a small district located in south east Essex. It is bounded by the River Crouch to the north and the urban areas of Southend and Castle Point to the south. The district has three main towns, Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. Much of the remaining area is green belt with a large area around Foulness, largely under Ministry of Defence control. London Southend Airport straddles the district's southern boundary with Southend.



### The People

The district has a population of 79,700 people, living in 33,700 households. This is predicted to rise to 80,300 by 2011, and to 81,000 by 2021, with a forecasted large increase of those particularly over the age of 85 years.

The area is relatively affluent, ranking 316 out of 354 most deprived authorities nationally. The most deprived ward, Foulness and Great Wakering East, ranks 2,680 of 8,414. Owner occupied homes constitute 86% of households. This is amongst the highest in the country. Private renting accounts for approximately 6%. House prices are higher than the average for England and Wales. Unemployment levels are below regional and national averages at 1%.

### The Council

The Council employs 211 full time equivalent staff, with key services contracted to the private sector, for example, refuse collection, recycling, street cleansing, grounds maintenance, leisure management and the IT service.

The Chief Executive, supported by two Corporate Directors, heads the Council's staff structure. Heads of Service then lead the management of particular service areas. The organisational structure separates the external, front line focus services, creating a clearer focus for the organisation's work.

The Council has 39 elected Members and has a Conservative administration as follows: 33 Conservative; 5 Liberal Democrat and 1 Rochford Residents. Until 2006, the Council operated a committee system with 5 Policy Committees bearing responsibility for policy and service developments within their remit. The CPA inspection in 2004 identified that the Council's overview and scrutiny process in particular needed improvement. Consequently, in May 2006, a new Review Committee was established following a member led review of the process. It aims to provide a balance to decision and policy making and be a means through which the Council can seek out and receive information and representation from the community.

Following on from that change, the political decision making structure was again reviewed in the context of the Local Government White Paper, "Strong and

Prosperous Communities”, and emerging legislation. As a result, from June 2007 we have operated a structure with an Executive Board and 3 Area Committees. The chairmanship of the Review Committee has also passed to the main opposition party. Further refinement is currently taking place as we move to a ‘strong leader’ model of government, with the Leader appointing members to the Executive Board and allocating portfolios to those members.

### Community Feedback

The General Satisfaction Survey of all 388 authorities, conducted every 3 years by independent pollsters, aims to find out what people like or dislike about how their Council runs things. The last residents’ survey, conducted in October 2006, confirmed that Rochford District Council is in the top 25% for overall satisfaction. The survey placed Rochford 2<sup>nd</sup> out of all Essex authorities for overall satisfaction with the Council’s performance.

Residents stated in the satisfaction survey that the following were important in making the community a good place to live:

- Level of crime
- Health services
- Clean streets
- Education provision
- Affordable housing

The survey also asked residents what most needs improving in their local area. Those things highlighted for the District were:

- Activities for teenagers
- Level of Traffic Congestion
- Road/Pavement repairs
- Level of Crime

### Approach to Community Engagement

The Council has an effective and pro-active approach to community engagement using a diverse range of engagement techniques. Service users have been involved in a number of service development initiatives, including:

- the revision of benefit forms to make them more user friendly leading to a Plain English Crystal Mark award;
- focus groups in different localities to shape the new waste management and recycling contract;

- focus groups and telephone surveying to better include disadvantaged groups in the development of the Access to Services Strategy;
- engaging young people at youth events;
- going into and working with schools to get young people to engage with the Local Development Framework.

The Council uses road shows to get into communities and engage them. The District has a small Black and Ethnic Minority population that is dispersed widely across the District and without any recognised representative organisation; the Council has recognised that engaging with these groups is difficult. However, with Castle Point and Maldon Councils, the Council has secured money through the Building Capacity East fund to undertake work to map and engage these and other minority groups, and to establish engagement arrangements. This joint working ensures that groups are not overly consulted but have the opportunity to input into decision-making and service issues.

The Council has recently refreshed its Citizens' Panel to increase the size of the panel in order to make it more robust and increase the number of people that can be engaged, but also to be able to identify needs and trends at the sub-district level. The Citizens' Panel is a useful tool within the Council's basket of engagement techniques and the results are used to inform policy and service development. Examples include the Access to Service strategy, the new waste and recycling contract, and the development of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park.

The Council also uses its District newspaper, Rochford District Matters, and website to engage, inform, and respond to those who live, work and visit within the District.

## VISION AND VALUES

The Council's vision is to make the District "the place of choice in the County to live, work and visit". The Council wants to create an environment that is vibrant, inclusive, safe, sustainable and modern while retaining the essential characteristics of the salt marshes, rivers, woodland, open countryside, villages and market towns that make Rochford what it is today. The Council sees the District as a place with high quality natural and built environments that retain their distinctiveness, foster civic pride and where all have access to quality, accessible services.

