

CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

**Venue: Town Hall,
Moorgate Street,
Rotherham S60 2TH**

Date: Monday, 6th February, 2012

Time: 10.00 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006).
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Localism Act 2011 - Proposed Changes to Social Housing (Pages 1 - 5)
4. Neighbourhoods General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012-13 (Pages 6 - 9)
5. Exclusion of the Press and Public
Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in those paragraphs, indicated below of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.
6. Petition - Clifton Mount (Pages 10 - 18)
(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act - information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)
7. 12-14 Ridgeway (Pages 19 - 24)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))
8. Neighbourhood Offices (Pages 25 - 32)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

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| ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER |
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| 1. | Meeting: | Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods |
| 2. | Date: | 6 February 2012 |
| 3. | Title: | Localism Act 2011 – Proposed Changes to Social Housing |
| 4. | Directorate: | Neighbourhood and Adult Services |

5. Summary

The Localism Act 2011 is the principal Act to deliver the Government's commitment to devolve power to the lowest level, enabling communities to make decisions as part of the big society.

The aim of this paper is to assist understanding on the proposals from Government around social housing policy which are covered by the Localism Act, and to agree a programme of consultation aimed at informing the development of local policy in the light of changes introduced through this act.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods:

- a) notes the range of proposals which may affect RMBC's social housing**
- b) supports the course of action towards implementation, including consultation, workshops, member seminars and further reports**

7. Proposals and Details

Localism Act 2011 Overview

The Localism Act is an extensive Act of around 500 pages. Most provisions of the Act will come into force on a date to be decided by the Secretary of State. It is expected that the Act will be in force by April 2012.

Greater detail on the provisions will be set out in Orders and Regulations that have not yet been published.

Housing

Homelessness – The Act provides that local authorities will be able to discharge their Homelessness Duty by providing accommodation in the private sector with a minimum 12 month, fixed term tenancy, without the applicant's agreement.

Before the duty is discharged the Local Authority will need to ensure that the offer is of good quality and suitable to the needs of the individual (ie accessible, where this is needed). However s. 149 provides that if an applicant becomes unintentionally homeless and re-applies for accommodation within two years of accepting an offer of a tenancy in the private rented sector, they will still be owed a duty under s.193(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (c. 52) regardless of whether they have a priority need.

Adopting this measure is likely to increase the number of council properties available for letting to other housing register applicants.

Allocations – The Act provides Local authorities with the option to set criteria to determine who qualifies for acceptance on to the housing register. Currently, Rotherham operates an 'open' housing register which accepts all applicants, regardless of their personal circumstances/need.

Tenure Reform - The 'lifetime' tenancies of existing social housing tenants will continue but there will be an option for Local Authorities to issue minimum 2 year, fixed term tenancies for new lettings.

The decision to issue fixed term tenancies should be informed by housing demand, the need to balance communities and the policies of Rotherham's neighbouring authorities.

The Council will need to develop and adopt a Tenancy Strategy setting out the matters to which all registered providers of social housing in the area should have regard when formulating their tenancy policies. The Tenancy Strategy will include:

- the circumstances in which the Local Authority will grant flexible tenancies, the term of the tenancy and the circumstances in which a further tenancy could be granted when a fixed term tenancy finishes, and*
- the criteria, if any, which will be applied to its Housing Register*

During the 'Fairer Future for Social Housing' consultation earlier this year, the option to issue fixed term tenancies received a cautious response due to concerns of creating greater transience on estates which could undermine sustainability.

Succession Rights - The rules on tenancy succession (where an occupant who is not named on the tenancy, and has lived in the property for more than 12 months, inherits the tenancy when the named tenant dies) are changing; each tenancy will only succeed once. For all new tenancies the spouse or partner will have an automatic legal right to succeed, as long as the named tenant isn't a successor.

Under the Act, the statutory right of succession for other relatives and carers is to be abolished. However, if the tenancy agreement contains an 'express term of the tenancy' provision can be made for a person other than a spouse or a civil partner of the tenant to succeed. Landlords may also include additional succession rights if they choose. This will not affect existing, secure tenancies.

The change to succession rights will result in a greater turn over of tenancies and further opportunities for those on the housing register. It is envisaged that RMBC may see a slight increase in the number of people wishing to hold joint tenancies as a safety net against the 'one succession' rule.

