

## REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES TO COUNCIL

### 1 REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE

#### Corporate Plan 2012-17

- 1.1 This item of business was referred by the Executive on 14 March 2012 to Full Council with a recommendation relating to approval of the Corporate Plan. An extract of the key elements of the report of the Chief Executive to the Executive is attached at appendix 1. A copy of the Corporate Plan, amended to incorporate the observations of the Executive, is attached at appendix 2.
- 1.2 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES** that the revised Corporate Plan for 2012-17 be adopted. (CE)

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## **CORPORATE PLAN 2012-2017**

### **1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 To recommend to Council that the revised Corporate Plan for 2012-2017 be approved

### **2 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Since 2006, the Council has re-introduced the production of the Corporate Plan as a key document to be reviewed on an annual basis. The format and content around the Corporate Plan continues to be reviewed and updated since its re-introduction and the latest draft plan attempts to build on the format and content of the 2011-2016 Corporate Plan.
- 2.2 The draft before Members reflects the decisions taken as part of the 2012/2013 budget process and the content of the Council's Key Plans and Actions Report.

### **3 SALIENT INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Plan brings together the Council's main priorities and picks up the key elements from the 2012/13 budget. Subject to Member consideration and comment, the Plan, once approved, will be one of the main reference documents for the Council.
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan is a working document which, along with the Annual Report (which will include a look back as to our performance and will be finalised prior to the summer recess), explains what the Council is about, what it is focusing on and what it is aiming to do over a period. The Plan is seen as a key element in cementing linkages between service planning and the budget process and in particular the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/13 – 2016/17 which covers the same period.

### **4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The content of the Corporate Plan is in line with the decisions taken as part of the budget process and its production is funded from the Chief Executive's budget head.

The preparation of the Corporate Plan impacts upon and will continue to require senior officer time as it is produced and reviewed.

# Corporate Plan 2012 – 2017



## Rochford District Council – Corporate Plan 2012 – 2017

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## What is the Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out Rochford District Council's short and medium term priorities, over the next five years or so, and is linked into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and budget process.

The Corporate Plan and its delivery plan is reviewed and updated annually. It has not been developed in isolation and takes into account national, regional, county-wide and local priorities. To inform the Council in setting priorities we use a range of information and intelligence, including the results of public consultation exercises undertaken in the District.

Most importantly the plan provides the Council's link to the key partnership structures operating in the District. The main partnership operating locally is the Joint Castle Point and Rochford Local Strategic Partnership. The Corporate Plan ensures the District Council's objectives support those of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Castle Point and Rochford Local Strategic Partnership is a non-statutory multi-agency partnership which brings together, at a local level, the different parts of the private, public, community and voluntary sectors. Castle Point and Rochford LSP is made up of an Executive Board underpinned by thematic partnerships that support the delivery of identified priorities. The Executive Board had representatives from both public and voluntary sector partners, including Rochford District Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Essex County Council, Essex Police, National Health Service South Essex, General Practitioners from the local Clinical Consortia Group (CCG), local voluntary and community sector, the local business community, local Registered Social Landlords and each of the Chairs of the thematic partnerships.

The Joint LSP has developed the shared partnership arrangements and reflects the changing context of partnership working, with reduced and evolving funding streams, changing legislation and changing organisational structures. There are now five joint partnerships underpinning the Joint LSP (pending Home Office approval in regards to the Community Safety Partnership). The five partnerships are; The Children's Commissioning and Delivery Board, Community Safety Partnership, Employment, Skills and Business Group, Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Development Partnership.

Internally, the Corporate Plan is underpinned by Divisional Plans and individual staff and team priorities are picked up through the Performance Review process. The Corporate Plan does not set out everything the Council does. However, it attempts to focus on the 'headline' items and provides clarity around where the Council plans to concentrate its activity. The Plan should be read in association with the Council's Annual Report, which is published in July, and gives details of how we have performed over the last year.

We describe this linkage between partnership and Council priorities, our Corporate plan and Annual Report and ultimately to divisional plans and individual employee's personal development reviews as our golden thread. This means that everything the Council does can be related to the priorities of our community and our staff understand their role in delivering our priorities.

## Our Vision for Rochford

The Council's vision is shared with that of the Castle Point and Rochford Joint Local Strategic Partnership:

***To make Rochford District a place which provides opportunities for the best possible quality of life for all who live, work and visit here***

To support its vision, the Council has four main corporate objectives for 2012 – 2017, these are:

- **Making a difference to our people**
- **Making a difference to our community**
- **Making a difference to our environment**
- **Making a difference to our local economy**

Our vision and our four corporate objectives translate into the things that we do; our key strategic documentation such as this Corporate Plan, the Local Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF); the services we deliver and the facilities we provide

As a Council we have been asked what we envisage the District looking like under our vision. Over the **next five years**, we see a number of projects coming to fruition or making considerable progress to being delivered. These projects will contribute to the Council achieving its vision and its aims.

We want to improve the quality of life for the people in our communities and play a full role in the sustainable growth and prosperity of our county. In particular, we wish to utilise our position within Thames Gateway South Essex to promote the District as the ‘green part’ of the sub-region.

By the ‘green part’ we mean woodlands; coast and areas for outdoor recreation and leisure – all the things which fit well with our overarching vision. To this end, there will be improvements in the provision and upgrade of green space, resulting in increased usage. Enhancement of heritage sites and local facilities will improve opportunities for leisure and free time

activities, improving the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors to the District and providing quality places to visit.

Following its expansion and the completion of the new car park entrance at the eastern end of the site, together with improved footpath and cycle links, residents will be able to take full advantage of the amenities offered by Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park. In addition, the environmentally sympathetic Wallasea Wetlands Project, will have commenced. This will become a popular destination for bird watchers and others, particularly during the winter months.

We see us developing our services and improving their access to meet the changing needs and expectations of our communities. Our emphasis will be on quality and cost effectiveness whilst ensuring that Rochford District remains one of the safest places in the country and the fear of crime will be reduced.