In achieving this vision, the Council will build on the heritage, cultural and economic strengths of the area and the sense of identity and civic pride of our people. We want to improve the quality of life for the people in our communities and play a full role in the sustainable growth and prosperity of our county. In particular, we wish to utilise our position within Thames Gateway South Essex to promote the District as the 'green part' of the sub-region.

By the 'green part' we mean green belt, we mean woodlands; coast and areas for outdoor recreation and leisure; we mean quality built-up areas; cleanliness; good parks and open spaces; a safe and healthy district – all the things which fit well with our overarching vision.

As a Council we have been asked as to what we envisage the District looking like under our vision. Whilst it is always difficult to predict too far into the future, over the next five years, we see us developing our services and improving their access to meet the changing needs and expectations of our communities. Our emphasis will be on quality and cost effectiveness. Rochford District will remain one of the safest places in the country and that will be increasingly recognised by those who live and work in the District or who come to visit. Fear of crime will diminish.

Our Core Strategy will provide clarity as to where and how the housing needs of our communities will be met. The new homes to be provided will offer high quality design and include water retention and renewable energy features. There will be growing emphasis on responding to and meeting the needs of a community which is ageing. At the same time, engagement with and facilities for young people across the District will have improved. Similarly, our recycling rate will have increased to at least 50% and significant strides will have been made by the Council in connection with reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

There will be improvements in the provision and upgrade of green space, resulting in increased usage of these spaces which in turn will result in healthier lifestyles. Enhancement of heritage sites and local facilities will improve opportunities for leisure and free time activities, improving the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors to the District and providing quality places to visit.

Following its expansion and completion of a new car park entrance at the eastern end of the site, together with improved footpath and cycle links, residents will be able to take full advantage of the resource offered by Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park. The environmentally sympathetic Wallasea Wetlands Project, will have commenced. It will be starting to become a popular destination for bird watchers and others, particularly during the winter months.

New jobs will have become available as part of the automotive development on Rochford Business Park, offering skilled and semi-skilled positions. Passenger flights will have increased from London Southend Airport and some new jobs will be available from this. The new terminal and railway station at the airport will be complete and a plan for improving surface access agreed. Further employment land will also be under construction in the environs of the airport.

In Rochford, the redevelopment of the hospital site has provided high class, modern healthcare facilities for the treatment of mental health. The employment generated will also contribute to the growing prosperity of Rochford Town Centre.

A site for a new satellite healthcare facility for Rayleigh will have been identified and work will be underway.

Lastly the Council will be working with partners to tackle the problems of traffic congestion, both within the District and on routes in and out of the District. Improvements through work on an integrated public transport system, as part of the Thames Gateway regeneration, will start to offer residents an alternative to travelling by car.

In achieving our vision the Council will carry out its work in accordance with a set of values which it thinks are important. We will:

- Be an open, accountable, listening, responsive Council.
- Put the customer and citizen at the heart of everything that we do, delivering services in a caring and sensitive manner.
- Coordinate the management of resources with an emphasis on sustainability.
- Value the contribution of partners, employees and citizens, trusting each other and working collaboratively.

Underpinning the Council's vision are 6 corporate objectives. These are:

1. To provide an excellent, cost effective frontline service for all our customers.
2. To work towards a safer and more caring community.
3. To provide a green and sustainable environment.
4. To encourage a thriving local economy.
5. To improve the quality of life for people in our district.
6. To maintain and enhance our local heritage.

Our vision and our 6 corporate objectives translate into the things that we do – our key strategic documentation such as this Corporate Plan, the Local Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework; the services we deliver and the facilities we provide. They also fit well with our original Community Strategy, which was produced with partner organisations in 2004, and the work we're doing with partners around our new Sustainable Community Strategy, both of which are referred to in the next section. They also fit in well with the emerging themes of the new LAA for Essex, more on which is also included in the next section.

## PLANS & PRIORITIES

### Rochford Community Strategy

The Community Strategy for Rochford was published by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in April 2004 and described the vision for the area against 6 key themes:

- **Feeling safe:** to reduce both the level and fear of crime and to make the District a safer place for people to live in, work in or visit.
- **Looking after our environment:** to protect and enhance the natural and built environment for present and future generations.
- **A good education, good skills and good jobs:** to enable all residents of the District to access high quality education, training and skills development opportunities to ensure a thriving local economy now and in the future.
- **Healthy living:** to improve and promote the social, physical and mental health of everyone in the District, by providing a variety of choices for leisure and free time pursuits and first class healthcare.
- **Getting around:** to improve people's ability to get across and around the District.
- **An inclusive community:** to promote active and responsible citizenship, creating a community inclusive of all groups and enabling everyone to fully participate in activities that improve their quality of life.

These individual themes can be collectively summarised in the Council's vision:

***To make Rochford District the place of choice in the County to live, work & visit***

Whilst the current Community Strategy has provided a focus for planning and delivery, the Council has recognised the need to improve this key document. We have therefore taken the opportunity with the development of the new Essex Local Area Agreement to revisit the strategy. The LSP commissioned research (Rochford Futures - published in November 2007) which has identified, together with other community intelligence in our evidence base, some new priorities for the LSP. Additionally the LSP has reflected on its own operation and in order to give better focus it has decided that:

- supporting statutory partnerships (eg Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) Children & Young Persons' Strategic Partnership, (CYPSP)) should deliver their strategies and be more effectively monitored by the LSP, and
- the LSP's own focus and action plans would be of most value if they concentrated on projects that require partnership delivery not covered elsewhere.