Mobility of Social Housing Tenants - Currently, there is little scope for existing social housing tenants to move to other parts of the country, to be closer to family or for employment reasons, and remain social housing tenants. The Act seeks to facilitate the movement of social tenants. That said, Rotherham Council subscribes to the Home Swap database which allows their tenants to link with other social housing tenants who are looking to move house free of charge.

Finance – Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Reform - Under the existing subsidy system housing rents are collected centrally and spending on housing functions, such as estate management and repairs and maintenance, is determined by Government and budgets allocated accordingly.

The self financing system will allow local authorities to retain rental income in exchange for accepting a proportion of the £22b national, housing debt. This debt will be determined by calculating estimated income and expenditure for each local authority and their ability to deliver the housing services needed and manage the debt; for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council their debt offer is currently £332m. The Act allows for the Secretary of State to revisit this settlement figure in future.

Officers from Neighbourhoods Directorate have been meeting regularly over the past year and have determined that based on current modelling:

- current housing stock investment plans can still be delivered
- debt can be serviced and/or repaid, and
- forecast, surplus resources present opportunities for RMBC to meet long term and wide ranging investment needs

Addressing the Act in Rotherham

Given the cross-cutting nature of this legislation the Council has taken a coordinated approach to assessing the issues arising whilst the Bill was passing through Parliament. This has involved a series of reports and member seminars to highlight the provisions and enable early discussions.

There will continue to be a whole Council approach now that the Act has been passed, facilitating detailed reports and briefings to be made in a coordinated way, including:

- Reports to Standards Committee
- Reports to Cabinet as required
- Reports to Scrutiny as required
- A further programme of members' seminars, this time each one focussing on part of the act, and
- Information sessions for managers

Consultation

A consultation programme will capture the views of members, officers, partners, residents and other stakeholders and will inform the decision of members when considering whether or not to adopt many of social housing related changes proposed through this Act.

In August/September 2011, the Localism Steering Group held a series of Localism awareness raising sessions with Members, New Members and Strategic Housing Forum. Some Members expressed concerns around some of the proposals but these views, along with other Members'/Stakeholders' views, need to be captured through formal consultation now the Bill has been finalised and received Royal Assent.

Three further Member Development sessions are taking place in March 2012 to capture members' views on elements of the Localism Act which give local authorities options to implement changes.

8. Finance

There are some elements of the Act, which are not directly related to social housing, which may have financial implications for RMBC. These were covered by a report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Report on 16 December 2011.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Many aspects of the Localism Act are detailed, however, on a significant number of issues the Secretary of State has been given new powers to determine, and make changes, to the detail. This creates an uncertain environment for future

implementation. In a housing context the Secretary of State has the power to revisit the settlement figure offered under HRA Reform.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The provisions of the Act do not directly impact on the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan. There are some policy and strategy requirements, especially in relation to Planning and Housing.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Localism Act 2011 (c. 20)
- Localism Act 2011: Report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, 16 December 2011
- Consultation on Social Housing Reform: Local Decisions – a fairer future for social housing. Report to Cabinet Member, 29 November 2010
- Discussion paper: Discussions around the Future Shape of Social Housing. Report to Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel, 16 September 2011
- Localism Bill. Report to Cabinet, 6 July 2011

Contact Names:

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| ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS |
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|----|---------------------|--|
| 1. | Meeting: | Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods |
| 2. | Date: | Monday 6TH February 2012 |
| 3. | Title: | Neighbourhoods General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring 2012/13 |
| 4. | Directorate: | Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Services |

5. Summary

This report details the projected year end outturn position as at 31st December 2011 for the Neighbourhoods department within the Neighbourhoods & Adult Services Directorate compared to the approved Net Revenue Budget of £3.28m. **The latest forecast shows a projected underspend of (£294k) by the end of March 2012.**

6. Recommendation

That the Cabinet Member receives and notes the latest financial projection based on income and expenditure to the end of December 2011.

