
PARISH COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide an update of previous agreed action and to consider further work in connection with Parish Council partnerships.

2 PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN

- 2.1 To consider the action plan shown as appendix A

3 PARISH I.T. SURVEY

- 3.1 To consider the summary of replies to the I.T. survey shown at appendix B.

4 PLAYSACES

- 4.1 Parishes have now seen the report on proposed cost sharing a copy of which is shown at appendix C. Parishes are now invited to submit comments relating to the possible transfer of playspaces to Parishes.
- 4.2 Parishes are reminded that due the timing of financial planning any transfer of cost will not be implemented until 1st April 2006.
- 4.3 As part of the move to protect community assets Rochford District Council is looking to identify options for the transfer of parks and open spaces to suitable charitable trusts. This will ensure that these assets remain protected for future generations. The Head of Legal Services wrote to all Parishes on the 6th December (copy attached as appendix D). To date only Hullbridge have responded. Comments would be welcomed.

5 ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL BUDGET

- 5.1 Appended to this report at appendix E is a summary of the budget strategy for 2005/06. Parishes are invited to submit any comments on these priorities.

6 ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2004-2024

- 6.1 Within this document under the section “ Being part of a community” there is the statement “ Build the capacity of Parish and Town Councils to enable them to take more responsibility for decisions affecting their communities “. Essex County Council will be invited to comment on this statement and possible proposals.

7 OUT OF HOURS COVER

- 7.1 The council has arrangements in place for out of hour's contacts. It would be useful for Parishes to provide information as to whether they have any out of hours response and how that is provided.

8 ISSUES FOR PARISHES

- 8.1 To invite Parishes to raise any issues for future discussion.

9 REVIEW OF CONSULTATION CHARTER

- 9.1 To consider proposals on the process to amend the document “ Working with Local Councils – Consultation Charter and Code of Practice “ which is attached as appendix F. Clearly many issues have moved on since this was agreed including the amount of data that is now available through the Council's website. Looking down the list there are issues where consultation no longer appears to be appropriate.
- 9.2 There needs to be agreement on the way that the document is updated and the timetable.

10 RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 It is proposed that the Committee considers the issues contained in the report and recommends accordingly.

Dave Deeks

Head of Financial Services

Background Papers:-

None

For further information please contact Dave Deeks on:-

Tel:- 01702 318029

E-Mail:- dave.deeks@rochford.gov.uk

Service:

1

Initiative

Parishes

Authority risk:

2

Proposed Start date: 6th October 2004

Proposed Finish date: Not yet determined

Actual Start date: 6th October 2004

Actual Finish date:

No.	Key Action <i>(No longer than 2 month interval in first year)</i>	Risk H/M/L	Due date	Approved change to due date	Officer		Completed date	Issues or missed date details	Issue date dd/mm	Agreed resolution	Agreed by L/CD/CMB and date
					Lead	Support					
1.	Circulate to Parishes a copy of the current document – Working with local Councils – Consultation Charter and Code of Practice		Dec 04		DD	MM	Jan 05			Document sent	
2.	Circulate to Parishes a list of District Council officer contacts		Dec 04		DD		Jan 05			Document sent – new list will be sent every 3 months.	
3.	Circulate to Parishes a copy of the draft Contribution Formula in respect of playspaces		Dec 04		RC	DD	Jan 05			Document sent	
4.	Provide a response to Parishes following the view that Parish comments made in relation to planning applications are not always included within reports.		Dec 04		SS	DD	Jan 05			Response from Head of Planning Services – providing that comments are received in time they are included. Parishes must respond within the statutory period (21 days) Parishes may wish to consider raising any further issues at the Parish Planning Forum	

Service:

1

Initiative

Parishes

Authority risk:

2

Proposed Start date: 6th October 2004

Proposed Finish date: Not yet determined

Actual Start date: 6th October 2004

Actual Finish date:

No.	Key Action <i>(No longer than 2 month interval in first year)</i>	Risk H/M/L	Due date	Approved change to due date	Officer		Completed date	Issues or missed date details	Issue date dd/mm	Agreed resolution	Agreed by L/CD/CMB and date
					Lead	Support					
5.	Parishes requested information on the progress of planning enforcement action		Dec 04		DD	SS				Parishes to raise issues at Parish Planning Forum	
6.	Prepare and circulate survey for Parishes to understand their current IT structures		Dec 04		DD		Jan 05			Survey prepared and circulated	
7.	Essex County Council to supply details of the current position relating to Parish Websites		Dec 04		ECC			ECC unable to supply at the moment as planned meeting had to be cancelled.			
8.	Parishes are supplied with details as to how to sign up for the .gov.uk address.		Dec 04		DD			Awaiting information			
9.	Parishes provide response to playspace issue following circulation of Contribution formula		Feb 05		TC & P					All Parishes submit a response which is then considered and agreed at future meetings	
10.	Returns from Parishes regarding IT structures considered		Feb 05		TC & P					All Parishes submit a response which is then considered and agreed at future meetings	

Service:

1

Initiative

Parishes

Authority risk:

2

Proposed Start date: 6th October 2004

Proposed Finish date: Not yet determined

Actual Start date: 6th October 2004

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No.	<i>Key Action</i> (No longer than 2 month interval in first year)	Risk H/M/L	Due date	Approved change to due date	Officer		Completed date	Issues or missed date details	Issue date dd/mm	Agreed resolution	Agreed by L/CD/CMB and date
					Lead	Support					
11.	Future of Parish Websites considered		Meeting after Feb 05		ECC						
12.	Consider amendments to "Working with Local Councils " document		Future meetings		DD	MM					

Parish Survey – Information Technology

Parish	1. Person Submitting	2. Computers Owned and Used but the Parish	3. Computers Used For Parish Work	4. Operating System	5. Software Installed	6. E-Mail Address(s)	7. Who Has Access To General E-mail Box
Rawreth	Spencer Croucher		1 AMD Athlon 2500 Stand Alone Home PC	Windows XP Home Edition 2002	Microsoft Works (Word 2000) Microsoft XL 2002 Adobe (Photoshop20./Reader6.0)	spencer@jolians.freeseve.co.uk	Myself
Foulness Island	Gary Bickford		1 Emachine Stand Alone Home PC	Windows XP		gary.bickford@btopenworld.com	Only User
Rochford	Janice Rigby	2 Dell Networked Office PC's		Windows Millennium	Office 2000 Microsoft Publisher Quickbooks Accounting Microsoft Excel	rochfor.parish@btinternet.com	Clerk and one councillor
Hullbridge	Linda Cowan	1 128MB Stand Alone Office PC		Windows 98	Microsoft Office 2000 Professional Microsoft Front Page (web-site) Terrapin Nero - CD writer	hullbridgepc@lineone.net	Clerk
Ashingdon	Peter Murray	1 Emachine Stand Alone Home/Office PC	1 Stand Alone Home/Office PC	Microsoft XP Professional	Windows Office 2000, HP Director	petermurray@ashingdonpc.fsnet.co.uk	Clerk

Technical Issues Regarding Website (if applicable)

Parish	8. Website Address if Applicable	9. What Software Do You Use	10. Who Maintains It	11. Who Hosts it	12. What IT Development Have You Got Planned For The Immediate Future	13. What Are The Key Resources Required To Make Improvements	14. Apart From Paper How Would You Like TO Receive Information
Rawreth					We would like to have our own website but integrated within a Rochford or Essex Website		E- mail
Foulness Island							
Rochford					Looking into website provision	Finance and	E- mail
Hullbridge	www.hullbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk	Microsoft Front Page	Clerk	Freemove	None		E- mail
Ashingdon					For the new financial year a Web Site has been authorised. Arrangement and building of the site already in progress		