A draft new Sustainable Community Strategy has been produced for development with partners and is the subject of consideration and further work by the LSP Executive Board. The intention is for the Board to finalise the document in July after a



period of consultation with key partners. In this way the document will be able to contain the latest relevant themes and targets incorporated into LAA2.

Any new targets and objectives emerging from the Sustainable Community Strategy that are not incorporated into the Corporate Plan will be picked up at the half yearly review stage of the budget and thereby be incorporated into the Council's budget process. Building on the experience of the first Community Strategy, the new Sustainable Community Strategy will be better informed about the needs of our communities and will have SMART action plans underpinned by a robust project and performance management system.

In developing the new strategy the LSP has recognised that much work either by individual partners or through partnerships to address the needs and issues of the district has been in progress for a number of years with a number of outcomes already achieved. The LSP in the development of the new strategy does not seek to duplicate this work but to add value by concentrating on issues that can only be effectively delivered by partnership working and which are not already being addressed by an organisation or partnership. The emerging Sustainable Community Strategy has been developed from a robust evidence base of work.

On the basis of the work done to date, the LSP considers that the emerging strategy should focus around four priority areas where it believes the LSP can add additional value over the coming years. These are:

- Supporting the ageing population
- Fostering greater Community cohesion
- Strengthening the Third Sector
- Increasing accessibility to services

## Local Area Agreement

In April 2006 the Council signed up to the first Essex-wide Local Area Agreement (LAA1), which set a shared agenda for local service providers. Over fifty public organisations came together as partners to focus on fourteen shared priorities grouped together under the following blocks:

- Children & Young People
- Safer & Stronger Communities
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Economic Development

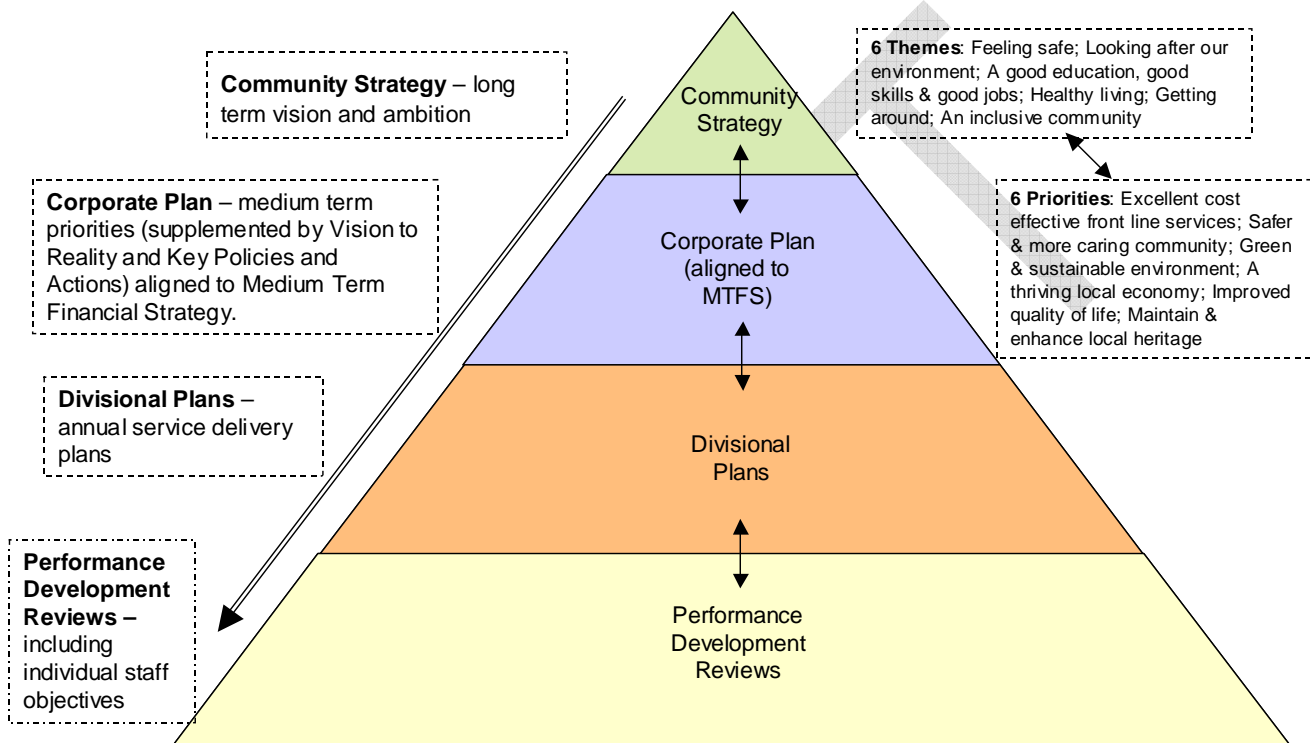
LAA1 was originally to have a lifespan of 3 years. However, it has already been superseded by a second Essex Local Area Agreement (LAA2) comprising 10 priority areas, which should be signed off by the Minister for Communities & Local Government in June 2008. The Council, in considering its roles and responsibilities in the context of LAA2, has used its priorities as determined through the 2008/2009 budget process and also the emerging themes coming through the work around the Local Strategic Partnership as a useful baseline from which to contribute. In the circumstances therefore, the Council has advised Essex County Council, who are leading the work on LAA2, that the Authority is keen to play a role particularly in contributing to those priorities around Support for More Vulnerable People (Priority 2); Sports, Culture & Volunteering (Priority 6); Community Safety (Priority 7); Climate Change & Waste (Priority 9); and the Environment (Priority 10).