7. Proposals and Details

The table below shows the summary forecast outturn position for the Directorate against the approved Net Revenue Budgets.

| SERVICE AREA | Net Budget | Forecast Outturn to 31st March 2012 | Variance from Net Budget Deficit/ (Surplus) | % Variation to Net Budget |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| | £000's | £000's | £000's | % |
| Asylum | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Housing Access | 343 | 332 | (11) | (3.21) |
| Housing Choices | 243 | 155 | (88) | (36.21) |
| Safer Neighbourhoods | 2,070 | 1,901 | (169) | (8.16) |
| Business Regulation | 309 | 284 | (25) | (8.09) |
| Neighbourhood Partnerships | 276 | 275 | (1) | (0.36) |
| Neighbourhood Investment | 43 | 43 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTALS | 3,284 | 2,990 | (294) | (8.95%) |

Most Service areas are projecting underspends at year end or balanced budgets. The main variations are summarised below:

Housing Access (£11k)

There are small projected underspends within Adaptations Service (£5k) and Housing Management & Admin (£10k) as a result of vacant posts. These are partially reduced by a small forecast shortfall of £4k on the Medical Mobility and Community Care budget due to the unmet vacancy factor on this small budget area and a small projected income shortfall of £2k on the Housing Mortgage cost centre due to reducing income from Mortgage Interest.

Housing Choices (£88k)

This Service Area is projecting an underspend within the Homelessness budget of (£25k) as a result of a post being held vacant since the post holder's secondment to another service area within Housing Choices and savings achieved within supplies and services.

In addition the Lighting of Staircases budget is projecting an underspend of (£63k), mainly as a result of a number of large refunds on utility bills relating to previous years and lower than anticipated costs in the current year.

Safer Neighbourhoods (£169k)

There is an overall forecast underspend within Community Protection of (£139k) due in part to vacant posts of (£48k) and savings as a result of controlled spending on supplies & services and additional income. This underspend also includes projected savings on transport costs as a direct result of efficiencies achieved due to the merger of Community Protection with the former Neighbourhood Wardens and Enviro-Crime costs centres. Additional underspends are projected within Community Safety (£11k), Domestic Violence (£6k), and Anti-Social Behaviour (£18k) mainly due to controlled spending on supplies and services and vacant post being held due to the restructure.

The Pest Control Service is currently facing a forecast income pressure of £21k from fees and charges, which is being closely monitored and is the main reason behind the overall projected £5k shortfall anticipated in this area.

Business Regulation (£25k)

Within Business Regulation there are forecast underspends in Health & Safety, Food & Drugs and Bereavement Services totalling (£113k) as a result of vacant posts, tight controls on supplies and services expenditure due to the council wide moratorium and increased fee income. These are offset by projected overspends on Animal Health and Trading Standards of £52k mainly due to the services being unable to meet their vacancy management targets. Licensing budget is also forecasting a projected shortfall of £36k, mainly as a result of pressures on fee income, however this is being closely monitored and may reduce by the year end if additional income targets are achieved.

Neighbourhood Partnerships (£1k)

The Service is forecasting a small underspend due to savings achieved due to Maternity Leave, which has offset pressures of meeting the vacancy management target plus additional external audit costs on the Local Ambition programme.

Neighbourhood Investment - Balanced

The Registered Social Landlords cost centre is projecting a shortfall in income of £8k against budget as the number of landlords in the scheme is reducing in 2011/12. This is being offset by a surplus of (£8k) now being forecast within Neighbourhood Investment as a result of a vacant post.

A full review of the Neighbourhood Investment Team cost centre has been undertaken to ensure that sufficient funding is available to cover all costs incurred as no general fund budget is available for this service in 2011/12. The costs incurred are to be met by Growth/Housing Market Renewal Revenue Programme, New Build Council Housing and Homelessness funding (as a result of work undertaken by this team that links to the Homelessness service). It is anticipated that all costs will be met in this financial year for this service.

During the budget setting process for 2011/12 savings of £790k were identified in respect of Neighbourhood Wardens, Neighbourhood Partnerships, Food Inspection, and Trading Standards. These budget savings are on target to be achieved with the exception of Trading Standards where there are further budget pressures as highlighted above.

7.1 Agency & Consultancy

To date there is no spend on either Agency or Consultancy within Neighbourhoods General Fund Budgets.