Our Planning Core Strategy will provide clarity as to where and how the housing needs of our communities will be met. The new homes to be provided will offer high quality design and include water retention and renewable energy features. There will be growing emphasis on responding to and meeting the needs of a community which is ageing. At the same time, engagement with and facilities for young people across the District will have improved. We have been very successful in helping residents to increase their recycling rate and aim to make steady progress towards a target of 70%.

The automotive development on Rochford Business Park will be complete. London Southend Airport will have been upgraded with modern passenger friendly facilities and passenger flights to and from the airport will have increased, resulting in new jobs for the area. Further employment land will also be under construction in the environs of the airport.

Lastly, in working to achieve our vision and ensure delivery against our corporate objectives the Council will carry out its work in accordance with a set of values which it thinks are important.

- Be an open, accountable, listening, responsive Council
- Put the customer and citizen at the heart of everything that we do, delivering services in a caring and sensitive manner.
- Co-ordinate the management of resources with an emphasis on sustainability.
- Value the contribution of partners, employees and citizens, trusting each other and working collaboratively.

## A Picture of our District

### The Place

Rochford is a small District located in south east Essex. It is bounded by the River Crouch to the north and the urban areas of Southend and Castle Point to the south. The District has three main towns, Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. Much of the remaining area is green belt with a large area around Foulness under Ministry of Defence control. London Southend Airport straddles the District's southern boundary with Southend.

### The People

In the 2001 census Rochford District had a population of approximately 79,000 people.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2010 mid-year population estimates showed Rochford District as having a population of 83,400.

The area is relatively affluent, ranking 299 out of 326 authorities nationally, where 1 is the most deprived and 326 the least deprived. Owner occupied homes

constitute 86% of households. Private renting accounts for approximately 6%. House prices are higher than the average for England and Wales. The proportion of the resident working age population who are in employment in Rochford is high, with the area ranking in the top 40% of Districts nationally. The proportion of the working age population who are unemployed in Rochford is very low, with the District ranking in the bottom 20% of Districts nationally. In Rochford, 4.9% of people are unemployed, compared to a regional average of 6.7% and a national figure of 7.7%. ([www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk) Jul 2010 – Jul 2011)

### The Council

The Council employs approximately 210 full-time equivalent staff, with key services contracted to the private sector, for example, refuse collection, recycling, street cleansing, grounds maintenance, leisure management and the IT service.

The Council has a flat management structure headed by a Chief Executive, supported by 6 Heads of Service. These Heads of Service lead the management of a particular service area. A copy of the Council's organisational structure is included at Appendix 1. The geographical composition of the Council by wards is shown at Appendix 2.

The Council has 39 elected Members, has a Conservative administration and the political composition is as follows:

- 31 Conservative;
- 4 Liberal Democrat;
- 2 Rochford District Residents;
- 2 Green.

For the past four years the Council has operated a 'strong leader' model of government, with the Leader appointing seven members to the Executive and allocating portfolios to those members. The members of the Executive and their portfolios are included at Appendix 3.

## Consultation and Engagement

Consultation across the District, both as a Council and as part of a wider group of public sector partners is an important aspect of delivering community focused services. The Council carries out regular consultation exercises and events throughout the year on a range of issues.

Rochford also has a duty to consult with its residents under statutory best value guidance which aims to ensure that local people have regular opportunities to comment and shape local government services.

Examples of our consultation work in Rochford include:

- The RDC Youth Council.
- Community Forums
- The ‘Have Your Say’ Citizens Panel Group.
- The business breakfast and local development plan events.
- Planned public information events held across the District with other Local Strategic Partners around particular themes e.g. the elderly.

The Council also uses its District newspaper, **Rochford District Matters**, which is a quarterly publication, and website to engage, inform, and respond to those who live, work and visit within the District.

## Our Services

Local Government in Essex is structured into what is commonly termed largely as a ‘two-tier’ structure. What this means is that responsibilities and service provision is shared between District and county Councils.

For Rochford District, Essex County Council, Rochford District Council and the Town and Parish Councils work together with a range of other partners to provide a large range of services to the public.

Rochford District Council includes:

**Environmental Services** which includes; Refuse Collection, Recycling, Street Cleansing, Public Open Spaces & Woodlands, Environmental Health and Licensing

**Community Services** which includes; Leisure and Culture, Benefits, Council Tax, Community Safety and Strategic Housing

**Planning & Transportation Services** which includes; Development Management, Building Control, Spatial Planning Policy, Planning Enforcement, Taxi Licensing, Car Parking and Economic Development and Regeneration.

**Legal, Estates and Member Services** which includes; Committee services, Legal, Asset Management, Land Charges and Burials.

**Information & Customer Services** which includes; Elections, Customer Services, office support, Information and Communication Technologies.

**Finance** which includes; Audit, Financial Services and Performance Management.

**Chief Executive** services which include human resources, policy development, partnerships, health and safety, emergency planning and business continuity, internal and external communications and staff engagement.

## Governance

Rochford District Council is committed to the principles of good governance. Governance for the Council is about how



our management ensures the Council does things properly. Rochford does this by producing its code for corporate governance and by producing an annual governance statement.

The Council recognises that effective local government and the success of the authority relies on the public having confidence in both the elected members and officers of the Council.

Rochford District Council’s Monitoring Officer is the Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services. The role of the monitoring officer is to ensure lawfulness and fairness of Council decision making, ensuring that the authority complies with codes and protocols whilst promoting high standards. In addition the monitoring officer provides an annual report which provides information about work from the previous year.

In addition to its commitment to good governance, Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and requires one officer to be nominated to take responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

Rochford District Council’s Section 151 Officer is the Head of Finance. The Section 151 officer has a number of duties which include; administration of financial affairs, giving financial advice and ensuring lawfulness and prudence in all financial matters.

Finally, until relatively recently Rochford Council has been subject to an independent annual review of its business and services through the use of resources inspection and through the Comprehensive Area Assessment by the Audit Commission. These assessments covered a whole range of Council activities but included assessing the Council’s compliance with sound accounting principles and effectiveness.