As LAA2 develops and specific information and targeting emerges, the Council will take the opportunity at the half yearly budgetary review stage to look at its alignment in terms of its budget priorities and strategy focus.

## Our Golden Thread:

In agreeing our priority actions we have to reconcile different expectations, in particular the needs and views of the people of the District, national priorities identified by central government and partnership priorities which have been formulated as part of the Community Strategy or LAA processes. However, there is a linkage between the various elements as outlined below:

## Rochford's 'Golden Thread' – cascading objectives



## KEY ACTIONS FOR 2008/2009 & BEYOND

Through the work around the budget process, the Council has identified its key priorities for 2008/2009 and the period up until 2012/2013. These are described below and are aligned to one or more of the Council's six key objectives. The focus and detail is very much on those things to be delivered or started in 2008/2009, recognising that the Plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

## **Objective One - Provide an excellent, cost effective frontline service for all our customers**

### ***Why is this a Priority?***

A key challenge for the Council is to continue to improve and meet the increasing and changing expectations of our customers. For many of them, they have no choice but to use the service on offer by the Council and therefore it is important that we deliver our services in the most cost effective way to a standard which is recognised as excellent. If we wish to deliver our vision around being the place of choice in the County to live, work and visit, it is important we get our service offer right and ensure it continues to meet the ever changing demands placed upon us.

In national surveys to date we have received high satisfaction rates from our residents and it is important that we continue to achieve in this area.

### ***By 2012-2013***

We will have aimed:

- To have delivered our Access to Services Strategy.
- To continue to deliver the Workforce Development Plan to improve the Council's leadership capacity, the skills and capacity of the workforce, the organisation as a whole. We will be recognised as an exemplar of good practice in employment and offer competitive pay and rewards.
- To continue to utilise our partnership structures with other public sector partners, private sector and the voluntary sector to deliver continuous service improvement at affordable costs.
- To resolve 80% of our customer queries at the first time they contact us and work to ensure our customers get to the right person first time.
- To have maintained our high customer satisfaction rates overall and in key service areas, and to continue to be in the upper quartile nationally when compared to other local authorities.

### ***Objective One - Measures of Success***

We will know whether we are achieving these things or not through a variety of measures:

*Our Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and its successor around Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) ratings.*

*The new Place National Survey and its outcomes in terms of residents' opinions and satisfaction levels*

*Other survey and customer satisfaction data, including complaints and compliments*

*An analysis of our delivery of the key outcomes in a timely fashion as outlined.*

*Our Use of Resources Assessment level*

*Performance indicator trends and targets*

DRAFT

Our main areas of focus in 2008/2009 under Objective One

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Deliver Access to Services Strategy (Also delivers for objectives 2 & 5)	Service Development Improvement & Performance Management	Head of Information & Customer Services	April 2008	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business case for Access to Service improvements to Executive – July 2008</li> <li>• Implementation from July 2008 once key actions agreed.</li> <li>• Accessible services available to all our residents</li> <li>• High levels of customer satisfaction</li> </ul>	Will feed into satisfaction levels in LAA2	New Revenue Budget allocation Capital Programme investment
To review and update the Capital Strategy Member consideration and approval.	Finance & Resources	Head of Finance Audit & Performance Management	July 2008	December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review from July 2008</li> <li>• Approved Strategy – Dec 2008</li> </ul>		Core Revenue Budget
To investigate the development and implementation of a Revenues and Benefits Partnership with other authorities. (Also delivers for Objective 2)	Council Tax Benefits and Strategic Housing	Head of Community Services	April 2008	February 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on progress and options to Executive – Sept 2008</li> <li>• Implementation, if approved – Jan/Feb 2009</li> </ul>		New Budget allocation
Deliver the Workforce Development Plan (ongoing)	Finance & Resources	Human Resources Manager	April 2005	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing Leadership Capacity - Mar-Sept 2008</li> <li>• Developing skills and capacity of work force - Mar-Sept 2008</li> <li>• Completed review of Recruitment and Advertising Contracts – Dec 2008</li> <li>• Exemplary employment practice enhances service delivery</li> </ul>		Core Revenue Budget