7.2 Non-Contractual Overtime

Actual expenditure to the end of December 2011 on non-contractual overtime for Neighbourhood Services was £7,154, as follows:

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| Safer Neighbourhoods; | |
| Community Protection | £6,463 (includes Out of Hours Service) |
| Pest Control | £ 691 |

8. Finance

The financial implications for each service area have been outlined in Section 7 above.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

These forecasts are based on financial performance to the end of March 2012. The forecast outturn is dependent on delivery of the planned management actions being achieved and thus effective and tight financial management practices remain essential - monthly budget clinics are held with the Service Directors to facilitate this.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget within the limits determined in March 2011 is vital to achieving the Council's Policy agenda. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Cabinet February 2011 – Proposed Revenue Budget & Council Tax 2011/12
- The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – December 2011.

The content of this report has been discussed with the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods and the Director of Finance.

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| ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – CABINET MEMBER |
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| 1.0 | Meeting: | Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods |
| 2.0 | Date: | 6th February, 2012 |
| 3.0 | Title: | Neighbourhood Offices |
| 4.0 | Directorate: | Housing and Neighbourhood Services |

5.0 Summary

A previous DLT report was submitted in August 2011, providing information on customer access at the 4 neighbourhood offices which would remain open following the withdrawal of cashiering services at Wath, Rawmarsh, Greasbrough and Kimberworth Park.

Since that time it has become apparent that customers are increasingly using other channels to access services. However the neighbourhood offices remain open, staffed by housing champions. This is detracting from the core functions of the champions, resulting in relatively unproductive time and a poorer housing service.

6.0 Recommendations

Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods:

- 6.1 Agree that consultation should take place regarding future access arrangements for Housing Services.**
- 6.2 Accept a further report on the outcome of the consultation programme with proposals for service improvement in March 2012.**

7.0 Background

Statistics recorded at the time of the earlier report indicated that:

In July 2011, the following visits were made by customers to neighbourhood offices:

- Wath 74
- Rawmarsh 159
- Greasbrough 73
- Kimberworth Park Not recorded but generally not as busy as Greasbrough

Since that time there have been a decreasing number of visitors accessing our services at the neighbourhood offices as detailed below:

- Wath September - 32 August - 80
- Rawmarsh September - 47 August - 106
- Greasbrough September - 114 August - 132
- Kimberworth September - 26 August - 65

At the same time an increase has been seen by customers accessing services at the Customer Service Centre at Swinton, where figures have doubled. During August and September almost 400 visitors per month used the centre in comparison to 200 in previous months. These increased numbers are predominantly from customers living in the Rawmarsh area, which collates with the reduction in customers visiting Rawmarsh Neighbourhood Office.

There has also been an increase of 200 people per month during August and September visiting the Customer Service Centre at Civic Buildings.

Although there appears to have been an increased number of visitors seen at Greasbrough Neighbourhood Office, the figures include those customers who call to make payments, and are offered no service other than being redirected.

Posters are now in place in all offices giving information on the way in which payments can be made, and the nearest location of the paypoint facility.

Since the earlier report and following the withdrawal of cashiering services in August, the neighbourhood offices have remained open from 8.45am to 4.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 9am to 6pm on a Wednesday.

The only service available in the neighbourhood offices now is housing and neighbourhood services, and is managed by the Housing Champions who staff the reception points.

The average number of visitors to the offices per week is now:

- Wath 8
- Rawmarsh 12
- Greasbrough 26
- Kimberworth Park 6

It is clear that customers do not visit the neighbourhood offices as they did previously, and that the numbers of visitors has substantially reduced.

The busiest time is Wednesday mornings when customers call at the offices to place bids for properties. Wednesday is the day that the new list of available properties is published. However the number of customers requiring this service is minimal and alternative methods can be used to place bids, either by use of the internet or by placing a bid by phone. The length of time taken to deal with enquiries is less than 5 minutes generally, apart from customers who attend for interview (i.e. anti social behaviour or allocations.)

Housing Champions are currently staffing these customer access points, and are therefore unable to carry out the main role of their job, which is spending time out on estates, identifying and dealing with issues, and supporting tenants.

8.0 The way forward

As part of the Customer Access Strategy 2011-15 our customers have told us that they want to have choices in the ways they can access services and interact with the Council. Customers want to use different ways to contact the Council for differing service requests and to suit their own convenience.

Since the withdrawal of the cashiering services it is evident by the reducing number of callers to our neighbourhood offices that our customers prefer to visit one place to access services, or use the internet or telephone for their enquiry to be dealt with.