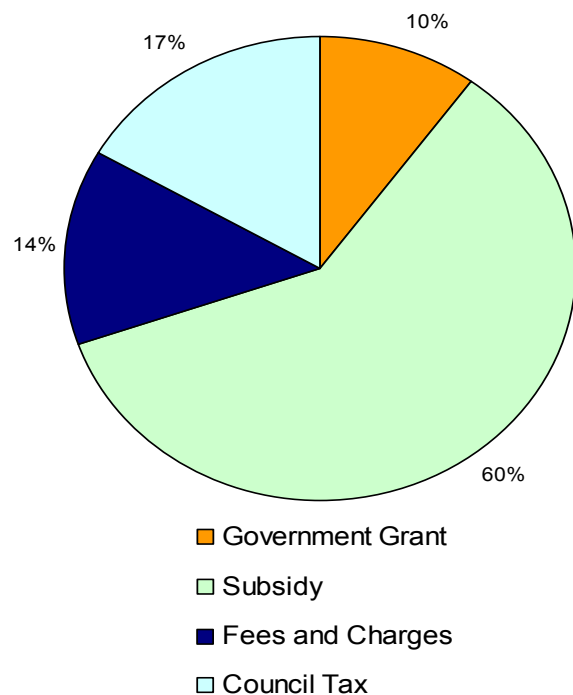
Under these inspections the Council has been identified as performing well.

### Our Finances

Rochford District Council is keen to keep local people informed about how it spends their money. In this section we explain how we raise income and where we spend money. In 2012/13 the Council will have to deliver savings and additional income totalling £900,000. The majority of this has already been identified and only £200,000 is left to be identified in the year.

#### Where our money comes from

Source	£m
Government Grant	3.8
Benefit Subsidy	23.0
Fees and Charges	5.2
Council Tax	6.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.4</b>



**Council Tax** – Rochford District Council collects the Council Tax charge, on behalf of Government, not only for itself but also for Essex County Council, Essex Fire & Rescue Service, Essex Police and the local town and parish councils.

Each authority sets its own charge that contributes to the total. For 2012/13 the total average charge, at Band D, for all these authorities is:

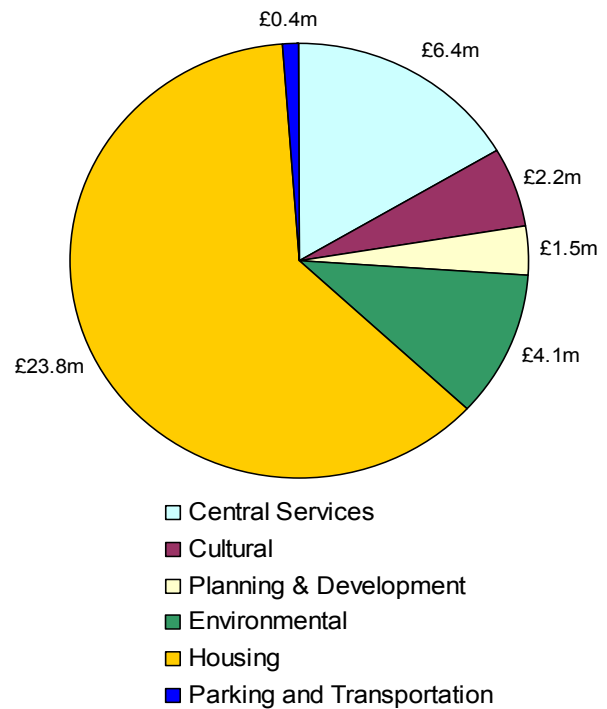
Precept	2011/12 £
Essex County Council	1,086.75
Essex Fire Authority	66.42
Essex Police Authority	136.71
Town and Parish Councils	34.67
Rochford District Council	201.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,528.22</b>

Rochford District Council's part of the charge is £201.15, 13% of the total. Rochford did not increase its Council Tax in 2012/13.

**Government Support** – Of the 12 District Councils in Essex, Rochford District Council receives the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest grant from Government per head of population. For 2012/13 Rochford District Council gets £37.89 per head of population. The Essex average is £48.07 and the highest grant is £68.88. The main Government grant has decreased by 10.5%. A further decrease is also anticipated for 2013/14, but the extent of this decrease will not be known until late in 2012.

**How the money is spent**

	£m
Central Services	6.4
Planning & Development	1.5
Environmental	4.1
Cultural	2.2
Parking and Transportation	0.4
Housing	23.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.4</b>



**Our Strategy** – Our five year Financial Strategy is reviewed, updated and rolled forward each year. Our Financial Plan coincides with this Strategy and is managed in the same way. The Strategy for 2011 – 16 is updated to include the 2011/12 budget and sets out the key financial policies, risks and assumptions. Although Council finance can be complex, Rochford District Council is keen to help keep stakeholders informed about how we manage money.

Our Financial Strategy aims to:

- Support our vision, aims and priorities.
- Set out the Council's future financial prospects.
- Assist the Council's strategic planning and policy making.
- Ensure a strategic approach is taken to the management of the Council's finances, Council Tax, and budget setting.

**Timing** – The Council has detailed budgets for revenue expenditure for 2012/13 and for capital investment for five years. It also has a summary Financial Plan to 2016/17.

### Budget Consultation

The Council has consulted local residents on budget priorities for 2012/13. The questionnaire was open from 19 September to 9 December and was made available through the Council's newspaper, the Council website, at Council events and at both Council receptions. 495 responses were received (328 paper/167 online).

The main headline results were:

Priority	Protect expenditure	Reduce expenditure
1	Anti-Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime	Sports & Leisure
2	Waste & recycling	Planning & Economic Development
3	Street Cleaning & Litter Picking	Parks and Open Spaces

### Our Council – staff and leadership

The Council recognises that it is a major employer and that both members and officers have a duty to serve the public. We do this by ensuring that members and officers work together to achieve our vision and priorities. We ensure officers have the skills and confidence to deliver our priorities and members are fully informed to provide challenge and scrutiny in the way services are managed and delivered.

We achieve this through identifying corporate and service specific themes within our Workforce Development Plan, where Heads of Service drive the priorities identified.

To achieve our objectives and best serve our public we recognise that the Council must be a rewarding and motivating place to work. We work through an established pay structure which follows equal pay principles and provides transparent career pathways within which to develop and provide opportunities for staff. We strive to be a flexible employer who puts staff welfare and wellbeing at the heart of our organisation and work within a robust policy framework to ensure consistency across the Council.