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Member Training & Development Programme	Standards Committee Responsibility	Head of Information & Customer Services	May 2008	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing programme of training and development available for 2008/9</li> <li>High levels of satisfaction with the programme as measured by post events surveys</li> </ul>		Core Revenue Budget Building Capacity East Grant
To report on Asset Management Performance Indicators and review the Asset Management Plan. (Also delivers for Objective 3)	Finance & Resources	Head of Legal Services	Under-way	July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asset Management Performance Indicators Report – July 2008</li> <li>Asset Management Plan reviewed – July 2008</li> </ul>		Core Revenue Budget
Deliver continuous service improvement at affordable costs	Service Development Improvement & Performance Management	Corporate Director (External Services)	April 2008	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved services as measured by KPIs and customer satisfaction measures in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning – NI 157(a-c)</li> <li>Housing Benefits – NI181</li> <li>Council Tax – ExBV9,10</li> <li>Recycling – NI191/192</li> <li>Waste Collection Service – RDC5.1</li> <li>Environmental Services - NI 182, 185, 195, 197.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Resolve 80% of customer enquiries at first contact – NI 14</li> <li>VFM savings - NI179</li> </ul>	Will feed into satisfaction levels in LAA2	Core Revenue Budget Planning Delivery Grant

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Reporting on the performance of the Council	Service Development Improvement & Performance Management	Head of Finance Audit & Performance Management	May 2008	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BVPI Performance report for 2007/8 published – June 2008</li> <li>• Annual report published - July 2008</li> <li>• Ongoing programme of quarterly reporting for 2008/09 to members and public – July &amp; Oct 2008 , Jan &amp; April 2009</li> </ul>		Core Revenue Budget



## **Objective Two - Work towards a safer and more caring community**

### ***Why is this a Priority?***

In order to achieve the Council's vision to make the District the place of choice to live, we recognise that we must have an inclusive community where residents are not only safe but feel they are safe. Although the District already has a very low crime rate compared to the rest of the Country and other parts of Essex, the Council aims to make the District even safer by actively playing its part in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), which involves a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies. The Council appreciates the link between high levels of community involvement and the feeling of safety and is therefore keen to promote vibrant communities.

Also important to the Council is the caring aspect, aiming to progress services and initiatives which deal with the more vulnerable sections of our community, either alone or in partnership with other public agencies, the private sector or the voluntary and community sector.

### ***By 2012-2013***

We will have aimed:

- Through the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to achieve sustainable levels of crime reduction by tackling crime and the causes of crime, targeting specific issues and particular problem areas where appropriate.
- Through the Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to develop initiatives, which, as well as addressing the specific issue of antisocial behaviour, help to reduce the fear of crime within the communities which make up Rochford District.
- With Partners, to implement a series of initiatives aimed at providing more alternative facilities specifically for young people, with the intention to secure at least one new facility per year.
- To ensure that community facilities provision and access to these is considered in all new major residential development.
- To continue to support the Disabled Facilities Grant process.
- To continue to support the Handyperson and Handygardening schemes for the elderly.
- To continue to support Wyvern Community Transport and the Disabled Taxi Voucher scheme.
- To continue to support and develop Rochford and Rayleigh Association of Voluntary Services as the district-wide organisation responsible for promoting and developing the voluntary and community sector in the District.

- To continue to support the STAR Partnership as a key local delivery group in the voluntary and community arena in terms of developing and progressing specific local community initiatives.
- To continue to support the Local Citizens Advice Bureau as an important local facility for the provision of impartial advice and guidance.

## **Objective Two - Measures of Success**

We will know whether we are achieving these things or not through a variety of measures:

*Equality Standard for Local Government*

*CDRP Crime figures and performance indicators*

*Residents' perception of safety and other factors of well-being via the Place Survey & other surveys*

*Take-up of particular initiatives*

*National Performance indicators around care and support*

Our main areas of focus in 2008/2009 under Objective Two

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Review and prepare the new Rochford & District Sustainable Community Strategy (Also delivers for objectives 3-5)	Leader	Chief Executive	April 2008	Sept. 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy developed June 2008</li> <li>Strategy published 9/08</li> </ul>	Supports Essex SCS and related LAA2 targets	Core Revenue Budget
Implementation of the Youth Facilities Capital Programme (Also delivers for objective 5)	Young Persons, Adult Services, Community Care and Well-being, Health & Community Safety	Head of Community Services	April 2008	Autumn 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme to Executive – July 2008</li> <li>Implementation – Autumn 2008</li> </ul>	Supports LAA2 – Priority 6 in particular	Capital Programme investment
Work with partners in the Rochford District Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) to sustain reduction in crime levels and reduce the fear of crime	Young Persons, Adult Services, Community Care and Well-being, Health & Community Safety	Corporate Policy & Partnerships Manager	April 2008	March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific initiatives to be agreed with CDRP and success measured against annual and 3 year targets.</li> <li>Implementation over a 3 year period and reviewed annually</li> </ul>	Link to LAA2 – Priority 7	LAA – Safer and Stronger Communities Grant. Also Core Budget

## **Objective Three - Provide a green and sustainable environment**

### ***Why is this a Priority?***

We are committed to looking after the environment of the district, protecting the amenities of residents and preparing plans for future development that are well designed and sustainable.

