
ROCHFORD LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the way forward for the development of a Local Strategic Partnership for Rochford, and a method and timetable for progressing the Community Strategy.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 As Members are aware the Local Government Act 2000 requires the preparation of a Community Strategy for the district, lead by the local authority, and developed with key partners and stakeholders in the community. It should have a strong community consultative focus.
- 2.2 To develop the Community Strategy a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), consisting of a broad range of partners and stakeholders needs to be introduced. Appendix 1 shows the relationship between the LSP and the Community Strategy.
- 2.3 The Community Strategy should be aimed at integrating the plans and resources of a range of public sector organisations to meet the needs of the local community in a more 'joined up' way. It should seek the views of the community in identifying needs. The resultant strategy should then set out the needs and priorities of the area in the next 10-15 years.
- 2.4 The Local Strategic Partnership should be a partnership of those delivering services locally, purchasers of services and users of services. These are likely to come from the private sector, public sector, community and voluntary sector. The LSP will also be involved in monitoring the progress of the Community Strategy.
- 2.5 At their meeting in April, Members agreed to consult with various partners to identify ways of progressing the Community Strategy and developing a Local Strategic Partnership for the District.

3 PARTNER CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Consultation has been undertaken with a number of agencies including those listed below.
- Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust (PCT)
 - Rayleigh Police Division

- Essex County Council - Social Services and Policy
- Thames Gateway South Essex
- South Essex Partnership NHS Trust
- Learning and Skills Council for Essex
- Legal Services Commission
- Essex Fire Service
- The Environment Agency
- Chambers of Trade and Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Services (RAVS)
- Faith Representative
- Town and Parish Councils in the District

3.2 In addition following Committee decision on the 23rd July a sample of businesses not represented by the Chambers of Trade and Commerce are being asked their views on how they would like to be consulted and how they would like to interact with the LSP and Community Strategy (Min 359/02).

3.3 The range of organisations surveyed or interviewed reflects the range identified in the Community Strategy and LSP guidance documents.

4 FEEDBACK FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

4.1 The interviews undertaken have proved very positive about being involved in Rochford District LSP and Community Strategy. Most organisations are broadly aware of the purpose of each and some already have some involvement in LSPs in other areas, such as Southend, Basildon and Thurrock.

- 4.2 There are a number of lessons to be learnt from experience in other LSPs, including the need for a Steering Group of partners, as potentially the number of partners could be vast. In addition it is felt that the existing partnerships need to be linked in to avoid potential duplication of resources and ensure the group is both representative and small enough to drive the Strategy.

5 PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF THE LSP

- 5.1 It is proposed that a Steering Group of key partners and community representatives be developed with no more than 20 representatives.
- 5.2 The Steering Group should also ensure that links with the existing Partnerships Groups is maintained with a communication protocol being produced similar to the existing Parish Protocol.
- 5.3 Partners, stakeholders, Members and officers are involved in many partnerships and working groups. To avoid the LSP being perceived as too onerous it is suggested that meetings are held four times per year following an initial facilitated event to identify key themes to be addressed in the Community Strategy. Terms of reference and protocols will also be developed at this initial meeting to avoid duplication with other partnerships.
- 5.4 All existing partnerships could be included in the Local Strategic Partnership as members, being used for consultation, information and advice and implementation of the Community Strategy.
- 5.5 Whilst there are numerous partnership and working group arrangements such as crime and disorder, health, environmental, and regeneration partnerships, there is no partnership which represents the community. Members may wish to consider forming a group with which it can consult, or use the LSP as that vehicle.
- 5.6 The proposed structure of the partnership is identified in Appendix 2.
- 5.7 Links to the Essex County Council Local Area Forum should be made with the LSP Steering Group.

6 POTENTIAL LSP STEERING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1 The proposed membership of the Steering Group is outlined below. The list is not exhaustive, but reflects government guidance on involvement in LSPs and Community Strategies.