The Council already offer four ways for customers to access services.

These are:

- The Website
- Telephone
- Letter or email
- In person

It is our intention for customers to be able to access the same range of services at any of our customer contact points, but the services currently offered at Neighbourhood Offices do not provide this range or quality of service. We will be involved in a number of service improvements in the future, including improvements to the website, improved resolution of enquiry at first point of contact, including both face to face and telephone contact, and work to reduce the level of avoidable contact.

In the future where there is a clear customer need, we may provide ways for customers to access services from some of our other Council buildings. For example, a library, Carer's Corner, Children's Centre or community buildings, may have free phone access, internet kiosks or video conferencing facilities, providing ways to contact customer service staff in one of our Joint Service Centres without the need to travel. This service already exists within neighbourhood teams as home visits are encouraged, and surgeries are held locally where our services can be accessed.

The introduction of an electronic document records management system, will ensure that all our staff can access letters and information no matter where they have been received. This will help to make the Council more efficient and means that we can answer customer queries from any of our contact points.

The use of e-mail is being encouraged to allow us to communicate with our customers, although we currently only use this method of communication to around 6% of our tenants, due to their current preferences.

In the light of these issues it is intended to carry out consultation with customers, Ward Members and other stakeholders with a proposal to promote alternative options for customer access and withdraw customer access from the increasingly obsolete neighbourhood offices.

Consultation can take place during January and February, and the results collated for a report to be prepared for Cabinet Member consideration in March.

Closure of neighbourhood offices would allow the Housing Champions to carry out their role more effectively and by offering appropriate and convenient local alternatives, including home visits then an improved, more streamlined service can be offered to customers.

We have endeavoured to provide mobile technology, alternative locations from which Champions can work in the community, and an increased presence on the estates over the past 12 months which will not be possible if we were to 'do nothing' and retain the front line customer service as it is at present.

Housing Champions are carrying out more home visits and want to ensure they are able to continue providing this service, as requested by customers. This again will not be possible if they have to provide full time reception cover.

The services accessed at neighbourhood offices by our customers have considerably reduced and alternatives are widely available, which reinforces the need to close neighbourhood offices, and allow Housing Champions to carry out more appropriate services to customers.

As part of the Customer Access strategy and the localities review, it is proposed to provide customer services in the following ways.

8.1 Wath

The closure of Wath Neighbourhood Office is being recommended and the customer access point located within the library at Wath. A Cabinet decision is awaited on this, as there are cost implications to carry out the necessary building works to accommodate this. It is understood that these costs will be met corporately.

If a decision was agreed to close the neighbourhood office to the public, the alternatives that would be provided are:

- Surgeries are held by Housing Champions in community buildings and customers may access this service locally.

- Appointments for home visits can be made by customers.
- Enquiries can be dealt with on the golden number – 0300 100 2010.
- Appointments can be made to visit the neighbourhood office by appointment even if the offices are closed to the public (this is a service that is often requested when discussing neighbourhood disputes where a home visit is not appropriate).
- If a decision is reached to carry out alterations to Wath library then an interviewing facility will be available, allowing the neighbourhood office to close and for staff to be relocated. This would create value for money savings in relation to on going maintenance costs and potential for sale.

8.2 Rawmarsh

The new Customer Service centre is due to open in April 2012. This will allow a purpose built facility for the Rawmarsh area in line with strategic customer access proposals.

There is therefore support from ward members for closure of the Rawmarsh Neighbourhood Office. The consideration that local members have requested is in relation to the sale of the current premises and their request to retain the façade of the building due to its historic interest.

If a decision was agreed to close the neighbourhood office to the public, the alternatives that would be provided are:

- Surgeries are held by housing Champions in community buildings and customers may access this service locally.
- Appointments for home visits can be made by customers.
- Enquiries can be dealt with on the golden number – 0300 100 2010.
- Appointments can be made to visit the neighbourhood office by appointment even if the offices are closed to the public (this is a service that is often requested when discussing neighbourhood disputes where a home visit is not appropriate) and would be replaced when the Customer Service Centre opens.

8.3 Greasbrough

It is proposed to install a customer access point in the library at Greasbrough in 2012.