Growing awareness of the impact of climate change means that the work we do for the benefit of the district and the plans we prepare for the future must be carefully considered, be sustainable, and balance the needs of residents, workers and visitors against our long-term ambition to protect and enhance the environment.

### ***By 2012-2013***

We will have aimed:

- To work on reducing the Council's own carbon dioxide emissions by 30% (based upon 2005 baseline).
- To roll out the new contract for waste collection and recycling from April 2008 with a target of achieving at least a 50% recycling rate within the 5-year period.
- Through the Council's Local Development Framework, to ensure that the future development of the District up to 2021 and beyond is planned and carried out in a sustainable fashion.

### ***Objective Three – Measures of Success***

We will know whether we are achieving these things or not through a variety of measures:

*Waste Recycling and Composting levels*

*Improved performance levels*

*Enhanced public satisfaction through the Place Survey and other surveys*

*Completion of the Rochford Core Planning Strategy through Inquiry Stage by autumn 2009 and adopted by late 2009/early 2010*

Our main areas of focus in 2008/2009 under Objective Three

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Implementation of new recycling arrangements  (Also delivers for objectives 1 & 5)	Environment	Head of Environmental Services	Underway	July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New arrangements in place from July 2008</li> <li>Recycling and composting level up to 35% (NI192) in 2008/9 and seeking to be over 50%</li> <li>Residents satisfaction with household waste collection (Ex BV 90a at 90% by 2010/2011)</li> </ul>	Supports LAA2 – Priority 9	Core Revenue Budget Capital Programme investment
Roll out of new Grounds Maintenance Contracts  (Also delivers for objectives 1 & 5)	Environment	Head of Environmental Services	April 2008	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>95% of pitches and open spaces satisfactory when inspected (RDC 5.3)</li> <li>Residents satisfaction with parks and open spaces (Ex Bv89 at 79% by 2010)</li> </ul>	Supports LAA2 – Priority 6	Core Revenue Budget
Roll out of new Street Cleansing contracts  (Also delivers for objectives 1 & 5)	Environment	Head of Environmental Services	April 2008	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street cleanliness measures: NI 195 (a-c)</li> <li>Residents satisfaction with street cleanliness (Ex BV 119e – 84% by 2010/2011)</li> </ul>	Supports LAA2 – Priority 7	Core Revenue Budget
To prepare the Rochford Core Planning Strategy  (Also delivers for objectives 4-6)	Planning & Transportation	Head of Planning & Transportation	Underway	Late 2009/early 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise Core Strategy and Consult - October/November 2008</li> <li>Public Inquiry - mid 2009</li> <li>Adopted late 2009/early 2010</li> </ul>	Links to LAA2 Priority 2 – Affordable Housing Provision	Core Revenue Budget Planning Delivery Grant

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Urban Street Tree Planting Programme	Environment	Head of Environmental Services	September 2008	February 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme to Executive Member for decision – September 2008</li> <li>• Implementation - November 2008 to February 2009</li> </ul>		New Revenue Budget allocation
Reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	Environment	Head of Environmental Services	April 2008	March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in Councils own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 30% over 5 years - NI 185</li> <li>• Per capita reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – NI 186</li> </ul>	Supports LAA2 – Priority 9	Core Revenue Budget
Implement an Adapting to Climate Change Action Plan	Environment	Head of Environmental Services	April 2008	March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NI 188 – 2008/2009 – TBA. Achieve Level 3 by 2010/2011</li> </ul>	Supports LAA2 – Priority 9	Core Revenue Budget

## **Objective Four - Encourage a thriving local economy**

### ***Why is this a Priority?***

The Council seeks to work with partners to maximise and encourage economic growth for the benefit of the communities in the area.

The district of Rochford is located within the Thames Gateway South Essex sub region. National and regional government has earmarked the Thames Gateway as the single largest regeneration project in Britain. Within South Essex, considerable change to the economy and social environment is planned with an increase of 55,000 net additional jobs across the sub region by 2021 – approximately 20%. There are currently 21,000 jobs in the District and very low rates of unemployment. However, outward migration is high with 68% of workers commuting out of the District to work.

To meet the aspirations of our communities and to begin to sow the seeds for more dynamic and sustainable employment locally, we need to further develop the regeneration of our employment areas and town centres. This in turn will help make the district a location of choice for employees and businesses and so help us play our part in the regeneration of Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE). At this first stage, key to this process will be the planning policies contained in our Local Development Framework (LDF).