Table 1

Partner	Steering Group Membership
Rochford District Council	(2) Leader/CEX
Essex County Council	(2) Member/ /partnership Co-ordinator
Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust	(2) CEO and Chairman
Learning and Skills Council for Essex	(1) Head of Department
Rayleigh Police Division	(2) Divisional Commander/Community Safety Inspector
South Essex Partnership NHS Trust	(1) Chief Executive
Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership	(1) Delegate
Business Representatives	(2) representatives (Rayleigh Chamber of Trade and Rochford Chamber of Trade)
Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association Voluntary Services	(2) representatives
Representatives of the 14 Parish and Town Councils	(3) Parish representatives
Schools	(1) Representative
Faith Group	(1) Representative

- 6.2 This totals 20 members. However members may wish to consider the range of the representation included. Nine of the 20 represent the community, the rest are public sector. Members may also like to consider whether 3 representatives from the Town and Parish Councils is an appropriate number to represent the extent of their interest.
- 6.3 In a recent consultation event the Chambers of Trade and Commerce asked that Members consider having three business representatives. Officers have not yet concluded the feedback from the survey about non- represented businesses, and how they would like to link with the LSP. Members may wish to reserve a place on the LSP for a business that is not part of a Chamber of Commerce/Trade, subject to the findings of the business survey.
- 6.4 The membership of the partnership is not final once agreed. Many existing LSPs have found they need to develop or change membership over a period of time, or use existing groupings or sub groups to involve a greater range of people.

7 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

7.1 Community consultation can be addressed via existing partnership activity or through a series of events or surveys, which could be developed with partners. Community consultation has taken different forms in different areas, for example :-

- Essex County Council will be using a Citizens Panel of 2000 residents to consult with residents in the County. This has the advantage of being rigorous statistically ensuring that a representative sample of the population is achieved.
- Braintree has used a consultative package they have developed for community groups and for use during their summer fairs. The packs can be used by community leaders and by partners to facilitate a response from a variety of groups. This has the advantage of being cost effective, and includes partner input, but is accessible to a wide variety of people in an informal setting. However it is not statistically robust.

7.2 A mixture of consultation methods can be adopted including surveys and community consultation events to maximise feedback on the Community Strategy. Members will have a role in community consultation providing advice and information to the LSP about the needs of their wards and in supporting and consultation undertaken.

7.3 A report progressing the District Council's consultation arrangements on a variety of issues is scheduled for the next meeting.

8 TIMETABLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

8.1 The following table identifies an outline timetable for production of the Community Strategy.

Table 2

Actions	Dates
Identify key stakeholders locally and develop LSP framework for the area	September 2002-
Initial facilitated meeting of the LSP Steering Group	October 2002
Identify the key themes for the Community Strategy	Nov 2002
Establish a community consultation process	Jan 2003
Develop a draft Community Strategy	Nov – Feb 2003

Actions	Dates
Consult with Stakeholders and the Community on the Strategy	March – July 2003
Finalise the Community Strategy	October 2003

9 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Community Strategy is expected to incorporate Local Agenda 21 Strategy issues.

10 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Prospective partners have been asked to identify resources they could contribute to the LSP and the Community Strategy.
- 10.2 Human resources, such as staff time, senior level attendance at meetings and support were the main areas identified. In addition some partners have indicated a willingness to divert their research work into the area. The Learning and Skills Council for Essex for example is going to undertake research into learning needs in the area which they would be willing to share with the partnership. Funding resources are likely to follow that needs assessment.
- 10.3 Castle Point and Rochford PCT would be willing to use their resources to support initiatives in the area linked to the NHS modernisation agenda.
- 10.4 Thames Gateway South Essex has a role in supporting bids for funding from EEDA and other agencies.
- 10.5 At this stage the cost of developing the LSP and the Community Strategy is difficult to estimate in total but will be similar to that associated with the Local Plan preparation.
- 10.6 Costs will to be incurred in the following areas:
- Initial facilitated meeting of the LSP to be held in October to identify the key priorities for the area, and themes for the Community Strategy
 - Community needs research based on existing information and reports available and additional research to validate key themes identified by the LSP with the community

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- Publication of draft Community Strategy
 - Consultation on the Community Strategy
 - Publication of the final Community Strategy document
- 10.7 £2000 has been budgeted for Community Strategy development in 2002/3, which can be used to publish the draft Strategy and develop the initial consultation.
- 10.8 Funding for consultation will be required. The level will depend on the method identified.
- 10.9 Based upon experience elsewhere up to £10,000 may be needed to consult on the Strategy and publish the final document in 2003/04. It is proposed that initially the Council look towards the Best Value budget, which funds amongst other things the consultation around Best Value, to finance this task.

11 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Production of a Community Strategy is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2000.

