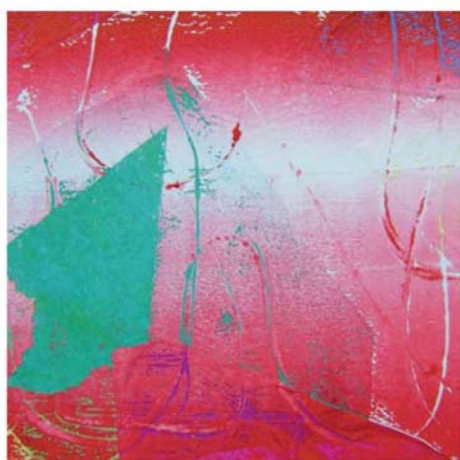


The Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 – 2015



Vision 100

Rochford District

Local Strategic Partnership



The Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 – 2021

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Sustainable Community Strategy for Rochford District revised for 2010.

This strategy, produced by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has included a diverse range of organisations and the public in its development. The strategy gives all organisations a clear focus on the key priorities to be tackled within the District. We are fortunate within the Rochford District to benefit from beautiful landscapes, good standards of education, health and employment. However, this does not mean that we can be complacent. The District does have areas that don't achieve as well as other areas and we need to tackle this. We are also facing an ever increasing ageing population and whilst this is a good thing we need to ensure that services are available to help people in later life.

The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) has been produced by the Local Strategic Partnership – a partnership of key Public, Private and Voluntary sector organisations who have a duty to develop a long term vision and strategy for the area that contributes to and influences the Essex wide Local Area Agreement and the Local Development Framework for the District. Following the general election in May 2010 the Local Strategic Partnership is aware that there may be significant changes in the coming year.



Councillor Terry Cutmore
Chairman Rochford Local Strategic Partnership Executive



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“Working in partnership to make our District a place which provides opportunities for the best possible quality of life for all who live, work and visit here”

An Introduction to the Rochford Sustainable Community Strategy

The Rochford Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) introduces the long term vision, aspirations and objectives for the District of Rochford and its Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). Rochford Local Strategic Partnership brings together the views of the local public, private, voluntary and community sectors, to turn the vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy into a reality.

The strategy was designed through consultation with the public, private, voluntary and community sectors in 2009 and has been revised for 2010. It has been developed with regard to national guidance and emerging national policy. This strategy provides a focus for all organisations to work together for the benefit of the whole community. The LSP recognises that much work either by individual partners or through partnerships to address the needs and issues of the District has been in progress for a number of years with a significant number of outcomes already achieved. The LSP does not seek to duplicate this work but to add value by concentrating on issues that can benefit from effective delivery through partnership working.

In addition, individual organisations and the various partnerships have also agreed to sign up to targets within the Essex Local Area Agreement that meet their identified priorities and the needs of the local community. The strategy is in line with national commitments to create Strong and Prosperous Communities, in regards to the development of local government and how local people should be able to engage much more in the decision making process in their local area. Local Area Agreement (LAA): A three year 'contract' between a local area (represented by the local authority and other partners through the Local Strategic Partnership) and central Government to deliver particular priorities.

There are a range of mechanisms, local, regional and national in place that designed to support the work of the Sustainable Community Strategy, however following the general election of May 2010, the LSP is aware that some of these will be modified during the year ahead.



About the Rochford Local Strategic Partnership

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) 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. The Rochford LSP was established in 2002 and produced its first Community Strategy in 2004. The Partnership is made up of an Executive Board consisting of representatives of Rochford District Council, Elected Members, Essex Police, Essex County Council, NHS South East Essex, representatives from local social registered landlords, of the third sector and local businesses along with representatives of the five thematic partnerships that support the delivery of the Community Strategy.

Rochford LSP currently has five thematic partnerships; these are Community Involvement Group, the Castle Point and Rochford Children's Trust Board, the Community Safety Partnership, the Employment and Skills Group and the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

Delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 - 2021

The Rochford LSP through its Executive Board and its thematic partnerships is determined that the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy's vision and its identified priorities lead to real improvements in the overall health, well being and quality of life of all our communities. In order to achieve this, the LSP is committed to lead in improving partnership working and delivery across the District.