The Council has recently been awarded Investors in People – Gold status. We are proud of the commitment and hard work of our staff in achieving this national recognition. We will celebrate their achievements and successes appropriately to ensure they are supported in their roles. We canvas their views via the quarterly Staff Forum meetings and test staff engagement through our staff survey which provides key feedback on areas where more work is needed; the annual staff awards process was a direct result of staff feedback and these awards are now embedded as an annual event.

The Council also recognises the need to support our members. We offer member training and support in order to further develop members' skills and have recently achieved Charter status for our member training and development programme, which is seen as best practice amongst District Councils.

### Working in Partnership

Rochford District Council works with many partners including other public sector bodies, parish councils, voluntary groups, local faith organisations, local business and the private sector.

Partnership arrangements vary, from the delivery of day to day public services to the long term strategic planning for our District, county and region. The Council aims to be transparent in its partnership working and details about our partnership activity are

available from the Council or from its website. The Council reviews its partnership arrangements through the Overview and Scrutiny process. The Council has a partnership guide for officers entering into strategic partnerships and prepares governance guidance for strategic partnerships to adhere to.

### Performance Management

Successful performance management ensure that the Council's aims and objectives are achieved. It requires the Council to:

- Prioritise what gets done and ensure there are sufficient resources to do it.
- Ensure the authority provides value for money.
- Motivate and manage staff.
- Identify and rectify poor performance at an early stage.
- Learn from past performance and improve future performance.
- Increase user and public satisfaction.

Effective performance management requires a co-ordinated approach to planning and review, to enable key decision makers, both political and managerial, to take action based on both facts about performance and the public perception of performance, encompassing consultation with service users and residents.

To effectively manage performance, the Council ensures that there is:

- A systematic approach to deciding and communicating what needs to be done (aims, priorities and targets).
- A plan for ensuring that it happens (Divisional and service plans).

- A means of assessing if this has been achieved (performance measures).
- Information reaching the right people at the right time (performance monitoring and reporting) so that decisions are made and action taken.
- Review of performance by Senior Management, Line Management and Members.

The main components of our Corporate Performance Management Framework are:

- Our Corporate Plan
- The Local Development Framework (LDF)
- Partnership Plans
- Our Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- Divisional and Service Plans (including Risk assessments).
- Performance Indicators and targets
- Individual performance objectives set for each officer.
- A target challenge which takes place as part of the business planning process.

Monitoring and reporting of outcomes is achieved by:

- Council/Executive and Management reviews of Quarterly Performance reports.
- Ongoing review of performance via regular team and one to one meetings.
- Formal review of individuals' performance via My Performance Reviews (MPR).
- An Annual Report of the Council's performance.

## Risk Management

It is the policy of the Council to adopt a proactive approach to Risk Management consistent with the various conventions and best practice.

The Council acknowledges that risk cannot be totally eliminated, the Council is however committed to the management of “significant” risks in order to:

- Ensure compliance with statutory obligations.
- Preserve and enhance service delivery.
- Maintain effective control of public funds.
- Promote the reputation of the Council.
- Support the quality of the environment.

These objectives are attained by systematically identifying, analysing and evaluating, effectively controlling and monitoring risks, which may endanger the people, property, reputation and financial stability of the Council.

The culture of risk management is embedded into all operations and service planning processes. Risk Registers and the Risk Action Plans are regularly reviewed and updated and are presented to the Council’s Audit Committee for approval on a bi-annual basis.

## Priorities in 2011 – 2012

In terms of priorities for 2011 – 2012, the seventeen listed below were seen as key and progress has been reported to the Executive on a regular basis:

- Continue to deliver efficiency savings and identifying opportunities for increasing income.

- Continue to focus on Workforce Development to improve the Council’s leadership capacity, the skills and capacity of the workforce and the organisation as whole.
- Continue to ensure the Council’s asset base remains fit for purpose to meet the Council’s organisational, service and budgetary requirements.
- Planning and preparing for the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit.
- Continue the procurement work for the new Information Communications Technology (ICT) contract.
- Continue to develop and consolidate our partnership arrangements via the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and other partnerships such as the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to develop and improve service provision to our communities, particularly around the ageing population.
- Continue to improve our council tax and benefits service.
- Continue to improve service access and delivery for our community.
- Secure delivery of 250 housing units including up to 35% affordable units.
- Progressing the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core strategy through adopting the Core Strategy as the Councils key land-use planning document and progressing the allocation and development management plan document to inquiry.
- Implementing the Action Plan that supports the Council’s Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy – Climate CO<sub>2</sub>de.
- Continue to monitor and seek improvement in local air quality.

- Improve the customer facilities and access arrangements for Cherry Orchard Country Park
- Continuing to improve recycling rates
- Progressing the three town centre studies for Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh to detailed Action Plans for each centre
- Progressing the Joint Area Action Plan in partnership with Southend Borough Council, covering London Southend Airport and its environs.
- Implementing the Action Plan associated with the Economic Development Strategy, particularly those measures highlighted to combat recession and encourage regeneration.
- Continuing to benefit from ongoing capital investment by our long term Leisure Services contracted partner to deliver first class and improving sports, leisure and arts facilities.
- Improving service access and delivery by holding five public information days.
- Continuing to improve our award winning recycling scheme by extending it to cover more flats and securing the Green Hero Award from the Green Organisation.
- Adoption of our Local Development Core Strategy against a background of uncertain Central Government intentions regarding planning regulation and growth targets.
- Progress with our three Town Centre action plans.

### Successes in 2011 – 2012

Over the last twelve months Rochford District Council has achieved a number of notable successes, these include:

- Achievement of efficiency savings.
- Achieving 'Excellence against the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- Achieving the top recycling rate in the country, at 65.52%.
- A community engagement programme including consultation activity branded under the title 'Have Your Say' to ensure we understand residents' priorities and community needs.
- An Ageing Population Strategy which ensures that the Council can respond to the needs of a growing section of our residents.
- An IT contract procured, in partnership with 3 other councils, achieving a common specification and single provider, saving a significant amount of money.
- A vibrant Community Safety Partnership which continues to deliver one of the lowest crime rates in Eastern England through a combination of diversionary and local policing initiatives.
- Maintaining a high level of collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.
- A speedy response to fly tipping with most cases cleared within 1.5 days of report.
- Taking action to address air quality issues in Rawreth and Rayleigh.
- Approval of a 5 year Management Plan for Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park.
- Securing the future of public conveniences across the District.
- Securing two Silver RSPCA Community Animal Welfare Footprints Awards.