The library is not currently suitable to carry out interviews with customers, and therefore is it requested that consideration is given to offer alternatives to customers currently using the services of the neighbourhood offices with the potential to close subject to cabinet approval.

If a decision was agreed to close the neighbourhood office to the public, the alternatives that would be provided are:

- Surgeries are held by housing Champions in community buildings and customers may access this service locally.
- Appointments for home visits can be made by customers.
- Housing and Neighbourhood enquiries can be dealt with on the golden number – 0300 100 2010.
- Appointments can be made in the short term to visit the neighbourhood office by appointment even if the offices are closed to the public.
- Promote the internet facility available at the library which is located in the library which is adjacent to the neighbourhood office.

In April 2012 the team currently located in the neighbourhood office will relocate to Riverside and utilise the hot desking facility, whilst carrying out the majority of their work locally and using facilities at community buildings.

8.4 Kimberworth Park

This office is used the least throughout the borough for customer access.

The proposal to close this office subject to Cabinet approval would have little impact on the local provision of customer service.

Alternative services will be available as stated above and the team currently based at Kimberworth Park will relocate to Riverside.

Initial discussions have taken place with local members at Rotherham North and Rotherham South and it is generally accepted that the neighbourhood offices are not providing value for money, but they want to be assured that local alternatives are provided, particularly for vulnerable customers.

8.5 Consultation Proposals

Wath

- Close Wath Neighbourhood Office to the public
- Install a customer access point within Wath library
- Promote alternative options for customer access including the golden number, community surgeries, home visits or appointments at the Neighbourhood Office

Rawmarsh

- Close Rawmarsh Neighbourhood Office to the public
- Promote alternative options for customer access including the golden number, community surgeries, home visits or appointments at the Neighbourhood Office/Customer Service Centre

Greasbrough

- Close Greasbrough Neighbourhood Office to the public
- Relocate staff from the Neighbourhood office to Riverside (Apr 2012)
- Install a customer access point within Greasbrough library
- Promote alternative options for customer access including the golden number, community surgeries, home visits or appointments at the Neighbourhood Office

Kimberworth Park

- Close Kimberworth Park Neighbourhood Office
- Relocate staff from the Neighbourhood office to Riverside (2012)
- Promote alternative options for customer access including the golden number, community surgeries, home visits or appointments at the Neighbourhood Office

9.0 Finance

In the short term there will be a slight saving made in reduction in lighting and electricity costs when the offices are closed. But in the longer term, as asset sales are achieved, savings will be more substantial.

The cost of the alterations to Wath Library are detailed below.

The housing team currently based at Wath will use the library as a hot desking facility, and the majority of staff who will be based at the library are from Adult Social Care.

Projected alteration costs for Wath Library are as follows:

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| Prelims @ 15% | £14,073.99 |
| Contractor overheads and profit @ 15% | £14,073.99 |
| Building works | £45,192.12 |
| Electrical works | £23,500.00 |
| Mechanical works | £20,666.56 |
| Contingency @ 5% | £4,467.93 |
| Professional fees @ 15% | £18,296.19 |
| ICT changes | £14,000.00 |
| Relocation costs | £8,500.00 |

Total Cost: £164,210.78

Approximately £35,000 of this cost is made up of essential maintenance costs for the building.

Relocation of services to Wath Library will provide £54,000 annual revenue savings in property management.

It will also remove the need for expenditure of £304,389.00 over the next 5 years for planned maintenance of the Town Hall.

Part of Wath Town Hall is a Grade II listed building, and is expected to generate a capital receipt of £1,200,000.00 for the Council.

The estimated Gross Capital receipt for Rawmarsh Neighbourhood Office is £210,000, and £50,000 for Greasbrough Neighbourhood office. There is no estimated value recorded for Kimberworth Park Neighbourhood Office.

Beyond the capital investments required for Wath Library, accommodation charges at the customer service centres will be in line with the normal council policy.

11.0 Risks and Uncertainties

The main risk relates to a lack of support for the proposals to close offices. support. Whilst this has been a contentious issue in the past, it is clear that since the removal of cashiering services, customers are not using the neighbourhood offices with the same frequency as before, and the contentious nature of the proposal is therefore partially diminished.

12.0 Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation has been conducted with ward members as part of the report to Cabinet in relation to withdrawal of cashiering services.

Customer Access Strategy

Localities Review

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