To progress and improve partnership working the LSP Executives of both Castle Point and Rochford have endorsed that officers from Rochford DC, Castle Point BC, South East Essex Primary Care Trust and Essex County Council explore and develop a more robust and outcome focused approach to collaborative working, a local pilot of 'Total Place'.

The purpose of the project, to enable partners to meet the future financial challenges all partners face and to ensure that quality and levels of service delivery are maintained as a minimum outcome. The team focused on vulnerable adults and independent living, (NI 141) the remit was to conduct a critical path analysis of the work undertaken by partner agencies in relation to vulnerable adults, led by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership with the aim of ensuring partners demonstrably work in collaboration.

Taking the project forward has proved to be a challenge; assumptions about duplication, silo working and unproductive partnership working which prompted the LSP Executives to agree to the pilot have been widely recognised and acknowledged as problematic by all of the partner agencies who have engaged. There is considerable scope for improvement of the way in which we keep and share relevant data, the effectiveness of our engagement with frequent service customers and as a result of this with our service users more generally. There is also scope for savings as a result of more effective assessment and responses. The 'Total Place' project is still being developed is also being supported by both Essex County Council and Government Office for the East of England.



The LSP is committed to transparency, accountability and ensuring that delivery and performance are monitored. Partnerships will be reviewed and encouraged to improve following national best practice, currently there are five thematic partnerships underpinning the LSP, and the Executive Board will be reviewing the structure of these groups and the structure and governance of itself.

Performance will be monitored by a suite of indicators drawn from the National Indicator Set supplemented by a range of Local Indicators. These will, in the main be reported quarterly in line with the Local Area Agreement, through the SCS Action Plan. Achievement will also be published in the annual report of the LSP which will be made available to partners, governing bodies, scrutiny committees and the public, ensuring accountability.

The SCS has been developed from a robust evidence base of work. The full evidence base can be found here. <http://www.rochford.gov.uk>. The information and data used comprises of, but is not exclusive of the following;

- Rochford District Area Profile undertaken by Local Futures and commissioned by the LSP and the Planning Policy Department of the District Council to ensure synergy between the SCS and the Local Development Framework (LDF): The new Planning Framework that sets out the spatial development within Rochford.
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The JSNA is a means by which Primary Care Trusts and local authorities describe the future of the health and well being needs of local populations and the strategic direction of service delivery to meet those needs.
- Strategic Assessment from the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership.
- Work undertaken by Tribal for Rochford District Council's Access to Services Strategy.
- RRAVS Needs Assessment of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Rochford District.
- The evidence base has created a joint understanding of the needs of the District now.



Rochford Now

Rochford District is situated in South East Essex within a peninsula between the rivers Thames and Crouch and with the North Sea to the east. The south of the District adjoins the urban areas of Southend-on-Sea and Castle Point. Much of the District's 65 square miles is designated as green belt and there are many miles of attractive coastline and nationally important areas of salt marsh.

The largest town, Rayleigh and the other two main settlements of Rochford and Hockley have good rail connections to London and there is access to the A127 London-Southend and then to the A13 and M25. London Southend Airport is primarily situated within the District and the airport and surrounding area are part of the Thames Gateway regeneration area.

In the 2001 census Rochford District had a population of approximately 79,000 people. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2008 mid year population estimates showed Rochford District as having a population of 83,200. In 2008 compared to the national average Rochford at 17.34% had fewer residents aged 0-14, at 11.48% fewer residents aged 15-24 at 25.00% fewer residents aged 25-44. Rochford at 27.39% has more than the national average residents aged 45-64 and at 18.78% have a higher proportion of residents aged over 65. The population is among the older local populations in Britain and this is likely to increase with the over 65 population predicted to grow by 4.50% by 2020. There are some local variations in this pattern, with wards around Rochford town centre and to the north of the District recording older average ages than those along the west border.

