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## KEY POLICIES AND ACTIONS FOR 2011/2012

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report formally sets out the main areas of policy development for 2011/2012. It identifies the main projects to be progressed and implemented and highlights any areas of service development/change. It also identifies issues on which the Council may wish to request consideration by the Review Committee and outlines the timetable for establishing the budget for 2012/2013.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 With the budget agreed at Full Council on 25 January and the Council Tax rate set at tonight's meeting of Full Council, it is opportune for Members to formally agree the main areas of the Council's work programme for the coming year.
- 2.2 At the same time, Members can consider the programme relating to the monitoring of the 2011/2012 budget and the preparation of the 2012/2013 budget. Members' views are sought on those policy, resource and service issues which might be appropriate for examination by the Review Committee, although it will be for that Committee to determine its work programme in the next Municipal Year (2011/2012).

### 3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 As Members are aware, this year has been particularly difficult in terms of the budget process given that the Council's grant from Central Government has been reduced by 16.2%. At a time when the continuing effect of recessionary pressures has had a negative effect on the Council's income streams and is putting pressure on resources in key service areas, such as benefits and homelessness, balancing the Council's budget, not just for 2011/2012 but over the 5 year life circle of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), remains extremely challenging. Nonetheless, the budget has now been agreed and it is important that the Council continues to deliver on a range of areas for the benefit of Rochford residents.
- 3.2 Key projects for the Council in the coming year will remain the continuing work around the Local Development Framework and its various stages, together with other key planning supporting documentation, such as the Joint Area Action Plan for the Airport and its Environs and the Town Centre Action Plans for Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh Town Centre. We will continue with the capital projects at Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and will progress our work around the Rochford Cemetery extension.
- 3.3 With the budget now agreed, a revised, updated version of the Corporate Plan will be produced for consideration by the Executive and approval by the Council at its meeting in April.

- 3.4 The key elements of the Council's work programme will be publicised through the press, the web and through Rochford District Matters, using other media as appropriate.
- 3.5 The attached appendices A, B and C make no attempt to cover all the Council's functions. Instead, they focus on the 'headline' areas of work for the forthcoming year. Appendix A deals with the policy and strategic framework. Appendix B covers the main projects and, Appendix C, the key areas of service development/change. In each of the appendices, the linkage is highlighted to one or more of the Council's four corporate objectives around 'Making a Difference' to:-
1. Our People
  2. Our Community
  3. Our Environment
  4. Our Local Economy
- 3.6 Given the work programme outlined and the issues coming before Council in the foreseeable future, Appendix D outlines those topics suggested for study by the Review Committee. However, in requesting subjects for consideration, Members need to take into account the capacity of the Review Committee and note that it sets its own agenda.
- 3.7 Appendix E sets out the process and timetable for monitoring the 2011/2012 budget and preparing the 2012/2013 budget for Member's information. The intention is to combine the half-yearly review of the budget with a half-yearly review of the work programme in October/November. There will continue to be regular monitoring reports covering the performance of key service areas. In this way, it is envisaged that Members can review progress on both the budget and the work programme during the financial year and make any adjustments that might be appropriate to ensure key targets are met or reassessed.
- 3.8 Finally, Appendix F sets out a list of events for Members' reference which will impact on the Authority during the year. It is not all-encompassing, but does attempt to capture the key activities which the Council will be involved in.

#### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES** that:-
- (1) The work programme for 2011/2012, as set out in Appendices A, B and C and the public notification of its content, as outlined in the report, be agreed.
  - (2) Those areas of work, with or without amendments, for consideration by the Review Committee, as outlined in Appendix D, be agreed.

- (3) The programme for the monitoring of the 2011/2012 budget and the development of the 2012/2013 Budget, as outlined in Appendix E, be noted.
- (4) The main events timetable, as outlined in Appendix F, be noted.

Paul Warren  
Chief Executive

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**Background Papers:-**

None.