Parish	1. Person Submitting	2. Computers Owned and Used but the Parish	3. Computers Used For Parish Work	4. Operating System	5. Software Installed	7. Network Software if Applicable	6. E-Mail Address(s)	7. Who Has Access To General E-mail Box
Hockley Parish Council	Paul Stanley	1 Dell Dimension Stand Alone Office PC 1 Relisys Stand Alone Office PC	1 Dell Stand Alone Home PC 1 Tiny Stand Alone Home PC	2 x Windows 2000 Windows XP Home Edition Windows XP Small Business Edition	PowerPoint Excel Publisher		enquiries@hockley-essex.gov.uk	Clerk and Administration Assistant
Great Waking	Mr H Morris	2 Desk Top Stand Alone Office PC's		2 x Windows XP	2 x Office/Frontpage/Publisher, 1 x Accountancy Package		enquiries@greatwaking-pc.gov.uk	Clerk and Assistant Clerk
Hawkwell	Stuart Mennell	2 Net-worked Office Desk Top Computers		2 x Windows 98	2 x Microsoft Office 2000 1x Microsoft Publisher 2 x Adobe Acrobat 2 x Microsoft Outlook 2 x Financial Director Omega 1x Kodak Easy Share		hawkwell.council@totalise.co.uk hawkwell_council@yahoo.co.uk	Clerk, Assistant to Clerk and Chairman

Parish	8. Website Address if Applicable	9. What Software Do You Use	10. Who Maintains It	11. Who Hosts it	12. What IT Development Have You Got Planned For The Immediate Future	13. What Are The As The Key Resources Required To Make Improvements	14. Apart From Paper How Would You Like TO Re ceive Information
Hockley Parish Council	www.hockley-essex.gov.uk	unknown	Flashbyte	Vertex 3D	Broadband and 2 Laptops for Councillors	Finance	Compact Disc and E-mail
Great Wakering	www.greatwakering-pc.gov.uk	Microsoft Frontpage	Clerk	Flashbyte	To train Clerk and Assistant, Broadband if assisted from Essex or Rochford with cost	Training and Broadband	
Hawkwell					Website to be introduced in 2005. New system to be explored in 2005	Full network capabilities (at present data shared)	Compact Disc and E-mail

Parish/Location	Cost £	Council Tax Band D £ p	Council Tax Band D Charge £ p	Playspace Cost as % of Current Band D
Ashingdon	<u>3,800</u>	<u>3.14</u>	22.30	14.1
Barling	<u>2,000</u>	<u>3.24</u>	27.53	11.8
Canewdon				
Althorne Way	4,700			
Rowan Way	<u>1,400</u>			
	<u>6,100</u>	<u>11.15</u>	23.76	46.9
Great Wakering				
Conway Ave.	2,800			
High Street	3,300			
Seaview Drive	1,200			
Morrins Close	900			
Glebe Close	<u>2,200</u>			
	<u>10,400</u>	<u>5.31</u>	25.52	20.8
Hawkwell				
Clements Hall	3,600			
Common	<u>3,300</u>			
	6,900			
Allowance	<u>-2,900</u>			
	<u>4,000</u>	0.89	20.15	4.4
Hockley				
Betts Wood	1,700			
Allowance	<u>-1,700</u>			
	<u>NIL</u>	0.00	35.39	0
Rawreth	<u>2,800</u>	<u>6.54</u>	17.58	37.2
Rayleigh				
Bedford Close	3,000			
Causton Way	3,000			
Elsenham Crt	2,200			
Fairview	3,300			
Fyfield	2,000			
Grove	3,300			
Hartford Close	2,800			
St. John Fisher	3,300			
Boston Ave.	<u>1,400</u>			
	24,300			
Allowance	<u>-2,900</u>			

Parish/Location	Cost £	Council Tax Band D £ p	Council Tax Band D Charge £ p	Playspace Cost as % of Current Band D
Rochford	<u>21,400</u>	1.79	25.74	7.0
Doggetts	5,500			
Warwick Drive	<u>3,300</u>			
	<u>8,800</u>	3.20	24.02	13.3
TOTAL	<u>59,300</u>			

**DIRECTORATE OF LAW,
PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION**

Head of Legal Services

A.J. Bugeja, BA(Hons.)

My Ref: AJB

Your Ref:

Ask for: Albert Bugeja

Direct Dial: 01702 318130

Email: albert.bugeja@rochford.gov.uk

Website: www.rochford.gov.uk



**Rochford District
Council**

Council Offices South Street
Rochford Essex SS4 1BW

Telephone: 01702 546366
DX 39751 Rochford

Facsimile: 01702 318154

Date: 6th December 2004.