The black and minority ethnic (BME) population is relatively evenly dispersed amongst the urban settlements. The estimated population by broad ethnic group, 2008 was:

Rochford

White 95.74%

Mixed 1.10%

Asian or Asian British 1.46%

Black or Black British 1.10%

Chinese or Other 0.61%

Source ONS

The Government's standard measure of deprivation and inequality in England is the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The IMD covers a number of aspects of deprivation including, disadvantage in education, income, employment, health and housing. The District is relatively affluent being 314th least deprived out of 354 districts. The District has approximately 33,700 homes and one of the highest proportions of owner-occupation in the country at 86%. Social housing comprises approximately 8%.

Rochford District scores well for the health of its population and this is supported by the Joint Health Needs Assessment, this is despite having only average levels of physical activity. However, there are higher rates of hospital admission for cancers and higher than East of England mortality rates for lung and breast cancer.



The health of the population has gradually been improving but these gains are not uniform for all the residents and communities of Rochford, with those in the least deprived populations benefitting more than those in the most deprived areas, meaning greater inequalities. Reasons for such inequalities are complex, including educational attainment, occupation, income, sex, ethnicity and lifestyle choices. The health and well-being of local communities; defines where inequalities exist; and incorporates local community views around priorities for service improvement.

Rochford District has a small but reasonably productive and enterprising economy. Although the District does not record significant levels of 'high skills', a solid foundation of basic and intermediate skills underpins the local economy and supports a healthy share of knowledge driven jobs. This is backed up by small-area data which shows that very few of the knowledge workers in Rochford District work in the area, as relatively high proportions of people out-commute to parts of Basildon and Chelmsford as well as Central London.

The comparatively small economic scale, modest levels of high skills and local competition may be undermining the sustainability of the local economy. The direction of travel for the local economy is not as positive as many other local authorities in the UK, resulting in Rochford District being ranked within the lowest quartile of local districts by its economic change score. Overall, Rochford District is a generally prosperous part of the country. Conversely, higher levels of deprivation are found in some of the more rural parts of the District.

Rochford District is home to a relatively large number of families, raising the average household size. The District is well connected overall, largely due to its rail links and proximity to London Southend Airport. However, drilling down to lower spatial levels reveals a stark divide between the urban and rural areas in respect of the use of public transport, perhaps reflecting unequal transport provision across Rochford District. This divide is emphasised by data on access to services which again results in a clear east-west, urban-rural divide.

Overall, the combination of an attractive natural environment, access to some good transport links and low levels of deprivation indicates a good quality of life for local residents.



Our Priorities 2010 – 2021

The Sustainable Community Strategy process has provided the LSP with the knowledge and understanding of the issues that have been identified in our District as the priorities for consideration and action. The LSP will concentrate on the following seven key areas over the next three years, we will however also be managing the performance of, undertaking or supporting work in other areas.

