

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2007-11

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report introduces a draft of a revised new Economic Development Strategy for Rochford District for the period of 2007-11 for Members' consideration.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This strategy recognises that Rochford District Council, whilst having an important role in economic development, the district cannot work in isolation and is dependent upon the many partners and agencies involved in this area of work locally, county-wide, sub-regionally and regionally.

3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The aim of the economic development strategy links with the Thames Gateway Economic South Essex Economic Development Strategy, Rochford District's Community Strategy, the emerging Local Development framework and the priorities aligned in Essex's Local Area Agreement.
- 3.2 The key aim of the strategy is to 'work with partners to maximise and encourage economic growth for the benefit of the community in the area, making the District the best place in the County to live, work and visit'.
- 3.3 There are six key objectives for Economic Development identified below:-

1. Raise the profile of Rochford

We will actively participate in county, sub-regional and regional initiatives to ensure maximum benefit for the District in attracting investment. We will also take advantage of any opportunities to lobby for improved infrastructure or other initiatives to benefit the economy of Rochford.

2. Support the needs of the business community in the area

We will ensure that existing or potential businesses have access to quality and effective support to meet their requirements. We will seek to develop the business community within the district to increase its capacity to contribute to the economic prosperity of the district.

3. Develop the skills of the local workforce

We will work with partners to ensure that skill levels meet the needs of businesses now and in the future, to maintain low levels of unemployment for the district and improve its attractiveness for new investment. We will seek to secure a better match between workforce skills and business requirements in order to maximise the opportunities for people to work locally.

4. Develop tourism and heritage

We will seek to develop initiatives, which provide new high value local employment and wealth generation opportunities. We will support existing and new visitor attractions and facilities that are appropriate to their locality, improve access to and the use of recreation facilities and preserve the districts' heritage for future generations.

5. Seek to improve town centre vitality and support town centre and industrial estate enhancements

We will support town centre retailers to enhance their offer and differentiate it from the major retail chains in order to maintain and improve town centre vitality. We will maximise opportunities to improve the environment of our town centres and industrial estates to ensure the area is economically prosperous and competitive.

6. Support sustainable use of resources

We will ensure that new investment is sustainable in economic, environmental and social terms and that new and existing businesses minimise their use of resources and creation of waste.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 As the Strategy states partnership involvement is fundamental to the success and implementation of the Economic Development Strategy. The views of Council partners, the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership and stakeholders have been sought and have been incorporated in the development of the Strategy.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The resource implications of the Strategy are identified in the Economic Development Strategy Action Plan.

6 RECOMMENDATION

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

- (1) To agree to adopt the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2007-11.
- (2) To review progress on the Action Plan in 12 months.

Paul Warren
Chief Executive

Background Papers:-

None

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