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**Policy Development Work**Council's Corporate Plan (1-4)

- Produce an updated Plan in the light of 2011/2012 Budget Process – for consideration and approval by Executive and endorsement by Council April 2011

Local Development Documents (1-4)

- Core Strategy
  - Receipt of Inspector's Report May 2011
  - Adoption Summer 2011
  - Allocations DPD
    - Submission Consultation Summer 2011
    - Submission December 2011
    - Public Inquiry Spring 2012
- Development Management DPD
  - Submission Summer 2011
  - Submission November 2011
  - Public Inquiry Spring 2012

London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Action Area Plan (1-4) [subject to decision on recent planning application and whether it is called in]

- Submission December 2011
- Public Inquiry February 2012

Hockley Town Centre Area Action Plan (1-4)

- Submission February 2012
- Public Inquiry May 2012
- Adoption October 2012

Rochford Town Centre Area Action Plan (1-4)

- Submission July 2012
- Public Inquiry October 2012
- Adoption March 2013

Rayleigh Town Centre Area Action Plan (1-4)

- Submission July 2012
- Public Inquiry October 2012
- Adoption March 2013

Asset Management Plan (1)

- Revised Asset Management Plan in place  
September 2011

Annual Report (1)

- Prepare 2010/11 Annual Report for Member consideration  
and approval July 2011

Climate Change and Sustainability

- Green Travel Plan for consideration by the Executive April 2011
- Home Energy Efficiency Policy (The Green Deal) for  
consideration by the Executive September 2011

## **Main Projects**

### Hall Road Cemetery Extension (1, 2 & 3)

- Recommence on site with laying out Spring / Summer 2011

### Recycling Rollout (1, 2 & 3)

- Complete the rollout of the new recycling scheme for flats and mobile home sites June 2012

### Equalities and Diversity agenda (1 and 2)

- Complete evidence and submission for external validation Feb/Mar 2011
- Successful external validation for achieving “Excellence” March /April 2011  
under new equalities framework for local government

### Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park (1, 2 & 3)

- Grove Woods additional car parking May/June 2011
- Permissive route through New England Wood October 2011
- Arboretum of fruit trees March 2012

### ICT Contract Joint Procurement (1)

- Tender specification and evaluation criteria to be submitted to Executive April 2011
- Tender award by Executive September/October 2011
- Contract commencement April 2013

**Areas for Service Development/Change**Council Tax/Housing Benefits – Work with Castle Point (1)

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the business case and the potential benefits of creating a shared service (currently on hold) once there is clarity around the introduction of the new Universal Credit</li> </ul> | July 2011       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Processing Re-engineering work across service functions (1)</li> </ul>  | Ongoing         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Local Strategic Partnership and other partnership arrangements – principally with Castle Point (1-4)</li> </ul>  | From April 2011 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued implementation of the Workforce Development Plan (1)</li> </ul>  | Ongoing         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the Council's Asset base to ensure it remains fit for purpose (1-4)</li> </ul>   | Ongoing         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor the delivery of the District's Housing targets as outlined in the Council's Core Strategy (1,2 &amp; 3)</li> </ul>   | Ongoing         |

**Issues for possible consideration by the Review Committee in 2011/2012**

- Annual Review of key partnership arrangements.
- Highways maintenance in the District.
- The emerging structures around health and wellbeing and the changing role of the District Council in this context.
- Update on the Climate Change Agenda and a review of the Council's progress in this area.



**Budget Process**

Closure of Accounts	June 2011
Annual Report identifying Performance over last year and main financial information of the Authority	July 2011
Completion of early review of 2011/2012 Budget	July 2011
Draft Internal Divisional Plans produced – internal bidding system	Oct 2011
Consultation with Local Chambers/Business around potential budget items/issues	Oct – Jan 2012
Community Consultation around Budget examining potential budget items/issues	Oct 2011
Member Budget Awayday – agree budget framework	Nov 2011
Half Yearly Review of Medium Term Financial Strategy, Work Programme and Key Performance Indicators	Oct/Nov 2011
Member Awayday – Finalise priorities for Budget	Jan 2012
Budget setting for the Council is agreed	Jan 2012
Council Tax Set	Feb 2012
Key Plans and Actions Report	Feb 2012
Corporate Plan Reviewed, Updated and Agreed	April 2012
Internal Divisional Actions Plan finalised	April 2012

**Main Events in 2011/2012**

May 2011 -	District/Parish Elections plus Referendum
May 2011 -	Receipt of Inspector's report into the Core Strategy
June 2011 -	Accounts for 2010/2011 agreed
Sept/October 2011 -	ICT Contract awarded
November 2011 -	First Member Budget Awayday
January 2012 -	Second Member Budget Awayday
January 2012 -	Budget Agreed
February 2012 -	Council Tax Set