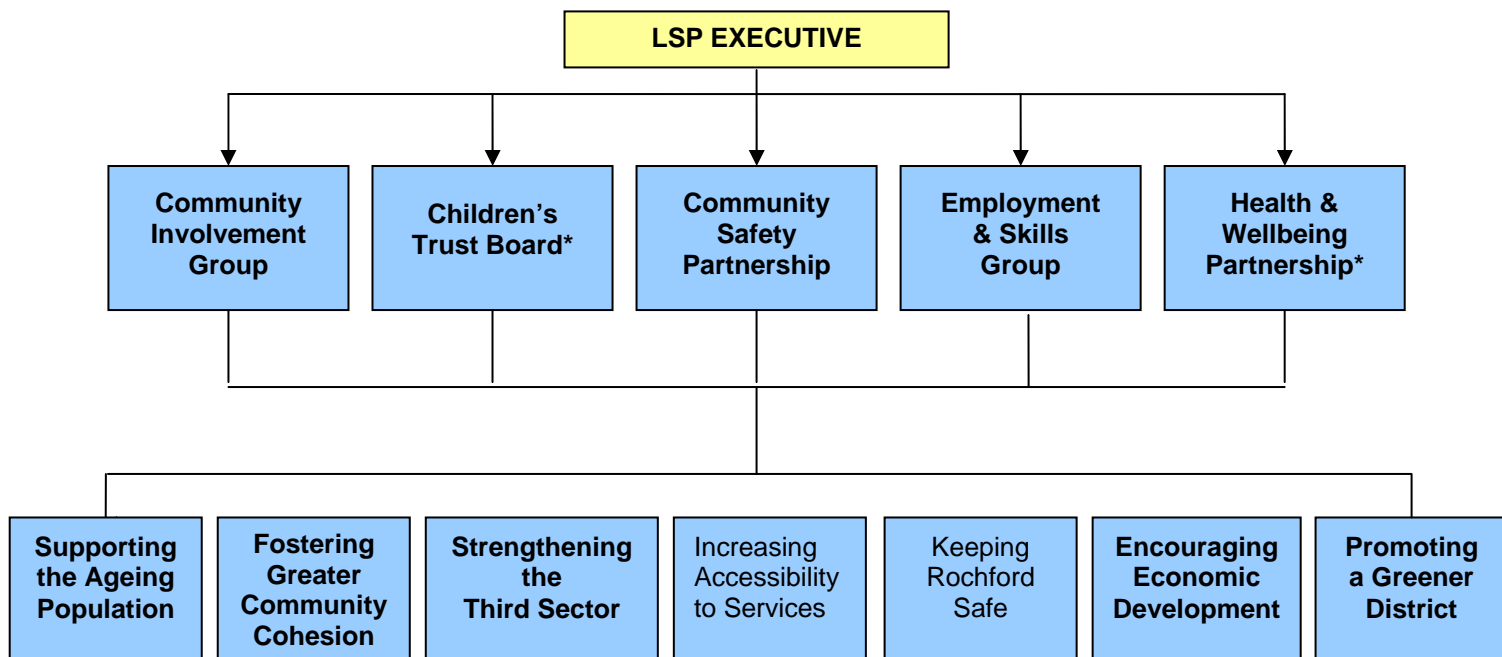
- Supporting the Ageing Population
- Fostering Greater Community Cohesion
- Strengthening the Third Sector
- Increasing Accessibility to Services
- Keeping Rochford Safe & Safeguarding the Vulnerable in our Community
- Encouraging Economic Development: Skills, Employment and Enterprise
- Promoting a Greener District

Underpinning all of the priorities will be the acknowledgement that the LSP needs to deliver services to address the identified issues relating to health inequalities and the safeguarding of vulnerable individuals within our communities.

The LSP is currently made up of an Executive Board and five partnerships that support the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The partnerships that deliver services to address our identified priorities and to achieve the vision of the LSP to lead to real improvements in the overall health, well being and quality of life of all our communities are the Community Involvement Group, the Castlepoint and Rochford Children's Trust Board, the Community Safety Partnership, the Employment and Skills Group and the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.



Structure & Sub Groups Of The Local Strategic Partnership



Community Involvement Group (CIG): Identify ways of working together to ensure effective implementation and develop and maintain a coordinated approach to consulting and engaging the local community.

Children's Trust Board: Brings together partners at a strategic level in a local area, underpinned by the Children Act 2004 duty to cooperate (as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill 2009) to determine needs and identify priorities and plans to secure better outcomes for children and young people in that area.

Community Safety Partnership: Works with service providers and the Community to create a safe environment for all those living in, working in or visiting Rochford District

Employment and Skills Group: Will focus on economic development issues and matters of importance to the local business community, particularly in relation to planning, infrastructure, employment and skills and funding issues.

Health and Wellbeing Partnership: The purpose of the partnership is to provide a co-ordinated approach to improving the health and quality of life of the people in Rochford and Castle Point and to reduce inequalities in health.



Examples of our Work

Outlined below are examples of projects, schemes and posts the LSP has supported and funded to ensure delivery of services to address our identified priorities and to achieve the vision of the LSP to lead to real improvements in the overall health, well being and quality of life of all our communities.