Dear >>>>>>>>>>

Public Open Spaces and recreational grounds

You may recall some years ago the Council established trust arrangements with the National Playing Fields Association and the Woodlands Trust to safeguard a number of its public open spaces in the district. Other open spaces were also transferred to Parish Councils on long leases with similar objective for local management.

The Council is presently considering how the remainder of its recreational areas and open spaces not currently held in trust might be further protected.

One area of consideration is the creation of trust status to include those areas leased to Parishes, by the Council transferring the freehold of these sites to an appropriate charitable trust such as the National Playing Fields Association. The benefits of such an arrangement apart from further protection, as charitable land would allow scope for wider sources of funding and support from the trust in the management of the area.

Under such an arrangement there would be no change in the management or control of the sites, which would remain with the Parish and be subject to the same provisions in the lease as at present.

Perhaps you could kindly let me have an indication as to whether your Council would support such an arrangement in principle. I would emphasise that at this stage it is very much a matter of exploring options and the views of your Members would be very welcomed on the proposals. If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head of Legal Services

Summary of Budget Strategy starting in 2005/06

At the council held on the 27th January the budget and Council Tax for Rochford District Council was agreed. The following is a summary of the position.

One of the largest influences on the Council is the Government. This is both in the funding arrangements that they agree and the Government priorities that the Council has to respond to.

On funding there are two areas. The grants that the Government makes available to the Council and restrictions on the Council to set a local Council Tax in line with our requirements

On grant distribution from the Government, additional funds have been made available to the Council but that still leaves us as the lowest funded Council in Essex

It also still leaves £138,000 held back by the Government of funds, which the Government says we should be entitled to

Regarding Council Tax, the Government has said that it is prepared to use capping powers to ensure that all Councils have an average increase of less than 5%.

At the moment this is all we can go on, as the capping rules do not get announced until after all councils have set their budgets.

The Council must therefore comply with this situation and for 2005/06 has set a Council Tax of 4.95 %

This is a reduction from our previous year increase of 9%

The Council agreed that this was not a position of choice in that the previous strategy agreed a 9% increase was needed to meet our service requirements.

The impact of this reduced Council Tax will not be fully known until the next three year funding model is announced next year.

For this reason the budget strategy is regarded as a short term strategy. One, which is not acceptable for the 5 year period

As usual we must wait for the other Authorities (Essex County Council, Fire, Police and Parishes) to set their tax demands before we can set the total council tax. However based on provisional information It is expected that the overall Council Tax increase will be around 3.5%

The Council must seek to protect the budget wherever possible and therefore earmarked funds and funding for major projects have been altered to give the General Fund more flexibility. Therefore balances will be artificially higher in 2005/06 than would normally be expected.

Faced with many demands the Council must decide on its priorities and funding strategies as to how to deal with them

There are key resources needed for the Council to develop its corporate vision, develop partnership working and build capacity. We are applying to the Government for £150,000 for these critical resources to improve the position of the Authority under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment

Looking at the priorities that this Council will undertake:

- £10,000 available to develop a strategy in respect of flood management for the rivers Crouch and Roach in partnership with the Environment Agency
- The Council has had many representations about graffiti removal. But there are also problems with abandoned vehicles, fly tipping, weeds in Town centres and chewing gum on pavements. – A total of £40,000 will be made available to deal with these issues.
- Government resources for Housing are now considered on a regional basis. For Rochford the key point is the sub regional agency Thames Gateway South Essex. - £10,000 will be made available to a partnership approach to ensure that Housing issues for Rochford are properly considered
- The Government now requires a new framework for Planning. Again the Council has to respond by providing resources to deal with the strategies that need to be prepared. - £25,000 will be provided in 2005/06 and additional sums in later years
- The Business community have requested that funds be made available to start to look at the problem of recycling business waste. - £5,000 will be made available for this
- The Government has placed new obligation on the Council to deal with Civil Contingencies, which is an extension of emergency planning - £25,000 has been made available for the Council to consider both internal resources and partnership arrangements to deal with this
- One specific area where the Council needs to make improvements is in the administration of Homelessness and the provision of Housing Advice - £20,000 will be made available in 2005/06 and additional sums in later years
- The Council wishes to expand the popular School Holiday Activities. - £10,000 will be included for this