12 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Parishes have been surveyed, regarding how they would like to be engaged in the LSP and/or the Community Strategy.
- 12.2 The results of this survey indicate that parishes would like to be involved in the LSP and Community Strategy, mainly through consultation, being involved developing the Strategy as part of a working group, and they would be keen to provide local information and contacts.

13 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) To agree the structure and membership of the LSP as proposed in appendix 2 and Table 1.
- (2) To agree the proposed timetable for development of the Community Strategy as identified in Table 2.

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- (3) To invite potential members of the LSP to an initial meeting to identify the key themes for the Community Strategy and develop terms of reference and protocols for the partnership.
 - (4) To reserve one place on the LSP for an additional business if this is indicated by the business survey results.

Paul Warren

Chief Executive

Background Papers:

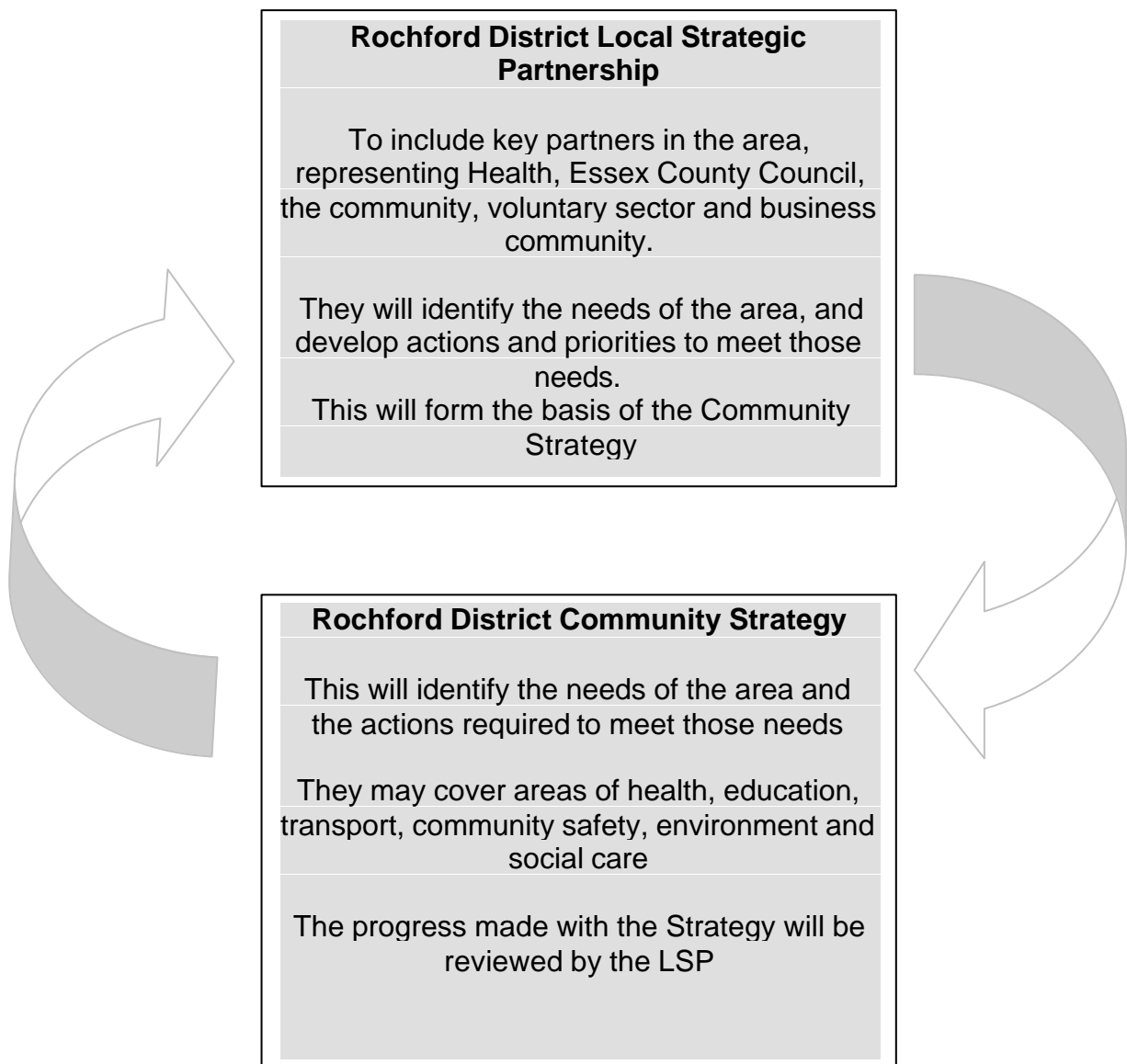
None

For further information please contact Helen Drye on:-

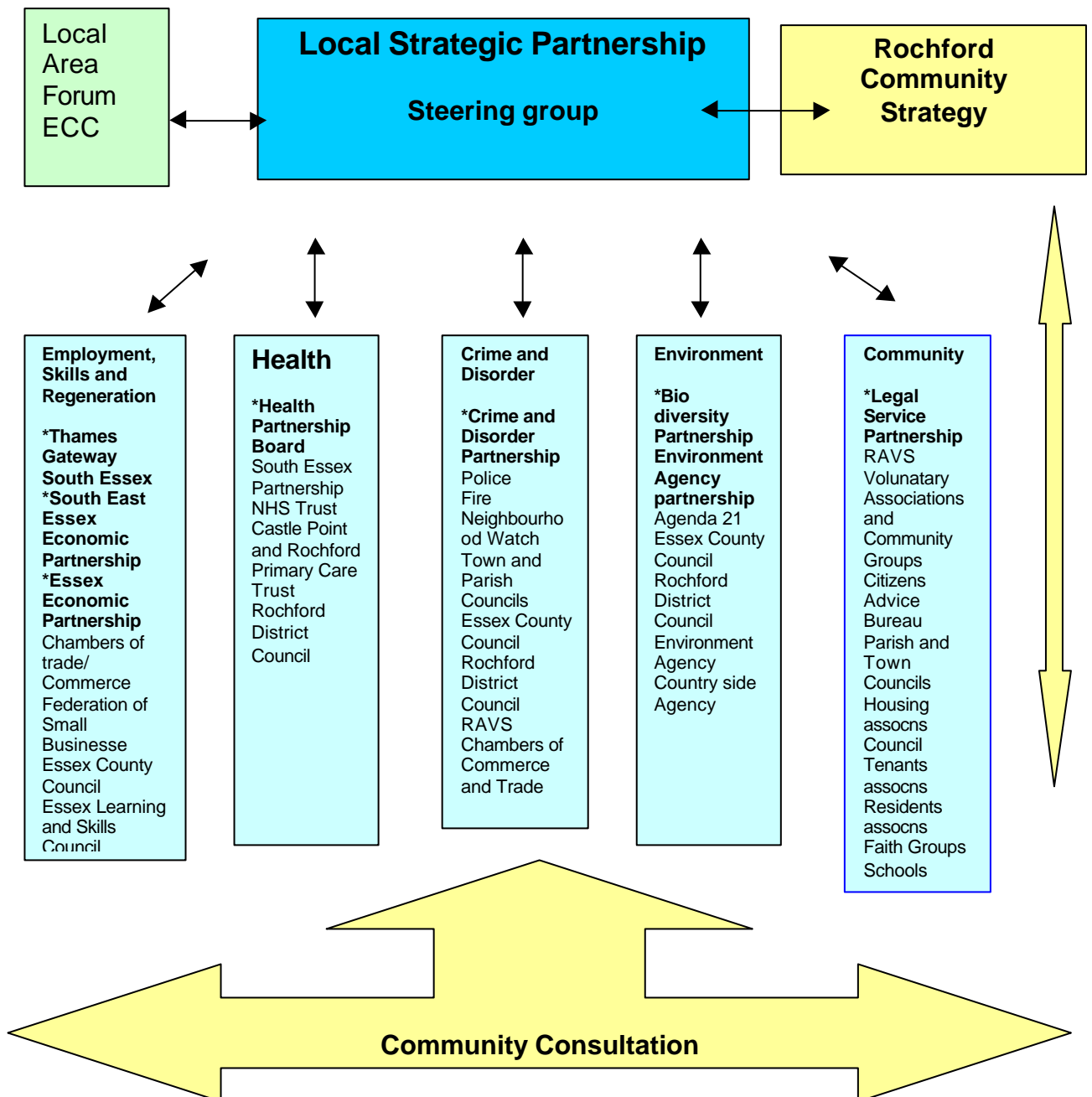
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Appendix 1

Local Strategic Partnership and Community Strategy



Appendix 2



* The partnerships in **Bold** are those which already exist covering that theme.