Blues BodyCare Fit for Life: is designed to improve the health and physical activity levels of adults aged fifty five and over. Participants will also be provided with information and knowledge to enable them to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Midday Luncheon Club and Activity Centre - Rayleigh Age Concern: a daily lunch club operates with subsidised meals, guest speakers and afternoon entertainment. Almost all of the clients served by the charity live alone and are elderly (70-95 years old) the lunches guarantee companionship and one hot meal each weekday for attendees.

Open Arts - South Essex Partnership University: a scheme to carry out two participatory arts courses in the Rochford Area for people with mental health problems who can gain skills and confidence, develop new ways of coping with their mental health condition and be supported into further education or employment.

Chief Officer- Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service: The funding has enabled the employment of a Chief Officer for Rochford and Rayleigh Association for Voluntary Service to work with organisations and to develop capacity to commission and tender for the delivery of services. It will also be possible to identify training needs, build sector partnerships and increase the quality and number of volunteering opportunities brought about by the increased growth of organisations.

Healthy Chance: focuses on promotion of healthy living and awareness of factors leading to heart disease, stroke and cancer amongst the community, accessible to all, regardless of age, mobility or socio-economic status. It provides healthy lifestyle information alongside a mobile blood pressure checking service.

Domestic Abuse Reduction Officer: to support and develop a co-ordinated approach to domestic abuse service provision by facilitating the multi-agency, cross sector work within Rochford District.

Lymphoma Support for You: a new support group set up for people who are affected by Lymphoma which is form of cancer. The organiser of the group has been working in this area for some time with the Lymphoma Association but due to the need for the work to be expanded and the limitations of the Lymphoma Association he has embarked on the setting up of the new group. Currently there are approximately twenty people who have expressed an interest in the new group. The funds provided will cover the projected cost to start the group including advertising and hire of venues for meetings.



Home-Start South East Essex-Improvement of Maternal Mental Health and Wellbeing:

This funding will enable the scheme to support 15 families. The project will improve maternal mental health and emotional wellbeing, benefiting the whole family unit. The object of the scheme is to offer one to one personalised support and friendship to parents with children less than 5 years of age in the family's own home. This support is offered by trained volunteers who are local parents and provide regular, reliable support in a trusting and supportive relationship with the family enabling the family to take back control of their lives, preventing crisis or breakdown.

Southend Carers Forum: identifying & Supporting Adult Carers in Rochford. The funding of an Adult Carer Coordinator will enable a programme to be initiated and implemented to identify Carers by providing them with advice and information to support and empower their role. Expansion of activities such as support groups, carers helpline and information, will help reduce their stress and social isolation, improve their mental well-being and provide them with an opportunity to seek assistance. They will also gain an understanding of their pressures and broaden their awareness of the services available to assist them.

Sanctuary: the installation of Sanctuary Rooms is funded by Rochford Community Safety Partnership. A safe room is provided to allow enough time for a high risk victim of domestic abuse to make an emergency phone call if attacked. This can positively reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse.

London Theatre Bus Company-Internet Safety: public perception of local levels of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour is a priority for the Rochford Community Safety Partnership and their 2008-2011 Partnership Plan includes a commitment and actions specific to improving the percentage of residents who feel safe. The Community Safety Partnership consulted with the public on their priorities as part of the formulation of its Strategic Assessment.

The LSP will continue to focus on the seven priority areas. The SCS Action Plan will further demonstrate how the identified priorities will be addressed and will include Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) targets. The process and actions will be regularly reviewed to reflect and adapt to any changing priorities and trends within our communities.



Our Priorities 2010 – 2021

Supporting the Ageing Population

Our objective is to ensure that older people in Rochford District are able to live independent lives for as long as possible and receive high quality services when they need them. With improved living conditions and better healthcare throughout life, life expectancy continues to increase.

The average life expectancy in Essex is just over 81 years, the Rochford average is 79.2 years. It is predicted that between 2007 and 2020 the population of over 65 years olds in the District will grow considerably – with 15,244 in 2007 compared with 20,600 in 2020. Hullbridge & Whitehouse are the wards with the highest proportion of 60+ year olds; almost one third. In other wards the situation is not as great but still significant, the proportion is 20% in Downhall and Rawreth and Sweyne Park. At the same time the number of people under 45 year olds will reduce across the District. This significant demographic change will have an impact on the types of services that will be required as well as the means by which local residents access them.