- Complaints have been made about the condition of highway verges. Although their maintenance is an Essex County Council function they tackle this from a traffic management point of view and not from environmental impact – An additional £32,000 will be provided
- The Council is also concerned about the damage and obstruction caused by vehicles parking on verges. This will be looked at later in the year
- Housing Benefits are one of the key services provided to vulnerable residents. It is also a key area for CPA judgment. £25,000 will be provided for 05/06 only to deliver key improvements to the service
- The Council wants to generate community activity for St Georges Day - £5,000 has been included for this.

The Council has agreed that it needs to take a strategic approach to car parking. Motorist tell us that it is not always possible to park, The Business Community have pointed out that there needs to be more parking available in Town Centres.

We cannot enter any discussion about additional car parking without funding.

Car Park Tariffs are the key tool for car park management as well as well as producing revenue for the Council

Evidence has been submitted of our charges compared to those of our neighbouring authorities.

It is therefore proposed that charges will be brought into line with these at 50p per hour and the removal of the ½ hour band.

The Council will now need to undertake the statutory process of advertising and consulting on the charges with the aim of introducing them mid May.

The Council has also to deal with the difficult decision to restrict free parking for the disabled only to those who have been granted motor tax exemption. This Council and other councils across Essex have reported abuses of the blue badge scheme and therefore blue badge holders will not be entitled to free parking in the future.

The Council also agreed the detailed charges contained within the fees and charges part of the report.

The Government have adopted the recommendations of the Gershon review. Here public bodies will be required to make savings. These savings will be either cashable or non cashable. Very broadly speaking, cashable savings are where services can be provided at reduced cost and non cashable savings are where additional services can be provided at the same cost.

The Council will have to produce a strategy in line with the Gershon requirements to both make cash savings and efficiency savings. The budget strategy contains the provisional target of £150,000 per year cash savings from 2006/07. The details on Gershon requirements for both the cashable and non cashable savings will be dealt with later in the year.

As regards the Capital Programme for General Fund services, the key points to note are the proposed new items.

The Council has already approved Works to Rochford Reservoir; Council has now provided the Resources.

For 2005/06 resource allocations are now agreed for Hall Road Cemetery extension and the replacement of the Clements Hall skateboard ramp. Reports on these will be presented to Members at a later date

Housing Revenue Account items are not included at this stage, as they will be considered as part of the Option Appraisal exercise that will be considered later this year.



ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

WORKING WITH LOCAL COUNCILS

Consultation Charter and Code of Practice

Edition 2 - December 2000

OUR CONSULTATION CHARTER

Introduction

Rochford District Council is committed to genuine and meaningful consultation with its partners. This means that we will actively seek the views of representative organisations and will take their views into account before reaching a final decision.

Effective consultation is, of course, a two-way process and this Charter explains what consultees can expect from the District Council, and what the Council expects in return.

What you can expect from the District Council

- All relevant information on which you are asked to form a view
- A realistic consultation period in which to respond
- An undertaking to take your considered views into account
- An opportunity for your views to be presented to the appropriate District Council Committee before a decision is made
- A willingness to achieve a mutually satisfactory solution
- An explanation if the decision does not accord with your views

What the District Council expects from you

- A practicable and realistic response to the matter under consideration
- A response within the specified consultation period
- A constructive dialogue, when necessary, to air different views
- A willingness to achieve a mutually satisfactory solution
- Respect for the final democratic decision of the District Council

Accountability and Responsibility

All consultees must recognise the fact that the District Council is democratically accountable for the decisions it makes. This ultimate responsibility cannot be discharged by anyone else, but our approach is to involve our partners, as much as possible, in the decision-making process.

We believe that an open and honest approach to consultation is the only way to achieve the necessary mutual respect for each other's views. We will not always agree but, by establishing this Charter, we expect that the potential for differences and misunderstandings can be minimised.