- Publication of a Travel Plan which builds upon our Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy.
- Securing an 11% reduction in energy consumption in 2010/11, a similar trend is expected this year.
- Continuing growth of Rochford Business Network to 386 members.
- Continuing growth of the Rochford Shop at my Local to 423 Businesses and 1000 shoppers.
- Ensuring invoices for local business are paid swiftly to support their cash flow during the current challenging economic circumstances.
- A Young Entrepreneur Programme in partnership with local schools to develop the business skills of the next generation.
- Dealing with the continued rise in benefit claims without increasing staff.

### Key Policies 2012 – 2013

The following list highlights the main policies and strategies of the Council that will require over the next twelve months.

- The Corporate Plan 2012 – 2017.
- The Local Development Framework.
- The Joint Area Action Plan for London Southend Airport.
- Individual Action Plans for Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh Town Centres.
- The Asset Management Plan.
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy
- The Annual Report.
- Workforce Development Plan.

### Achieving our objectives 2012 – 2017

Through the work on the budget process, the Council has identified its key priorities for 2012/2013 and the period up until 2016/2017. These are described below and are aligned to one or more of the Council's four key objectives. The focus and detail is very much on those things to be delivered or started in 2012 – 2013, recognising that the action plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

#### ■ Making a difference to our people

A key challenge for the Council is to continue to improve and meet the increasing and changing expectations of our customers, whilst at the same time having a much reduced level of grant funding from Central Government. For many of our customers there is no choice but to use the service on offer by the Council and therefore it is important that we deliver our services in the most cost effective way to a standard which is recognised as excellent. If we wish to deliver our vision '***To make Rochford District a place which provides opportunities for the best possible quality of life for all who live, work and visit here***' it is important we get our service offer right and ensure it continues to meet the ever changing demands placed upon us.

#### Our key targets for the next 12 months are:

- Continue to develop the organisation as a whole through mechanisms such as Peer Reviews and focus on Workforce Development to improve the Council's Leadership capacity and skills and the capacity of the workforce as a whole.
- Continuing to deliver efficiency savings and identifying opportunities for increasing income including shared service working and providing services to third parties.

- Continuing to ensure the Council's asset base remains fit for purpose to meet the Council's organisational, service and budgetary requirements.
- Ensure the Council's Information Communications Technology (ICT) remains fit for purpose to meet the Council's organisational, service and budgetary requirements, and in particular implementing the new ICT contract and data centre.
- Provision of effective and efficient 'back office' services to support the Council's aims and objectives.

#### **Our longer term targets to 2017 are:**

- To retain the Investors in People Gold Status we have been awarded at our next re-assessment in 2014/15
- To maintain our Member Development Charter Status at our next re-assessment in 2013/2014.

#### **Making a difference to our community**

In order to achieve the Council's vision we recognise that we must have an inclusive community where residents are not only safe but feel they are safe. Although the District already has a very low crime rate compared to the rest of the Country and other parts of Essex, the Council (as part of the LSP) aims to make the District even safer by actively playing its part in the Local Community Safety Partnership (CSP), which involves a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies. The Council appreciates the link between high levels of community involvement and the feeling of safety and is therefore keen to promote vibrant communities.

Also important to the Council is the caring aspect, aiming to progress services and initiatives which deal with the more vulnerable sections of our community,

either alone or in partnership with other public agencies, the private sector or the voluntary and community sector.

#### **Our key targets for the next 12 months are:**

- Continue to develop and improve our services to our community particularly in the case of:
  - Planning and preparing for the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit.
  - Improving our council tax and benefits service
  - The administration and delivery of Disabled Facilities Grant.
  - Developing our partnership with Castle Point BC in respect of Environmental Health Services
  - Planning infringements with an increase in planning enforcement
- Respond to and implement the requirements of the Localism Act to benefit of our community.
- Continue to develop and consolidate our partnership arrangements to develop and improve service provision to our communities
- Implementing the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy as the Councils key land use planning document and progressing the Allocation and Development Management Plan Document to inquiry, to facilitate the delivery of 250 housing units per year including up to 35% affordable units.
- Provide effective and efficient Civic and Democratic functions with particular focus on:
  - Organising Police Commissioner Elections



- Responding to the Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review

#### Our longer term targets to 2017 are:

- Through the local CSP, to continue to achieve sustainable levels of crime reduction and fear of crime by tackling crime and the causes of crime, targeting specific issues and particular problem areas where appropriate.
- Implement a series of initiatives aimed at providing more and/or alternative facilities specifically for young people, with the intention to secure at least one new/improved facility per year.

#### Making a difference to our environment

We are committed to looking after the environment of the District; protecting the amenities of residents and preparing plans for future development that are well designed and sustainable.

Growing awareness of the impact of climate change means that the work we do for the benefit of the District and the plans we prepare for the future must be carefully considered, be sustainable, and balance the needs of residents, workers and visitors against our long-term ambition to protect and enhance the environment.

#### Our key targets for the next 12 months are:

- Implementing the Action Plan that supports the Council's Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy – Climate CO<sub>2</sub>de.
- Ensure all open spaces are effectively managed and improve the customer facilities and access arrangements.
- Continue to improve the quality of local environment and street scene.

- Continue to improve recycling rates towards a target of 70%.

#### Our longer term targets to 2017 are:

- To ensure that community facilities provision and access to these is considered in all new major residential developments.
- To work on reducing the Council's own carbon dioxide emissions by 10% (based upon 2008 baseline).
- To continue to improve and upgrade our parks and open spaces through a rolling programme of open space refurbishment.
- To support the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in its proposals to secure the Wallasea Island wetlands project for bird watching and other recreation.
- To improve public access to the rivers Crouch and Roach.
- To utilise the LDF process to support and enhance our built heritage of listed buildings conservation areas and locally important buildings.