### ***By 2012-2013***

We will have aimed:

- To have prepared a Joint Area Action Plan in partnership with Southend Borough Council, covering London Southend Airport and its environs and commenced its implementation.
- To have finished two major town centre studies of Hockley and Rochford to aid the regeneration of those two centres and have prepared action plans for both as part of the Local Development Framework process.
- To work with the County Council as highway authority, to look at potential solutions to the current congestion problems across the District to ensure the highway infrastructure becomes 'fit for purpose' and at the same time, discuss with them the public transport network to ensure a more frequent, reliable and comprehensive system with better linkages between bus and rail.
- Through the Local Development Framework process, to seek to develop policies which result in the replacement of the old and poorly located industrial estates within the District. At the same time, to identify the provision of new employment areas.
- To use the Local Development Framework process to secure the long-term future of the wharfage at Baltic Wharf as an employment area and ensure that appropriate access infrastructure is put in place.

#### ***Objective Four - Measures of Success***

We will know whether we are achieving these things or not through a variety of measures:

*Increased number of jobs within the district*

*Reduced levels of employment out-migration*

*Number of VAT registrations*

*Increased income levels for those employed in the district*

*Increased business development activity in terms of floor space development*

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Our main areas of focus in 2008/2009 under Objective Four

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Develop London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan (Also delivers for objectives 5 & 6)	Planning & Transportation	Head of Planning & Transportation	Underway	Dec. 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publications of Issues and Options – June/July 2008</li> <li>• Submission – June/July 2009</li> <li>• Plan adopted – December 2009</li> </ul>	Linked to LAA2 – Priority 8	LABGI Grant from Govt
To review and update the Economic Development Strategy for Member consideration and approval. (Also delivers for objectives 3 & 5)	Leisure, Tourism, Heritage, Arts and Culture, including Business/Enterprise	Corporate Policy & Partnerships Manager	Underway	July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review June 2008</li> <li>• Further more substantial review planned January – April 2009 following on from progress on the Local Development Framework</li> </ul>	Linked to LAA2 – Priority 8	Core Revenue Budget
New Business Start Up Initiatives	Leisure, Tourism, Heritage, Arts and Culture, including Business/Enterprise	Corporate Policy & Partnerships Manager			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals to Executive Member – June 2008</li> <li>• Implementation – Autumn 2008</li> </ul>	Linked to LAA2 – Priority 8	New Revenue Budget allocation

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	• Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Complete town centre studies and preparation of LDF Action Plans for Rochford and Hockley.	Planning & Transportation	Head of Planning & Transportation	Underway	Spring 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues &amp; Options consultation Autumn 2008</li> <li>• Adoption – Spring 2010</li> </ul>		LABGI Grant from Govt
Work with County Council as Highways Authority to reduce congestion problems in the District and to ensure appropriate financial contributions are made by developers through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Planning & transportation	Head of Planning & Transportation	Underway		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved public transport</li> <li>• Better bus rail interfaces</li> <li>• Improved highways infrastructure</li> </ul>	Linked to LAA2 – Priority 5	Essex County Council locally determined budget. Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

## **Objective Five - Improve the quality of life for people in our district**

### ***Why is this a Priority?***

Nationally and locally, emphasis is placed on local government's role as community leader in supporting local residents, communities and local organisations to improve the quality of life for both present and future generations.

The Council can contribute to improving quality of life for people in the district in a number of ways. Over the last few years, a wide range of initiatives and specific projects has been implemented that have produced a very positive impact on the quality of life. These have been provided either directly by the Council, in partnership with other local organisations, or by adopting a facilitator role in assisting local organisations and volunteer groups.

It is the intention of the Council to continue this approach to the nature of provision, in order to maximise available resources and encourage participation.

### ***By 2012-2013***

We will have aimed:

- To develop the Council's communication and consultation framework to ensure that the views of the wider community, and sections within it who are not normally engaged, are taken into account in the decision making process.
- To develop our Access to Services strategy and its implementation to ensure that we have taken into account the needs and preferences of all sections of our community when designing and delivering services.
- To achieve level 5 of the Equality Standard for local government by the end of 2010.
- To develop the Council's Area Committee structure as a means of public engagement and communication.
- To develop further our partnership structures to continually engage and respond to our communities.
- To continue to refurbish our play areas through our rolling programme of playground improvements.
- To ensure that play provision and access to it is considered in all new major residential developments.
- To ensure that community facilities provision and access to these is considered in all new major residential developments.
- To expand Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park both west and east and secure access from Cherry Orchard link road, and improve footpath and cycle access.

- To continue to improve and upgrade our parks and open spaces through a rolling programme of open space refurbishment.
- To expand Sweyne Park to the area to the rear of the new Rayleigh Leisure Centre and develop that area for new sports pitch provision.
- To support the RSPB in its proposals to secure the Wallasea Island wetlands project for bird watching and other recreation.
- To secure the delivery on average of 50 affordable housing units per year through the auspices of Rochford Housing Association.
- To agree a Choice Based lettings policy for the Council by October 2008.
- To proceed with and complete the extension to Rochford Cemetery in Hall Road, Rochford.

