

MEETING OF THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PANEL – MONDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2005

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

Also Present: John Bostock (Principal Committee Administrator, RDC)

SUBJECT	KEY OBSERVATIONS	ACTION
Key priorities for the Council in 2005/06 and CPA Improvement Plan	- The report on key policies and actions for 2005/06 going to Full Council in February will cover all the main areas, including those driven by CPA. The CPA Improvement Agenda document relates specifically to the CPA Improvement Plan. Service Action Plans have been prepared which support/drive projects and initiatives.	
	- The Council's Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee will actively monitor and review the CPA Improvement Plan, which would include responding to Improvement Panel suggestions. The Committee will ensure that possible difficulties are addressed at an early stage, being particularly mindful of any capacity issues.	RDC
	- Whilst risk had not been a specific feature included in the CPA Improvement Plan, it was agreed to incorporate specific actions around risk management into the Improvement Plan documentation. The Finance & Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee already received position reports on risk management. There had also been Member training sessions.	RDC
	- From the Council's perspective, the key risks associated with progressing the Improvement Plan included whether ODPM capacity building grant monies were made available, whether there will be yet further additional Government Initiatives during the year and the developing Gershon agenda.	

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Consideration of Individual Service Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rather than review all service action plans, it was agreed that it would be useful to isolate one that relates to a corporate/external issue and one relating to a more internal service specific issue for detailed review at each improvement meeting. Such an approach would help the Council in that it would provide an external viewpoint/challenge. The subjects of housing benefits and succession planning (including, perhaps, the Workforce Development Plan) were agreed for consideration at the next meeting. The subject of waste would be appropriate for detailed review at a future meeting. 	RDC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback from this meeting would be considered at the March Meeting of the Council's Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee. All Panel members would receive copies of the draft and final reports being submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Panel meetings would be timetabled to facilitate input into the Committee reporting process. 	RDC
Inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Audit Commission would be looking to undertake a specific subject Best Value Inspection on site in January 2006. It was agreed that this should focus on 'the environment'. - In connection with CPA, a revised Self Assessment would need to be submitted by the Authority in September. Ian Davidson would then co-ordinate the external opinion and a formal direction of travel statement would be issued in December. - It would assist the Council to have clear time lines for the various inspection activities. - The Council would supply Ian Davidson with a list of the plans and strategies it was responsible for, together with a status report on each. 	RDC RDC
Next Meeting	The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 19 May 2005, commencing at 10.00am in Committee Room 4, Civic Suite, Rayleigh	ALL