Redress

Monitoring of this Charter will be the responsibility of the District Council Chief Executive. Any consultee, who believes the standards identified within the Charter or following Code of Practice have not been met, will have the right to make written representation to the Chief Executive. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the Chief Executive will report the outstanding issues to the relevant committee.

OUR CODE OF PRACTICE

Introduction

This Code of Practice has been prepared jointly by Rochford District Council and the Essex Association of Local Councils. It emphasises the importance attached by both the District Council and the Association to working in partnership with Local Councils in the provision of services to the public. The District Council and Local Councils have their individual responsibilities, but Local Councils have a key role in representing the views of the local community.

The Code of Practice is designed to strengthen communications as a means of both Local Councils and the District exchanging information, expressing views and taking action on those views. The aim of the Code is to enhance communication through representation, provision of information and consultation.

Representation

Although recognising the pressures on the time of Members, the District Council will encourage District Councillors to:-

- Attend meetings of their Local Councils and/or District Associations whenever necessary or to discuss specific items
- Maintain close contacts with local councillors

Local Councils will: -

- Welcome District Councillors for the area at meetings of Local Councils and/or District Associations
- Provide the District Councillor with agenda, reports and notices of meetings of the Local Council
- Assist the District Councillor in keeping informed about local views on current issues and developments

Information

Local Councils will also be supplied with the District Council's: -

- Year Book
- Public Notice of Meetings
- Minutes of Council and Committee meetings
- Press Releases

Consultation

The District Council will consult with individual Parish Councils as necessary on the basis set out in the Consultative Charter. In particular, Local Councils will be advised of all major issues affecting the District, building on past practice.

The remainder of this Code of Practice deals with each of the District Council's principal services and activities.

Town Planning, Development Control And Enforcement

The District Council is the Local Planning Authority responsible for: -

- The processing and determination of planning applications
- Giving advice on such applications
- The inspection of development sites
- The investigation of alleged breaches of planning control
- Taking formal Enforcement Action where appropriate
- Planning and enforcement appeals

It will seek the involvement of Local Councils in the planning process by: -

Providing Information

- On a weekly basis through the Parish Lists of planning applications to be considered and through the Weekly List of planning applications to be determined under delegated powers following Member consultation
- By supplying copies of all applications received from within each Parish area
- Before each Planning Services Committee Meeting through copies of the Schedule of Planning Applications to be considered, and the list of Planning Applications and Building Regulation Applications decided under delegation
- After each Planning Services Committee by providing a copy of the Minutes of the Meeting
- By notifying details of planning appeals received from within each Parish area.

Liaison

- Through the Head of Planning Services who will attend meetings of Local Councils at their invitation where major planning applications are to be considered.

Representation

- By granting Local Councils the right to be heard at the Planning Services Committee when contentious applications are to be addressed
- By inviting Local Councils to send representatives on site visits undertaken by the Planning Services Committee within the Local Council's area

Consultation

- As a statutory consultee and by taking full account of the Local Council's views received as a result of its involvement through this Code of Practice

Forward Planning

This involves: -

- The preparation and updating of the Rochford District Local Plan and planning policies
- Monitoring these policies
- The making of Building Preservation Orders
- Dealing with applications from Conservation Grants
- The production of statistical information
- The making of Tree Preservation and Woodland Orders
- Conservation, transport and employment

Local Councils will be

- Notified when the Local Plan is to be reviewed
- Invited to nominate local councillors to serve on any Working Group established to consider the revision of District Local Plan

Building Control

The Council is responsible for the statutory enforcement of: -

- Building Regulations and allied legislation
- The appraisal and determination of applications made under the Building Regulations 1985
- The inspection of building work under construction

Subject to the availability of resources, Local Councils will be provided with advice, particularly on matters affecting the disabled.

Economic Development

The District Council shares responsibility with the County Council for the economic development of the District.