### ***Objective Five – Measures of Success***

We will know whether we are achieving these things or not through a variety of measures:

*Housing stock investment programme underway*

*Low levels of homelessness*

*Increased numbers of affordable houses for local people*

*Completion of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and Sweyne Park schemes*

*Usage figures of leisure facilities and satisfaction levels from Place survey and other surveys*

Our main areas of focus in 2008/2009 under objective 5

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
To continue to expand & develop Cherry Orchard Country Park. (Also delivers for objective 3)	Environment	Head of Environmental Services	2007	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of additional land to the west of the park –Apr 2008</li> <li>• Purchase of additional land to the east of the park - CPO inquiry scheduled August 2008</li> <li>• Design proposals for enlarged park to Executive – Nov 2008</li> </ul>	Linked to LAA2 – Priority 10	Capital Programme investment
Hall Road Cemetery Extension (Also delivers for Objective 3)	Environment	Head of Legal & Technical Services	2007	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys completed Aug 2008</li> <li>• Outline Planning Application Aug 2008</li> <li>• Detailed design prepared July 2009</li> <li>• (To be open from 2012)</li> </ul>		Capital Programme investment
Public Open Spaces Refurbishment Programme (Also delivers for objective 3)	Environment	Head of Environmental Services			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme to be submitted to Executive portfolio holder– September 2008</li> <li>• Implementation of programme – Autumn 2008 onwards</li> </ul>	Linked to LAA2 – Priority 10	Capital Programme investment
Develop and implement the Choice Based Lettings Scheme (Also delivers for objectives 1 & 2)	Council Tax, Benefits & Strategic Housing	Head of Community Services	July 2008	January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of CBL Policy – Oct 2008</li> <li>• Implementation from Jan 2009</li> </ul>		New Revenue Budget allocation
Achievement of Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government	Service Development Improvement & Performance Management	Head of Community Services	Under-way	June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 3 Achievement recognised by external accreditation body (now achieved)</li> <li>• Commencement of work around securing level 4 by late spring 2009</li> <li>• Secure level 5 by late 2010</li> </ul>		Core Revenue Budget Building Capacity East Funding

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Sweyne Park Extension – Pitch Provision  (Also delivers for objective 3)	Environment	Head of Community Services	April 2008	September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to West Area Committee &amp; Executive re management and usage – April 2008</li> <li>• Planning application submission – July 2008</li> <li>• Start pitch preparation works - Autumn 2008</li> <li>• Pitches available for use – September 2009</li> </ul>		Capital Programme investment
Refurbishment of Great Wakering Public Convenience  (Also delivers for objective 3)	Young Persons, Adult Services, Community Care and Well-being, Health and Community Safety	Head of Legal Services	Sept. 2008	November 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion and re-opening of refurbished public conveniences.</li> </ul>		Capital Programme investment

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Implementation of Play Strategy	Leisure, Tourism, Heritage, Arts and Culture, including Business & Enterprise	Head of Community Services	July 08	Feb 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portfolio of play projects implemented as detailed below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play Ranger service to be operated through summer holidays over next 3 years, commencing July 08</li> <li>- New play equipment to be installed in open spaces around the District Autumn 08</li> <li>- Temporary ice rink to be operated at various locations around the District, over the next 3 years, during October half term, Christmas holiday period and February half term.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		£200,000 Grant received from Big Lottery Big Play Fund

## **Objective Six - Maintain and enhance our local heritage**

### ***Why is this a Priority?***

The District of Rochford covers an area of 65 square miles and is rich in heritage and natural beauty. There are more than 200 sites of archaeological interest, 14 ancient woodlands, several nature reserves and its towns and villages are diverse in character, reflecting their history, location and size.

The District contains examples of traditional Essex heritage and this has been identified by the Thames Gateway Partnership which recognises “the potential to develop those themes which link to the vision in Southend, in particular developing the area for leisure, recreation and tourism activity.” In addition, the District has been identified as “the green part of the gateway” and therefore these factors provide significant opportunities for Rochford to benefit from the regeneration of the Thames Gateway area.

### ***By 2012-2013***

We will have aimed:

- To develop a rolling programme of events and activities which celebrate our local heritage and culture.
- To further develop Rayleigh Windmill as a community heritage facility and its use for weddings and civil ceremonies.
- To utilise the Local Development Framework process to support and enhance our built heritage of listed buildings and Conservation Areas.

### ***Objective Six – Measures of Success***

We will know whether we are achieving these things or not through a variety of measures:

*Increased usage of Windmill facility*

*Number of heritage related events in the district*

*Satisfaction Rates from Place Survey*



Our main areas of focus in 2008/2009 under objective 6

Objective	Portfolio member	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	Successful outcomes and/or performance indicators	Linkage with Essex Local Area Agreement	Main Sources of Funding
Heritage Programme (Also delivers for objective 5)	Leisure, Tourism, Heritage, Arts and Culture, including Business & Enterprise	Head of Community Services	June 2008	March 2009	Proposals to Executive Member – June 2008 Implementation - Autumn 2009		New Revenue Budget Allocation

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