Older people have told us that they want to stay in their homes as long as possible; this is an issue that is particularly pertinent to the subject of housing provision. It is important that housing is designed to be flexible to changes in people's circumstances, therefore it will be a requirement within the District that homes meet the 'Lifetime Homes Standard', ensuring homes can be adapted to meet changing needs, for example, by having staircases that are wide enough to accommodate a chairlift. In addition, to support independent living, a range of services from all sectors will be increasingly needed to assist the growing number of older people to live healthy, safe and fulfilling lives. The issue is whether people will spend these extra years in good physical and mental health or in illness, distress and loss of independence.

The LSP will support and encourage work to be done to ensure people have the information available to them so they can take advantage of services they are entitled to and to provide additional help and support to fill identified gaps.

Fostering Greater Community Cohesion

Our objective is to make Rochford District a place where residents have a sense of belonging to and contributing to their communities. We will enable and encourage residents to have the opportunity to participate in civic life and work to reduce all inequalities within our communities.

Sustainable and inclusive communities where people have pride in the place they live helps create a good quality of life. There are currently 'sticking points' between the differing generations within our communities. There is a perception of anti-social behaviour and a fear of crime and disorder, a perception that the LSP and its partners will help to address through greater community engagement and supporting community projects.

Our District will grow and develop between 2001 and 2021, the East of England Plan requires that 4,600 additional dwellings are built in the District and we need to ensure that



developments are planned that meet local housing need and are well related to infrastructure, community facilities and play space enabling new residents to integrate into their new community. We will endeavour to make Rochford District a place where residents have a sense of belonging in their communities, have the opportunity to participate in civic life and where inequalities are reduced.

In the 2008 Place Survey 25% of respondents felt they would like to be more involved in decision making locally. A key way to achieve this will be maintaining an effective consultation procedure whereby residents feel valued and able to influence key local decisions, through initiatives such as the Citizens Panel.

The LSP will encourage and increase the numbers of people volunteering within the District and to increase the number of intergenerational activities and projects. We will also facilitate innovation in the local democracy processes.

Strengthening the Third Sector

Our objective is to support and encourage the development of a vibrant Third Sector. The Third Sector includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises and cooperatives. The Office of the Third Sector and significant funding encourages organisations to develop their capacity, the Quirk Review and developing Community Asset transfer continues this process. This enables the Third Sector to provide a diverse range of services to the community from social care, young people's activities, work placements, training and transport.

The exact number of Third Sector organisations within the District is unknown although Rayleigh, Rochford Association of Voluntary Services (RRAVS) has approximately 90 members. However, a needs assessment survey undertaken in 2006 identified that half of RRAVS members had not undertaken training or development or sought funding. The average volunteer age is over 50, there is a shortage of volunteers, the income of 80% of voluntary groups is less than £10,000 per year and the lack of collaborative working with other Third Sector organisations has led to closures. Work needs to be done to educate groups to develop their volunteers in order to improve and sustain their organisation.

The LSP will be working closely with the Third Sector and through support and additional funding it will ensure it is in a more robust position to provide these services.

Increasing Accessibility to Services

Our objective is to reduce inequalities in service provision and add extra value through a holistic approach to ensure that rural communities and those at particular disadvantage have access to all services.

People's expectation of being able to access services at a time and place that suits them has changed. From research undertaken we know that residents in Rayleigh have 100% access to essential services.¹ Elsewhere access to services declines and in the more rural parts of

¹ Essential services defined as post offices, banks, doctors, council services within 2km



the district there are relatively few essential services within easy reach. Transport links within the district suffer from congestion and public transport links are poor outside of the urban areas, this will require all service providers to work collaboratively to take services to the more remote rural areas.

The District has high levels of phone and internet connectivity with a population that has regularly uses the internet from home and the work place. Service providers are able to make services available online, however, we must ensure that those who do not have this facility are also able to access our services.