#### Making a difference to our local economy

The Council seeks to work with partners to support local businesses through the recession. In addition the Council will seek to maximise and encourage economic growth for the benefit of the communities in the area.

The District of Rochford is located within the Thames Gateway South Essex sub region. Within South Essex, considerable change to the economy and social environment is planned with an increase of 55,000 net additional jobs across the sub region by 2021 – approximately 20%. There are currently 25,000 jobs in the District and very

low rates of unemployment. However, outward migration is high with 64% of workers commuting out of the District to work.

To meet the aspirations of our communities and to begin to sow the seeds for more dynamic and sustainable employment locally, we need to further develop the regeneration of our employment areas and town centres. At this first stage, key to this process will be the planning policies contained in our Local Development Plan (LDP).

**Our key targets for the next 12 months are:**

- Implement the Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) in partnership with Southend BC covering London Southend Airport and its environs.
- Review and update the Council's Economic Development Strategy and associated action plan to further address the issues of recession and encourage regeneration.
- Progressing the three town centre studies for Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh to detailed action plans for each centre.
- Ensuring council operations and policies support the local economy and its sustainability wherever possible.
- Provision of an effective and efficient Building Control Service

**Our longer term targets to 2017 are:**

- To work with the County Council as highway authority, to look at potential solutions to the current congestion problems across the District to ensure the highway infrastructure becomes 'fit for purpose' and at the same time, discuss with them the public transport network to ensure a more frequent, reliable and comprehensive system with better linkages between bus and rail.
- To work with the County Council as highway authority, specifically in making improvements to Sutton Road, Watery Lane and access to Baltic Wharf.
- Continue to implement the Action plan associated with the Economic Development Strategy.
- Through the LDF process, to seek to develop policies which result in the replacement of the old and poorly located industrial estates within the District. At the same time, to identify the provision of new employment areas.
- To use the LDF process to secure the long-term future of the wharfage at Baltic Wharf as an employment area and ensure that appropriate access infrastructure is put in place.

## Corporate Plan – Action Plan 2012 – 2013

The Corporate Plan Action Plan highlights our key targets that the authority will be working towards over the next twelve months.

Making a difference to our people			
Key Targets	Deadline	Key Activities & Actions	Portfolio Holder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to deliver efficiency savings and identifying opportunities for increasing income including shared service working and providing services to third parties.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Monitor and report on achievement of efficiency targets for 2012/13 Monitor and report on income and shared service working.	<b>Leader &amp; Finance and Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop the organisation as a whole through mechanisms such as Peer Reviews and focus on Workforce Development to improve the Council's Leadership capacity and skills and the capacity of the workforce as a whole.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Plan and prepare for Peer Review in November 2012 Evaluate the results of the Peer Review and identify actions required for further improvement. Implement Workforce Development Plan	<b>Finance and Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to ensure the Council's asset base remains fit for purpose to meet the Council's organisational, service and budgetary requirements.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Complete review and identification of options for all the Council's holdings of land and buildings by Autumn 2012. Produce Asset Management Plan Implementing the Public Conveniences Strategy	<b>Finance and Resources</b>  <b>Environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the Council's Information Communications Technology (ICT) remains fit for purpose to meet the Council's organisational, service and budgetary requirements, and in particular implementing the new ICT contract and data centre.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Transfer of servers to the off-site data centre efficiently and effectively by 1 July 2012. Prepare for transition to new ICT contract in April 2013 with no impact on service users	<b>Service Development / Improvement &amp; Performance Management</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of effective and efficient 'back office' services to support the Council's aims and objectives.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replacement of print room equipment</li> <li>Review of post options and franking equipment</li> </ul>	<b>Service Development / Improvement &amp; Performance Management</b>

