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## **LOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT: JULY - SEPTEMBER 2005**

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This is the second quarterly update report to Members since the commencement of the Local Service Agreement (LSA) working arrangements on 1 April 2005. It reports on Highway Authority activities and LSA progress for the period from July to September 2005, as required in the Agreement.

### **2 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Local Service Agreement was introduced following the termination of the District / Borough Highway Agency Agreements as of 1 April 2005. It outlines the way Essex County Council (ECC) and the District / Borough Councils should work and co-operate with each other to deliver the common goal of providing services to the public.
- 2.2 As Rochford was never an Agency District, very little has changed with respect to the working arrangements between ECC and the District Council.
- 2.3 This report briefly explains what the LSA is and goes on to highlight some of the work that has been undertaken this quarter with regard to our working together.

### **3 BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE LSA**

- 3.1 The LSA is the basis for improved service delivery and partnership working across the two tiers of Local Government. Although the LSA in Rochford is yet to be formally signed, we are continuing to work closely with each other and in the spirit of the LSA.
- 3.2 Following the end of the agency agreements for highway functions with District and Borough Councils on 1 April 2005, there was a need for an agreement to reassure them of continued service and co-operation. This has been forthcoming within the LSA document. As Rochford has always been a Direct District with good and established working relations between the two Councils, it is felt very little has changed under this new agreement.
- 3.3 There are many aims and objectives identified in the LSA document recognising a need for a strong interface with those District/Borough Council functions that have a significant bearing on the Highways and Transportation service. This report details such cases where we have been doing this.
- 3.4 A notable difference with the introduction of the LSA is the split between County and Local roads, together with their respective budgets and the

decision making processes involved in each. This is discussed later in this report.

- 3.5 The LSA has given the chance to all District and Borough Councils to adopt 'Local Customised Arrangements'.

Rochford has chosen to:

- continue undertaking the role of verge grass cutting, with ECC contribution.

- 3.6 Other arrangements are:

- to arrange the landscaping sponsorship and works on roundabouts and verges, in liaison with ECC
- ECC to provide RDC with access to the CONFIRM reporting system, when available.

#### **4 ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL AND ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION AND PARTNER WORKING**

- 4.1 Communication has always been good between the two Councils and this has continued under the LSA. Good relationships have been formed between Rochford Members, Rochford officers and ECC officers to deliver the common goal of service to the public. An open invitation is made to all Rochford Members to visit the ECC Rochford team now located in Basildon where they will always receive a warm welcome.

- 4.2 Below are some of the many good examples of this good working relationship this quarter:-

- Site meetings with ECC and RDC officers
- Attendance by officers from ECC and RDC at the Traffic Liaison meeting and the Quarterly Liaison meeting held at the South Area Office
- Monthly management team meetings between ECC and RDC to discuss numerous common issues and passing of information
- Major ECC involvement with the RDC Websters Way enhancement scheme involving weekly progress meetings, site visits and office work
- Joint working with various officers to provide solutions to issues  
EXAMPLES include:  
Tidying of the road planings storage site in Rawreth; Brainstorming session to address RDC Members' wishes for improvements on the Anne Boleyn estate; Resolution of the Orange Martyrs march legalities; Co-ordinating RDC services during road works in Ashingdon Road; Discussions with RDC Planning to remove highway rights in Rayleigh Avenue; Jointly looking at how to tackle the inconvenience to residents and parents caused by vehicles being advertised for sale opposite Holt

Farm School; Information sharing regarding removal of cars that appear abandoned on New Road, Great Wakering; Reports from RDC Community Safety Officer of graffiti in the subway under the A1245 in Rawreth - jointly investigating using the YOTS/Probation Service to facilitate removal.

- ECC Action following RDC requests / queries.  
EXAMPLES include:  
Received notice of an obstruction in Betjeman Close, Rayleigh to which we investigated; Sunken manhole cover in Main Road, Hockley reported and resolved; agreeing the location of RDC recycling signs on the highway; checks of boundary issues such as Fernadale and Mortimer Road and Southwood Gardens, Rayleigh; Investigating improved signing for the Clements Hall Leisure Centre; Delivering the RDC Industrial Estate improvement scheme.
- Working with RDC Officers to maintain the PROW network.  
EXAMPLES include:  
Work with cleansing section to ensure PROW network is free from rubbish and fly tipping; work with legal services to progress PROW diversions; work with RDC officers to maintain and improve the PROW network in the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park.
- Regular liaison with RDC Parking Enforcement Department on issues such as residents' parking, signs, lines, Traffic Regulation Orders and reporting of traffic problems;  
EXAMPLES include:  
Joint site visits with local District Member to look at commuter parking issues in Eastcheap and Cheapside East and the 'Bird Estate', Rayleigh;
- Weekly visits by ECC Development Control Officer to RDC offices to review current planning applications with informal advice given by ECC.