- Local Councils will be consulted on proposals affecting their areas
- The District Council will consider any suggestions by Local Councils for economic development initiatives

Woodlands

The Council's Woodlands and Amenities Team is responsible for: -

- All woodland projects
- Coppicing and tree surgery
- Rustic crafts
- Caring for all trees on Council owned land

Local Councils will be

- Informed of any new projects or other initiatives
- Provided with advice on tree planting, permissive horse riding routes, pathways, access, way-marking, environmental projects and habitat improvements

Architects and Engineers

The Council has a small in-house Architectural and Engineering Service for: -

- Design and construction work
- Advice and supervision
- Information and guidance on consultation by statutory bodies

Subject to the availability of resources, Local Councils will be able to draw on this expertise.

Transportation

The County Council is the Highway Authority for the District and also deals with the co-ordination of Public Transport. The County has delegated decisions on the following local highways matters to the District Council's Transportation and Environmental Services Committee to consider: -

- Highway maintenance programmes, including both revenue and capital schemes
- Traffic management schemes, including the determination of Traffic Regulation Orders to which an objection has been lodged
- Minor capital projects, including private street works, structures, improvements, etc.
- Public rights of way
- Road safety planning
- Street lighting

Local Councils will be consulted on any of the above matters affecting their areas.

Off-Street Parking

The District Council provides off-street parking facilities within the District.

Off street car parks are regulated by Order.

Local Councils will be consulted on any proposal to vary the Off-Street Car Parking Order within their area.

Recreation

Management of the Council's leisure facilities is let to a private contractor. These facilities include: -

- Castle Hall
- Mill Hall
- Parks Sports Centre
- Freight House
- Great Wakening Sports Centre
- Clements Hall

The District Council will consult Local Councils on all aspects of recreation in the District.

Arts, Museums and Galleries

The District Council will work with Local Councils to identify community needs.

Subject to availability, Local Councils will be permitted to use Council buildings for Small local exhibitions, displays of work and artefacts.

Playing Fields, Parks, Open Spaces and Sports Facilities

The District Council will consult Local Councils on the provision, use and management of playing fields, parks, open spaces and sports facilities.

Tourism

The District Council will liaise with Local Councils on any plans to develop tourism in the area.

Subject to availability of resources, the District Council will assist Local Councils with any projects designed to encourage visitors to the area.

Environmental Health and Public Protection

The District Council is responsible for most aspects of public health with the exception of water and public sewerage but including

- Pollution control
- Food hygiene and safety
- Health and diseases
- Extensive monitoring to protect the community and the environment

Advice and information will be available to Local Councils.

Local Councils will be consulted on matters affecting public health within their areas.

Refuse Collection and Street Cleansing

A contractor provides these services on the Council's behalf but responsibility remains with the Council.

Local Councils will be consulted on any initiatives to reduce litter and to broaden the scope for recycling of waste.

Housing

The District Council is the local housing authority for the District.

The District Council works in partnership with Housing Associations to provide public housing.

Local Councils will

- Be consulted on any new scheme for rented housing accommodation in a parish, whether by the District Council or a Housing Association
- Be welcome to submit comments relating to any social housing issues
- Receive a copy of the Council's Housing Investment Programme Strategy

Local Tax Collection

The District Council is responsible for the collection of the Council Tax and Business Rates, including precepts for the County Council, Police Authority and the Parishes.

The District Council will provide: -

- Assistance to Local Councils in setting their precepts
- The District Council's Annual Report
- The District Council's Budget Book
- Information on the collection rate of taxes within each parish
- Information on the method of collection

Grants to Voluntary Organisations

The District Council will consult Local Councils on the grants it makes to voluntary organisations.

Elections

The District Council's Chief Executive is the Returning Officer for Local Council elections. Elections are conducted in accordance with statutory rules and regulations.

Local Councils will be provided with advice and guidance on procedures for filling vacancies and minimising election costs.

Electoral Registration

The District Council is responsible for appointing a registration officer to keep and maintain the Register of Electors.

A copy of the Register for the District Ward(s) which cover the area served by a Local Council will be provided free of charge to that Council at the time of publication.

Emergency Planning

The County Council co-ordinates the Local Authority response to an emergency, preparing plans to deal with natural or man-made disasters. The District Council has its own Emergency Team with a District Emergency Plan.

Local Councils will be provided with copies of relevant current plans and consulted on their preparation.