

Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is concerned with taking positive action to show that an organisation has a responsible and positive attitude to the customers, employees, communities and environment on which it impacts. It is about moving beyond a base of legal compliance to integrating socially responsible behaviour into core values.

The importance that Rochford District Council (RDC) attaches to CSR policies and initiatives is reflected in RDC's vision and accompanying corporate objectives, 2009-2013:

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

- 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

The following areas are some examples of the CSR activity that RDC is currently involved in:

Employment policies:

- Flexible working
 - A flexible working system is in place which encourages staff to maintain a healthy work – life balance.
- Communicating with staff
 - A staff intranet and staff sounding board are in place to keep staff informed and to allow feedback on decisions.
- Staff training
 - RDC is fully supportive of staff development/training and has established a progressive Learning Environment. Training and development are vital to raise the skill levels that staff require to carry out their roles confidently and effectively, therefore making a difference to the community they serve.

Helping the community:

- Grant scheme to voluntary organisations. Examples of voluntary organisations recently assisted include:
 - Recycled Teenagers – run activities such as aqua aerobics and salsa dancing for over the over 50's.
 - Rayleigh Physically Handicapped Club - to support physically handicapped people in their daily lives.

- Staff volunteering scheme
 - Giving staff the opportunity to work on specific voluntary projects in the District.

Helping local business:

- Economic Development Strategy
 - The Strategy identifies key practical steps which will impact positively on the economic prosperity of businesses and residents in the District. An example is promoting the 'Greener Economy' with business and partners. The Council, like its local and regional partners, wants to lead in forming a low carbon economy.
- 'Shop At My Local' campaign
 - A campaign which incorporates a range of projects and events to attract people to the local shopping areas in the Rochford District.
- Providing advice on how to implement CSR policies.
- Through the Rochford District LSP, encouraging partners to use local companies and suppliers where possible.

Helping the environment:

- RDC's Environmental Policy provides a commitment to 'minimising the environmental impacts of the organisation and to the improvement of the local, national and global environment in whatever way it can within resource limits'. For example, RDC looks for opportunities to maintain and improve existing and create new wildlife habitats.
- RDC has recently developed and approved its Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and its associated action plan – the ClimateCO₂de. The ClimateCO₂de aims to improve natural resource efficiency both within Council operations and out in the community. For example, an action from this strategy will involve the RDC offering a free thermal imaging service for local residents to detect heat loss from their homes.

For further information please contact Andrew Lowing, Community Planning Officer.