Public sector agencies are tasked with providing equitable access to services and increasing efficiency. In rural areas this is a particular challenge where relatively low populations make delivering services less cost effective.

The LSP will encourage both statutory and Third Sector agencies to work collaboratively to provide where needed services where direct provision is not cost effective.

Keeping Rochford Safe & Safeguarding the Vulnerable in our Community

Our objective is to ensure that our communities feel safe and that their fear of crime and their perception of crime decreases. In 2006, a review of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, sought to strengthen the process of the requirement to produce a detailed audit of crime, through consultation with key agencies and the wider community, to use the findings to identify strategic priorities and set targets and performance measures. This resulted in each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) producing a Strategic Assessment. Rochford District CSP has been the best performing CSPP in the East of England, achieving an unprecedented 32.9% in crime reduction in 2007/08.

It is recorded that local residents display disproportionate levels of fear of crime compared to actual crime statistics. This suggests that perception and the fear of crime is an issue within our communities, the LSP in partnership with the CSP address this. Performance monitoring allows the CSP to identify current patterns and trends within the crime and disorder agenda and they are able to quickly identify areas in which they are not meeting their required targets. This enables decisions around where targeted resources are to be allocated to be made promptly. This process also demonstrates where issues have emerged that require some long term and preventative measures to be put in place, such as domestic abuse where additional LSP educational and awareness projects have been funded.

The LSP will also work to support safeguarding activity and ensure that all partners prioritise safeguarding at the heart of their corporate planning and decision making. All the partners of the LSP should ensure that their policies and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults and children are up to date and include clear statements of their intention to support the vulnerable. Partners will also work to ensure that policies are implemented internally and include the provision of training for staff. All partners will regularly review these policies to ensure that they are current and supportive of Essex Safeguarding.

Encouraging Economic Development

Our objective is to encourage a thriving and enterprising local economy that has high levels of skills, sustainable businesses and increased employment opportunities.



Rochford has lower numbers of residents (of working age) qualified to NVQ level 3 and above than regional and national averages. Almost 19% of the working age population have no qualifications, which is significantly higher than regional and national averages (Annual Population Survey 2007). We need to encourage the take up of Train 2 Gain provision by raising awareness of funding and support services that are available to employers who take this route.

At present 48% of Rochford's employed commute out of the District to work. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Population Survey (2007) showed that 39,200 Rochford residents were in employment. The ONS Annual Business Inquiry showed that there were 19,000 jobs in the District over the same time period. The average household wage in Rochford (£28,725) is higher than the average for the workplace (£24,009) (Source: ASHE 2007). This would indicate that the more highly skilled residents commute out of the area to achieve higher wages we therefore need to encourage and support a growth in high value jobs.

The potential for inward investment is limited due to geography, transport infrastructure and rurality.

The LSP will encourage small business creation and growth as part of a sustainable community, particular attention will be paid to businesses that generate high skill, high wage employment to increase overall productivity and generate wealth for the local economy.

Promoting a Greener District

Our objective is to address the causes of climate change at a local level for the benefit of those that live, work in and visit the District.

There is scientific consensus that man-made greenhouse gas emissions drive climate change, the effects are potentially irreversible. Various mediums have addressed the subject and our everyday behaviours have been influenced for the better. The inevitable consequences of climate change will continue to occur for the next few decades because of past human activity and the inherent inertia in the climate mechanism.

Temperatures will continue to rise for approximately 40 years as will sea levels for more than a century. It is therefore vitally important for all LSP partners to pursue actions of adaptation and mitigation in the future. The need for change is vital for Districts in Essex, because not only is the county low lying, being situated within the Greater Thames Estuary; it is also one of the driest parts of the UK.

The increased demand for development, population and lifestyle changes will increase the District's vulnerability to the effects of climate change.

As an LSP we should take steps to ensure that potential risks to people, the environment, property and businesses in the District are minimised. In addition we should ensure that our own impacts as separate partners are minimised and that we recognise and realise the opportunities that may arise due to the effects of climate change (where they do not worsen the impact on others).

