

Review Committee Annual Report 2014/2015



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2 Glossary

CSP	Community Safety Partnership
ECC	Essex County Council
ICT	Information and Communications Technology

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3 Introduction

- 3.1 During the 2014-15 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.
- 3.2 In addition to the Committee's role of conducting Reviews it also has the duty to scrutinise decisions made by the Executive. As part of this role the Committee studies the Key Decision Document on a monthly basis.

4 Community Safety Partnership

- 4.1 Under the Police and Justice Act 2006, every local authority is required to have a Crime and Disorder Committee with the power to scrutinise the local Community Safety Partnership (CSP), as a whole, in terms of how they are tackling crime and disorder for the benefit of the local communities. This function is undertaken by the Review Committee. Under the Act the Committee has to meet at least once a year to fulfil this function.
- 4.2 These requirements were enacted by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 which came into force for local authorities in England on 30 April 2009.
- 4.3 Representatives from the CSP attended the November meeting of the Committee to update Members on developments taking place. The Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 has meant a number of changes are being introduced including a new process to deal with the Community Trigger and Case Reviews which were brought in via the Act.
- 4.4 In addition a new Community Hub has been established.

5 Overview of the Leisure Contract

- 5.1 Early in the Municipal Year Fusion Lifestyle, took over the running of the leisure contract from Virgin Active. Members of the Committee had the chance to tour the leisure sites prior to the meeting to update themselves on the issues that had been raised the previous year.
- 5.2 It was noted how the issues previously identified had been dealt with and how positive the atmosphere was during the tour of the sites and at the meeting.

6 Overview of the Key Decision Document

- 6.1 During the year the Committee continued to monitor the decisions due to be made by the Executive and its members. The Committee studied the Key Decision document on a monthly basis asking for further details as and when they felt it necessary.
- 6.2 The Committee has found this a useful way to explore the reasons behind decisions being made and to reduce the need to consider the call-in of a decision after it has been made.

7 Initial 2014/2015 work programme

- 7.1 It was agreed by the Committee at its meeting in June 2014 that project teams would be formed to look at the following topics:-
- Rochford District Matters
 - ICT Contracts
 - Building Control
- 7.2 The Committee also agreed to delegate authority to a task and finish group to consider the three Treasury Management Reports prior to their submission to Council.
- 7.3 Whilst the projects teams for the first two projects were able to complete their work, the Building Control project teams did not progress due to various changes taking place.

8 Additional items added to the work programme

- 8.1 The initial review brought to the attention of the Review Committee other items that the Committee Members felt should be investigated and, therefore, two further project teams were formed to complete the following reviews:-
- Review of Issues around the Use of iPads for Council Business.
 - Review of Third Party Software Contracts.

9 Other items considered by the Committee

- 9.1 In September 2014 the Committee was provided with details on the car parking income for the first 3-4 months of the financial year and a comparison with the income received in the previous year. It was agreed that a further report would come to the Committee in March.
- 9.2 At the same meeting in September Members of the Committee discussed the verge cutting in the District and the amount that ECC contributed towards the cost for this service.
- 9.3 In October 2014 members of the Committee were provided with an update on the 'Shop at my Local' partnership.
- 9.4 Dog fouling has been an item of concern across the District and so the Committee heard in January 2015 about the actions that the Council had taken in trying to reduce the occurrences in the District including making a video.
- 9.5 It was agreed at the meeting in June 2014 that the members of the Review Committee would examine the Council's budget. The budget report was submitted to the February 2015 meeting.

- 9.6 In March 2015 members of the Committee spoke to the Rochford Housing Association and others around homelessness in the District.

10 Topics for future work programme

- 10.1 The following topics have been identified as possible topics for the work programme for the next Municipal year:-

- Planning enforcement
- The budget process and consultation
- Complaints process at the Council
- Planning conditions and scheme of delegation
- Working with other authorities
- RDC Planning Protocol
- Pot holes

11 Performance Measures

- 11.1 The Review Committee has previously agreed a set of performance measures. These are listed below with the results or comments linked to them.

1. Completion of Overview and Scrutiny work programme on time.

Project	Scheduled Completion date	Actual Completion date	Reason for extension of date
Operation of the ICT Contract	October 2014	October 2014	
Rochford District Matters	April 2015	March 2015	
Review of Issues around the use of iPads for Council Business	April 2015	April 2015	
Review of Third Party Software Contracts	April 2015	April 2015	
Building Control	No date was agreed for this project		

2. The percentage of Overview and Scrutiny recommendations approved/rejected/acted upon by the Executive.

During this Municipal year the Review Committee has submitted two reports to the Executive with a further report to be submitted following its April meeting. The first report that was submitted in October 2014 was referred back to the Committee for further consideration. The other report was submitted in March 2015 and a response is still awaited.

3. Number of external representatives involved in Overview and Scrutiny work per annum.

During this year the Committee has heard from representatives of two different external bodies in relation to the items that have been examined.

4. Number of items on the work programme suggested by the public or in response to issues raised through surveys, comments or complaints.

None

5. Number of call-in notices received per annum.

No items have been called in by the Committee this Municipal Year.

6. The number of times that the Executive state that a decision is urgent and not subject to call-In.

During the year twelve decisions have not been subject to call-in.

7. Whether sufficient information is provided to witnesses about the Overview and Scrutiny process.

The responses from witnesses would indicate that they are happy with the information supplied to them prior to the meeting.

8. Witnesses' views of value added by Overview and Scrutiny meetings.

The responses received would indicate that witnesses think that their contribution has been worthwhile.