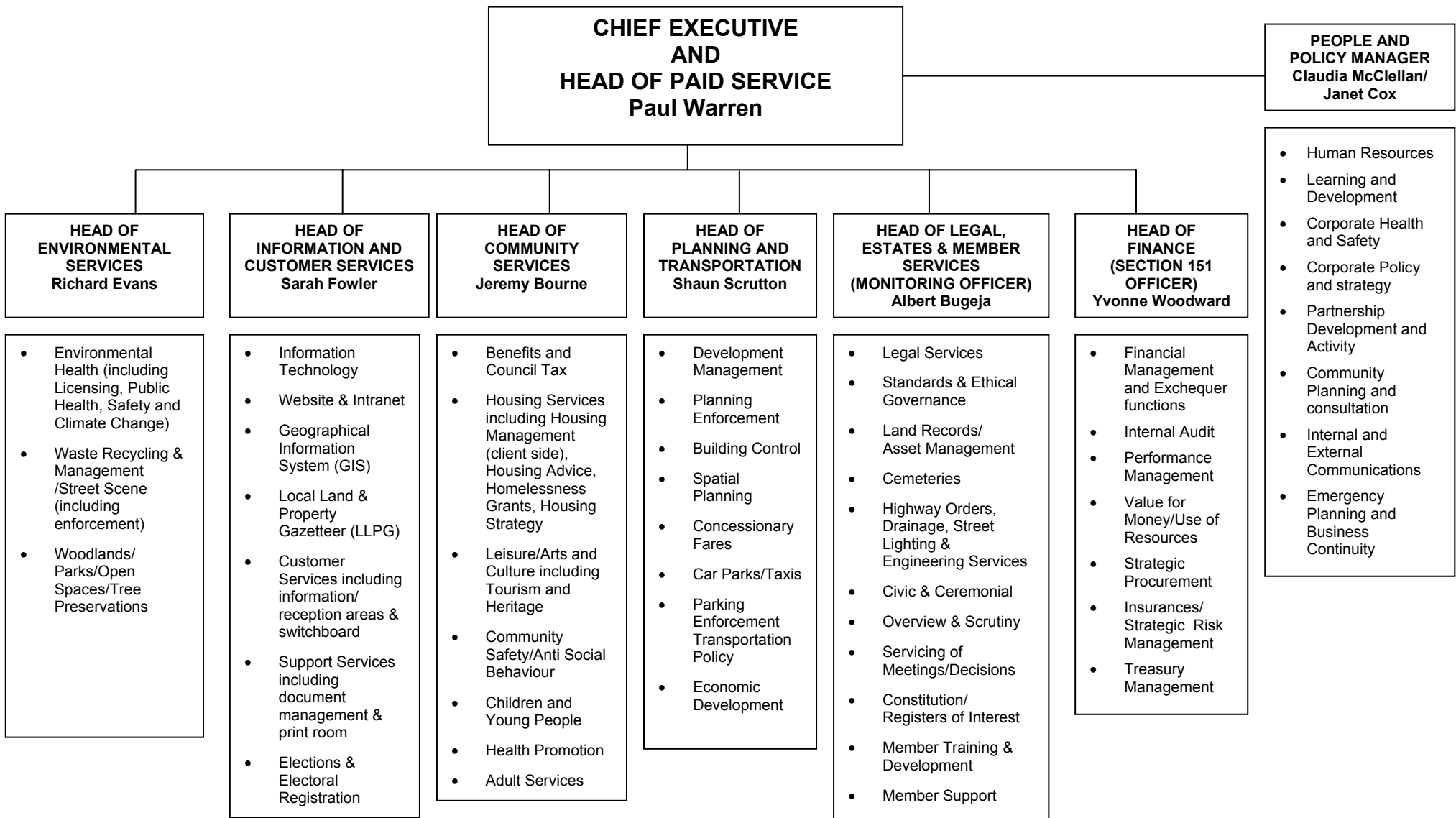
Making a difference to our community			
Key Targets	Deadline	Key Activities & Actions	Portfolio Holder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop and improve our services to our community particularly in the case of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Planning and preparing for the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit.</li> <li>– Improving our council tax and benefits service</li> <li>– The administration and delivery of Disabled Facilities Grant.</li> <li>– Developing our partnership with Castle Point BC in respect of Environmental Health Services</li> <li>– Planning infringements with an increase in planning enforcement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing</b>	Monitor information and guidance from central government on how it is to be implemented and then action accordingly, including liaison with other Essex authorities.	<b>Council Tax Collection, Benefits and Strategic Housing</b>
	<b>Ongoing</b>	Continue to analyse all aspects of the Council Tax and Benefits service, implementing new initiatives and developments where appropriate, to improve overall efficiency.	<b>Council Tax Collection, Benefits and Strategic Housing</b>
	<b>Ongoing</b>	(a) Implement Review Committee recommendations and other improvements to the process, in conjunction with the Home Improvement Agency. (b) Monitoring Performance Indicator figures for the various stages of the process.	<b>Council Tax Collection, Benefits and Strategic Housing</b>
	<b>September 2012</b>	Review of partnership arrangements with Castle Point BC in respect of the Environmental Health Services.	<b>Environment</b>
	<b>March 2014</b>	Monthly monitoring of enforcement caseload. Annual review of caseload	<b>Planning and Transportation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to and implement the requirements of the Localism Act to benefit of our community.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Any decisions on level of council tax for 2013/14 will need to take account of the right to veto excessive council tax rises referendum. Pay Policy for 2013/14 agreed by Council by March 2013 Monitor information and guidance from central government as the legislation is implemented	<b>Leader</b>

<b>Making a difference to our community</b>			
<b>Key Targets</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Key Activities &amp; Actions</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop and consolidate our partnership arrangements to develop and improve service provision to our communities</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing</b>	Ensure progress against a range of smart targets for all partnerships under the Joint Local Strategic Partnership	<b>Leader</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy as the Councils key land use planning document and progressing the Allocation and Development Management Plan Document to inquiry, to facilitate the delivery of 250 housing units per year including up to 35% affordable units.</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing</b>	Review of Core Strategy Allocations Development Plan Document – adopted Autumn 2013 Development Management Development Plan Document – adopted Autumn 2013	<b>Planning and Transportation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide effective and efficient Civic and Democratic functions with particular focus on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organising Police Commissioner Elections</li> <li>Responding to the Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Police Commissioner Elections held without challenge in accordance with guidance from the Home Office and Electoral Commission. Response to the Boundary Commission Review dependent on the Commission sending another round of consultation.	<b>Leader</b>  <b>Leader</b>

Making a difference to our environment			
Key Targets	Deadline	Key Activities & Actions	Portfolio Holder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing the Action Plan that supports the Council's Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy – Climate CO<sub>2</sub>de.</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing</b>	Carry out a review of the Council's Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose to 2018 Continue to realise the Council's carbon reduction programme to reduce CO <sub>2</sub> emissions Subject to information being made available, to undertake feasibility studies into the Green Deal and how the Council may participate in its delivery.	<b>Environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all open spaces are effectively managed and improve the customer facilities and access arrangements.</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing</b>	Procure long-term Grounds Maintenance solutions with the new contract operational by March 2013. Prepare an Open Spaces Strategy to sit alongside the review of the Grounds Maintenance Contract by September 2012. Deliver the Management Plan for Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park. Develop the Upper Roach Living Landscape Vision in partnership with Essex Wildlife Trust by August 2012.	<b>Environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve the quality of local environment and street scene.</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing</b>	Prepare strategy to inform the review of the Street Cleansing and Waste Management contracts (due in 2015) by November 2012. Seek improvements in Air Quality.	<b>Environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve recycling rates towards a target of 70%</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Consolidate and modify the recycling scheme to maximise our recycling rates. Review the Inter Authority Agreement with ECC. Seek funding to support weekly collections of refuse by August 2012.	<b>Environment</b>

