

# **WORKING WITH BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS**

## **THE ROCHFORD CONSULTATIVE CHARTER**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Rochford District Council is committed to consultation with its partners. This means that we will actively seek the views of representative organisations and will take their views into account before reaching a final decision.

Effective consultation is, of course, a two-way process and this Charter explains what consultees can expect from Rochford District Council, and what the Rochford District Council expects in return.

#### **What you may expect from the Rochford District Council**

- All relevant information on which you are asked to form a view
- A realistic consultation period in which to respond. In most cases this should be no less than three working weeks
- An undertaking to take your considered views into account and inform if your views have influenced the Council's decisions or policies
- An opportunity for your views to be presented to the appropriate Rochford District Council Committee before a decision is made
- A willingness to achieve a mutually satisfactory solution
- An explanation if the decision does not accord with your views
- Include a standing agenda item for forthcoming consultation from the Council at Chambers of Trade and Local Business Representative quarterly meetings.

### **What the District Council may expect from you**

- A practicable and realistic response to the matter under consideration
- A response within the specified consultation period
- A constructive dialogue, when necessary, to air different views
- A willingness to work towards a mutually satisfactory solution wherever possible
- Respect for the final democratic decision of the District Council

### **Who should be consulted**

The business community is represented by a number of business representative organisations in the district. These should be included in all appropriate consultation activity with the Council.

These include

- South East Essex Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Rochford and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce
- Rayleigh Chamber of Trade
- Hockley Chamber of Trade
- Rochford Traders Council

### **Accountability and Responsibility**

All consultees must recognise the fact that the Rochford District Council is democratically accountable for the decisions it makes. This ultimate responsibility cannot be discharged by anyone else, but our approach is to engage with our partners, as much as possible, in the decision-making process where appropriate.

We will not always agree but, by establishing this Charter, we expect that the potential for differences and misunderstandings can be minimised.

**The Council recognises that representatives from the business community may hold differing opinions particularly in connection with Planning and Highway matters and respects their rights in such instances to use the mechanisms available.**

### **Redress**

**Monitoring of this Charter will be the responsibility of the Chief Executive of Rochford District Council. Any consultee who believes the standards identified within the Charter have not been met, will have the right to make written representation to the Chief Executive. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the Chief Executive will report the outstanding issues to the relevant committee.**