

**MEETING OF THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PANEL – THURSDAY 19 MAY 2005**

**Present:** Ian Davidson (Audit Commission) – Chair, Elizabeth Forbes (ODPM), David Eagles and Stewart Frith (PKF), Cllr Terry Cutmore and Paul Warren (RDC)

**RDC Officers Present:** Steve Clarkson (Head of Revenue and Housing Management), Scott Logan (Revenue and Benefits Manager), Christine Paget (Audit and Process Review Manager) and John Bostock (Principal Committee Administrator)

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>KEY OBSERVATIONS</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
Previous meeting	With regard to Gershon, the Annual Efficiency Statement – Backward Look 2004/05 is to be agreed by Council on 9 June 2005.	
CPA Improvement Plan	<p><b>Organisational Review/Succession Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It could be recognised that each authority had specific challenges. There is no one successful structural model and sequential change can be appropriate.</li><li>- Corporate capacity/flexibility and stability would be key facets of a future structure, which will link to the Workforce Development Plan.</li><li>- As proposals are developed they can be shared with the Panel. It was intended that a finalised report would be submitted to Members by July 2005.</li></ul> <p><b>Workforce Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It was pleasing to note that the Council had achieved Investor in People status.</li></ul>	RDC

## 7.4

SUBJECT	KEY OBSERVATIONS	ACTION
	<p><b>Introduce Revised Performance Management System</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Members would be receiving a report on progress with regard to key priorities prior to the summer recess. The report would identify the specific status of each priority.</li> <li>- Now that the general election was over, the ODPM would be able to more rapidly process the Council's application for capacity building funds.</li> <li>- As part of performance management the Council needs to consider including performance and cost analysis, to assist in identifying VFM services.</li> <li>- The Essex-wide Policy and Performance Network was due to have its second meeting. Four are scheduled per annum.</li> </ul>	RDC
Revenue and Benefits Service Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The impetus of the projects started in 2004/05 continues into 2005/06 either to a successful conclusion or as 'work in progress'.</li> <li>- As a result of the progression of the Centre of Excellence Research Project, the bid submission to Go-East had been reduced to £35,000.</li> <li>- Although it is early days, the Capita Contact Centre Project looked to be very cost effective. Consideration would be given to the applicability/implications of this approach to other service areas across the Council.</li> <li>- The fostering of relationships and cross working with Castle Point and Basildon Councils included meetings between the Leaders.</li> <li>- There was every indication that the Council would score well with regard to the end of year Benefit Fraud Inspection.</li> </ul>	

## 7.6

SUBJECT	KEY OBSERVATIONS	ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PKF was still awaiting the final version of the Key Lines of Enquiry. Whilst a draft was being piloted and could be copied to the Council, this was potentially subject to change.</li> <li>- Self-assessment was a significant element of the CPA process and there would be merit in the Council starting to consider where it is now, its key challenges, achievements to date and the challenges that remain. It will be important to demonstrate solid evidence of directional movement.</li> <li>- With regard to the Environment Best Value Inspection, a Lead Inspector would visit the Council as soon as the inspection team is appointed (July at latest) to discuss inspection parameters/content.</li> <li>- Ian would be happy to receive draft progress assessments and to offer guidance as appropriate.</li> </ul>	PKF
Next Meeting(s)	Formal meetings of the Panel were scheduled for 1 September and 24 November 2005, commencing at 10.00am in Committee Room 4, Civic Suite, Rayleigh	RDC

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and closed at 12.42pm.