

Review Committee Annual Report 2007/08



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2 Glossary

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3 Introduction

- 3.1 During the 2007-08 Municipal year the Review Committee has considered a number of topics both as a whole Committee and in smaller teams reporting back to the main Committee once the team has completed its work. Details of the Reviews are outlined further on in this report.

4 Overview of the Refuse Collection, Recycling, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Contract process

- 4.1 At the beginning of the 2006/07 municipal year the allocation of the new Council contracts was identified as an area that might benefit from the Review Committee's involvement and it was agreed by the Review Committee that the then Chairman, Cllr K H Hudson, would represent the Committee in the overview of the refuse collection and recycling contract process.
- 4.2 It was agreed by the Committee that Cllr Mrs J R Lumley would represent the Review Committee in the overview of this process during this municipal year.
- 4.3 The contracts have now been agreed and the Review Committee was able to have a close watching brief over the process and to have direct input at each of the sub-committee meetings in the run up to the awarding of the contracts.

5 Review of Mental Health Services /Provision, Specifically with respect to the emerging new facility at Rochford

- 5.1 This topic had been recommended to the Committee as worthy of investigation. However, after applying to Essex County Council for delegated authority it was established that the Health Service and the County Council were undertaking consultation/reviewing the provision of services that would have fallen under the projects scope and that it would be better for this activity to be completed before a Review is commenced.
- 5.2 This topic has been carried over until the next Municipal Year when it will again be put in front of the Committee for consideration.

6 Anti Social Behaviour Review

- 6.1 This Review was started in the previous Municipal year and was undertaken by the whole of the Review Committee. The final activity involved a meeting with the Assistant Chief Constable to discuss findings.
- 6.2 The meeting took place at the end of May 2007 and the final report came to the Committee in September 2007 for approval.
- 6.3 A number of recommendations were made to the Executive Board, all of which were agreed.

7 Operation of the New Political Decision Making Structure Review

- 7.1 Following the changes to the Political Decision Making structure at the beginning of the 2007-08 municipal year it was recommended that a team from the Review Committee monitor the new structure.
- 7.2 A team was formed with a remit to monitor the operation of the Executive Board, particularly the decision making against the published Forward Plan and Key Policies and Actions report for 2007/08 submitted to Council on the 27 February 2007. The team was also to monitor the operation of the 3 Area Committees in relation to their engagement with the public and other appropriate bodies.
- 7.3 During the year the team made a number of suggestions and observations in an attempt to improve the structure.
- 7.4 The team also canvassed District and Parish Councillors, officers/other attendees and the public to obtain their thoughts on the operation of the Area Committees.
- 7.5 The team has produced a final report and it is expected that this Review will continue to be a necessary work stream for the Committee.

8 Understanding of Planning Appeals Procedures and the effectiveness of different forms of representation Review

- 8.1 This topic had been suggested as there was some concern regarding the number of Planning Appeals that the Council was becoming involved in.
- 8.2 A team was formed to consider this topic and a detailed study was conducted which included contacting other Local Authorities to establish how they dealt with Planning Appeals and what procedures they had for agreeing Planning Applications within the Authority.
- 8.3 A final report was prepared with a number of recommendations, which has been presented to the Executive Board for consideration.

9 Review of Implications of Global Warming agenda on Rochford District and the role the District Council and its communities might play

- 9.1 This topic was considered by the whole of the Review Committee and a number of meetings were utilised to gain a better understanding of the subject.
- 9.2 During these meetings the Committee received a number of presentations from District Council officers, a County Council officer and an external environmentalist.
- 9.3 The Committee also undertook a visit to Tilbury Power station and arranged for members of the public to be canvassed for their opinions as to what the Council could do towards combating Climate Change.
- 9.4 A report on possible future strategy for the Council has been submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

10 Topics for future work programme

- 10.1 The following topics are being forwarded as worthy of consideration by the Review Committee during the 2008/09 Municipal year:-
 - Continuation of the monitoring of the operation of the Political Decision making structure (to include Member Champions)
 - Review of Council's Community Halls/Assets
 - Role of Members on outside bodies and organisations
 - Surface Rainwater drainage systems – the ownership and maintenance of ditches in the District.
 - Review of the Child and Adolescent mental health provision for the District.
 - Performance of new environmental contracts