## **5 REPORTS AND DECISIONS PUT TO RDC COMMITTEES**

- 5.1 Other than the first Quarterly LSA report submitted to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 July 2005, there have been no other reports submitted to Rochford District Council in the period from July to September 2005 by the ECC Highways Department.
- 5.2 The LSA outlines procedures for decision making which has a clear split between County and Local roads. As the working relationship has not changed significantly between RDC and ECC, we have continued with the existing tried and tested methods. We aim to obtain the approval of Rochford Members regardless of the County or Local road classification. However, the decision making process for considering objections to Traffic Regulation Orders will shortly be amended. This new way of working is explained in more detail below.

**6 TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

- 6.1 Since the amalgamation of the Highway Agency Districts in to Essex County Council, the many different ways in which highway matters are dealt with across the County have become apparent. One of these anomalies is the way in which decisions are made to consider objections against proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).
- 6.2 A new method of working, differentiating between County and Local Roads, is currently being debated amongst senior ECC managers, with a view to implementing the new procedure in the near future. This procedure will ensure a consistent and fair approach to all objectors across the County, whilst still respecting the views of District and Borough Councils on Local Roads.
- 6.3 The procedure is in draft format but at present the anticipated procedure will be as follows:  
For new TROs, we shall advertise and consult as we have done in the past and if no objections are received, we will process the Order. If objections are received, we shall produce a report as in the past, stating the objections, together with our comments and overall recommendation to the Order.
- 6.4 For Local Roads, this will be presented to Rochford Members at either the Environmental Services Committee or the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment. The report, together with the recommendations of Rochford Members, will then be presented to the Director of Highway Services (Tony Ciaburro) for the final decision.
- 6.5 For County Roads, the procedure requires that the report be presented directly to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation (Cllr Rodney Bass) for the final decision. However, we will continue to obtain the recommendations of Rochford Members either via the Environmental Services Committee or the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in advance.

**7 UPDATE OF THE LOCALLY DETERMINED BUDGET (LDB) PROGRAMME 2005/06**

- 7.1 Since RDC approval to the LDB programme on 7 July 2005, we have been working at implementing schemes on the ground. Below are the schemes listed with a brief update of progress to date and the allocated funds from the overall £85k budget.
- **Anne Boleyn Residential Zone** - Brainstorming session held end of September and ideas currently being developed –.£0k allocated this year
  - **Folly Lane/Aldermans Hill Junction** – Junction improvement scheme is dependent on land being donated by the garage only if development proceeds. If no action by 1 January 2006, then reallocate funds to Great Eastern Road / Southend Road Hockley zebra crossing - £15k
  - **Lambourne Hall Road Footway** – scheme progressing - £0k allocated.

- **Coventry Hill Footway** – Design being developed but not to full footway standard due to major accommodation works required - £20k
- **Pram Crossings** – all ordered for 2005/06 - £5k
- **Minor Items** – numerous small works being funded from this budget - £10k
- **Kill Your Speed Signs** – Scheme underway in district - £5k
- **Vehicle Message Signs** - Scheme yet to be determined - £2k
- **Down Hall Road Zebra Crossing** – Completed early October 2005 in association with major footway and carriageway scheme - £15k
- **Street Lighting Plumberow Station Entrance** – Investigation underway - £1k
- **Street Lighting Survey B1013** – Investigation underway - £0.5k

**Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) – £11.5k**

- **School Keep Clears** – Schools in all parishes have been out to informal consultation. Additional/amended proposals for Rayleigh have just been re-advertised, while a further 2 proposals for Rochford may be advertised. Public consultation to follow.
- **Brooklyn Drive, Rayleigh** - Advertised informally, formal consultation imminent.
- **Graham Close, Hockley** - Residents consulted 100% support, informal consultation imminent.
- **Ferry Road, Hullbridge** - Advertised informally, formal consultation imminent.
- **Mucking Hall Road, Barling** - Site inspection carried out, did not meet criteria for a 30mph speed restriction. Cancelled.
- **Chaseside, Rayleigh** - Advertised informally, comments received being investigated. Then will be advertised formally.

**8 UPDATE OF THE ECC MAINTENANCE INITIATIVE IN ROCHFORD DISTRICT**

- 8.1 Since first reporting the list of proposed schemes to Rochford Members on 6 April, many of the schemes have been completed and there have also been some slight amendments. Below is a summary of scheme progress to date:-