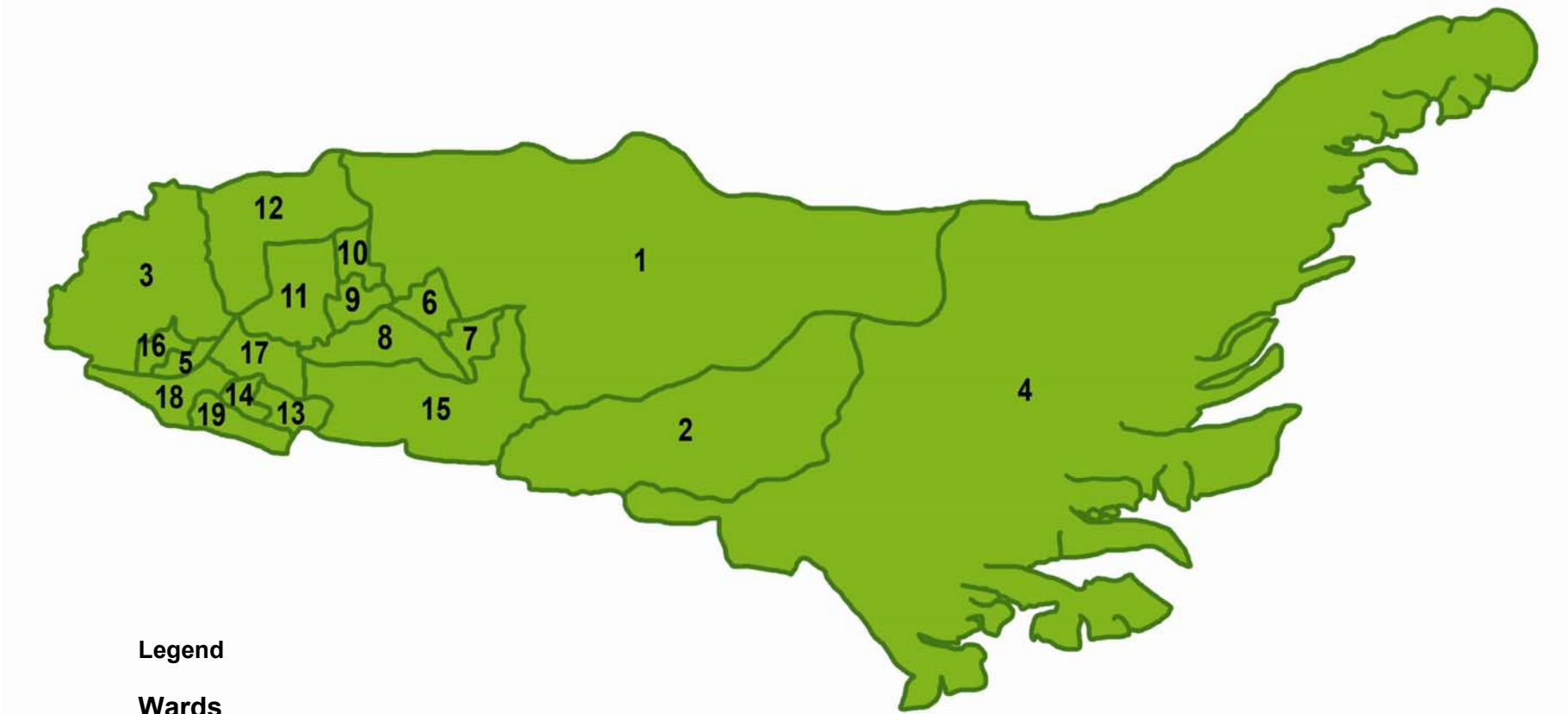
Making a difference to our local economy			
Key Targets	Deadline	Key Activities & Actions	Portfolio Holder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) in partnership with Southend BC covering London Southend Airport and its environs.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Plan adopted Autumn 2013	<b>Planning and Transportation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update the Council's Economic Development Strategy (EDS) and associated action plan to further address the issues of recession and encourage regeneration.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Adopted EDS March 2013. New Shop At My Local website launched 2012, with new initiatives to increase voucher use and use by traders.	<b>Leisure, Tourism, Heritage, the Arts, Culture and Business</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressing the three town centre studies for Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh to detailed action plans for each centre.</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Hockley – adoption Autumn 2013 Rochford – adoption Spring 2014 Rayleigh – adoption Spring 2014	<b>Planning and Transportation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of an effective and efficient Building Control Service</li> </ul>	<b>March 2013</b>	Implement mobile working for Building Control Explore and arrange for implementation of opportunities for partnership working	<b>Planning and Transportation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring council operations and policies support the local economy and its sustainability wherever possible.</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing</b>	Maintain 90% of local invoices to be paid within 10 days, and 98% to be paid within 30 days Improving the business support offer by issuing quarterly newsletters, Developing further the business forums and running the business breakfasts. Conducting the young entrepreneur of the year awards Continue to develop and manage the delivery of shop at my local. Continue to deliver Low Carbon Business in partnership with Groundwork and Thames Gateway South Essex local authorities through the Low Carbon Action Plan.	<b>Leisure, Tourism, Heritage, the Arts, Culture and Business</b>

Appendix 1 – Organisational Chart





Appendix 2 – Map of District



**Legend**

**Wards**

- |   |                             |    |                  |    |             |
|---|-----------------------------|----|------------------|----|-------------|
| 1 | Ashingdon and Canewdon      | 8  | Hawkwell West    | 15 | Rochford    |
| 2 | Barling and Sutton          | 9  | Hockley Central  | 16 | Sweyne Park |
| 3 | Downhall and Rawreth        | 10 | Hockley North    | 17 | Trinity     |
| 4 | Foulness and Great Wakering | 11 | Hockley West     | 18 | Wheatley    |
| 5 | Grange                      | 12 | Hullbridge       | 19 | Whitehouse  |
| 6 | Hawkwell North              | 13 | Lodge            |    |             |
| 7 | Hawkwell South              | 14 | Rayleigh Central |    |             |

Appendix 3 – Executive Appointments – 2012/13

Portfolios	Appointee
Overall Strategy and Policy Direction (Leader)	Cllr T G Cutmore
Planning and Transportation (Deputy Leader)	Cllr K H Hudson
Council Tax Collection, Benefits and Strategic Housing Functions	Cllr M Maddocks
Environment	Cllr M J Steptoe
Finance and Resources	Cllr C G Seagers
Leisure, Tourism, Heritage, the Arts, Culture and Business	Cllr K J Gordon
Service Development/Improvement & Performance Management	Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill
Young Persons, Adult Services, Community Care and Well-Being, Health and Community Safety	Cllr Mrs J E McPherson



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