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Location description</b>	<b>Comments</b>
A129 High Road, Rayleigh	Brook Road to Paul Pry pub	Kerbs and carriageway complete. Some footway work still outstanding
Ashingdon Road, Rochford	Meesons Mead to Oxford Road	Complete
Hambro Hill, Rayleigh	Down Hall Road to Hockley Road	Complete although possible additional footway work if budgets permit
Hockley Road, Rayleigh	Victoria Road to Hambro Hill	Complete
Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh	Lower Road to Montefiori Avenue	Complete
Daws Heath Road, Rayleigh	Roach Ave to A127	Complete
Rectory Road, Hawkwell	Ironwell Lane to Windsor Gardens	Complete
Ashingdon Road, Ashingdon	Woodview Kennels to Ashingdon School	Complete
Canewdon Road, Canewdon	Whitehouse Farm to Scotts Hall Road	Complete
Shopland Road, Barling	Shopland Hall Road to Beauchamps Cottages	Complete
Little Wakering Road, Great Wakering	Whole Length	Carriageway and kerbs complete. Some further footway work outstanding.
Shoebury Road, Great Wakering	Common Road j/w Conway Avenue	Complete
Beeches Road, Rawreth	Old Chellmsford Road to Beeches Cottages	Complete
Beeches Road, Rawreth	AWS works to Highlands Road	Complete
Church Road, Canewdon	Whole length	Complete
Clarence Road, Rayleigh	Whole length	Complete

8.2 In addition to the above schemes, we are in the process of arranging suitable treatments for the following sites this financial year that were not on the original list of schemes:-

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Location description</b>	<b>Comments</b>
A129 High Street, Rayleigh	Bus stop remedials	
Helena Road, Rayleigh	Louise Road to Victoria Road and Nelson Road junction	Replacement of speed cushions subject to survey.
Daws Heath Road, Rayleigh	Roach Avenue to Eastwood Road	
Beeches Road, Rawreth	Bends near river	
Ashingdon Road, Ashingdon	Bottom of hill to school and Lower Canewdon junction	Subject to Essex and Suffolk Water scheme.
Windsor Way, Rayleigh		
Pre-patching for 06/07 sites	District Wide	

**9 UPDATE OF OTHER SIGNIFICANT SCHEMES IN ROCHFORD DISTRICT**

**9.1 Planned Parish Visits**

The basic maintenance budget has enabled the well received Planned Parish Visits (PPV) programme to be run again. The degree of involvement from the Parish Councils has varied across the District but a full programme of works is now in place and underway.

**9.2 Additional Drainage Schemes**

On a local level, additional funds have been allocated to address the backlog of drainage problems in the District. A programme of works has been drawn up and is in the process of being implemented.

**9.3 Footway Schemes**

A budget of £414k has been allocated for the specific footway schemes of Down Hall Road, Grove Road and Plumberow Avenue. Down Hall Road from Cheapside East to the A129 London Road is now complete. We shall shortly be moving on to sections within the length from Cheapside East to Hambro Hill. Grove Road has started and Plumberow Avenue is anticipated to start in the new year.

**9.4 Spa Road Bus Lay-By**

A scheme is currently being designed to remedy the problem of buses waiting at the bus stop in Spa Road, Hockley. The regular use of this stop as a waiting point causes traffic problems by restricting the passing carriageway flow to one vehicle width only.

9.5 This scheme, anticipated for implementation early in the New Year, will consist of a half width bus bay enabling buses to wait whilst also allowing two way passing vehicular flow. The footway width will be reduced but as it is currently wide at this point there will not be a problem. Due to available widths, the passing of two very large vehicles past a waiting bus will not be possible, thus relying on a give way situation.

**10 UPDATE OF THE ECC PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW) 5 YEAR ROLLING MAINTENANCE PLAN**

- 10.1 As reported in a Members' Bulletin in early June, Rochford was chosen, along with Basildon and Castle Point, to pilot the ECC PROW 5 year rolling programme. The programme aims to survey and log the assets of the entire PROW network over 5 years, equating to 20% of the network being surveyed each year. The idea is to assess each 20% against set criteria and improve the network to a higher standard. Once the asset is known, we can identify what is required and place financial bids for larger improvement works.
- 10.2 This year, the network in the parishes of Sutton, Rawreth and Barling were surveyed. The results are currently being analysed and a report will be forthcoming during November.

**11 CO-LOCATION OF ROCHFORD, BASILDON AND CASTLE POINT DISTRICTS**

- 11.1 On 1 April 2005, the ECC Agency Agreements with some District Councils were terminated resulting in all previous employees of these Councils being transferred into the employment of ECC. This in turn created the situation whereby the Area Offices had to find new larger offices. The South Area Office relocated to a new office within the Festival Business Park in Basildon.
- 11.2 The merging of staff from the Rochford, Castle Point and Basildon teams has created the opportunity to use the wide variety of skills for the benefit of the entire South Area. This has proved its worth by the Rochford team drawing on the technical knowledge and design skills of these new team members. It has also brought new technology to the office, benefiting everyone.
- 11.3 Although the Rochford team are no longer located in the heart of the District, we are still continuing to deliver the same service and maintaining our physical presence on the ground. We have adapted our working practices so that site visits are better planned rather than ad-hoc as they were previously. This practice has created improved internal communication as anyone undertaking a site visit will ask others if there is anything they can visit whilst on site.
- 11.4 Although not as easy now that the ECC office is in Basildon, Rochford District Members and officers are more than welcome to visit us whenever they please.

**12 RECOMMENDATION**

- 12.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That the Local Service Agreement Update Report July to September 2005 be noted.



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**Background Papers:-**

None

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