

CABINET

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

Date: Wednesday, 23 May 2012

Time: 10.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To consider questions from Members of the Public.
2. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
3. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th April, 2012 (copy supplied separately)
5. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham LDF Members' Steering Group held on 20th April, 2012 (herewith) (Pages 1 - 7)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.
6. Publication Core Strategy (report herewith) (Pages 8 - 14)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.
7. Local Development Scheme (report herewith) (Pages 15 - 28)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.
8. Localism Act 2011 and Standards Regime (report herewith) (Pages 29 - 52)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
9. Audit Committee Annual Report 2011/12 (report herewith) (Pages 53 - 68)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
10. RBT Liquidation (report herewith) (Pages 69 - 71)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
11. Update on the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (report herewith) (Pages 72 - 77)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

12. Scrutiny Review Regeneration Funding and Neighbourhood Renewal (report herewith) (Pages 78 - 87)
 - Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services to report.
13. Early Help Strategy (report herewith) (Pages 88 - 124)
 - Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services to report.
14. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

The following items are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006 – information relates to finance and business affairs).
15. Maltby Academy - Procurement of Maltby Academy Capital Project (report herewith) (Pages 125 - 129)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
16. Discretionary Rate Relief Review (report herewith) (Pages 130 - 134)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
17. Discretionary Rate Relief Review (report herewith) (Pages 135 - 137)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
18. Discretionary Rate Relief Review (report herewith) (Pages 138 - 147)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
19. New Discretionary Rate Relief Top Up Applications (report herewith) (Pages 148 - 150)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.
20. Community Amateur Sports Clubs (report herewith) (Pages 151 - 153)
 - Strategic Director of Resources to report.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	CABINET
2.	Date:	23RD MAY, 2012
3.	Title:	MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF) MEMBERS' STEERING GROUP HELD ON 20TH APRIL, 2012
4.	Programme Area:	ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

5. Summary

In accordance with Minute No. B29 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th August, 2004, minutes of the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group are submitted to the Cabinet.

A copy of the minutes of the LDF Members' Steering Group held on 20th April, 2012 is therefore attached.

6. Recommendations:-

That progress to date and the emerging issues be noted, and the minutes be received.

7. Proposals and Details

The Council is required to review the Unitary Development Plan and to produce a Local Development Framework (LDF) under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The proposed policy change of the new Coalition Government should be noted re: the Localism Bill and implications for the LDF.

8. Finance

The resource and funding implications as the LDF work progresses should be noted.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- Failure to comply with the Regulations.
- Consultation and responses to consultation.
- Aspirations of the community.
- Changing Government policy and funding regimes.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

There are local, sub-region and regional implications. The Local Development Scheme will form the spatial dimension of the Council's Community Strategy.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Minutes of, and reports to, the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group.

Attachments:-

- A copy of the minutes of the meeting held on 20th April, 2012.

**Contact Name:- Karl Battersby, Strategic Director,
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ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP
Friday, 20th April, 2012

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors McNeely, Dodson, Whelbourn and Whysall.

28. INTRODUCTIONS/APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Jack, Pickering, Rushforth and R. Russell.

29. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15TH MARCH, 2012

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting.

Agreed:- That the minutes be approved as a correct record with the addition of Councillor McNeely's apologies.

30. PUBLICATION CORE STRATEGY DOCUMENT

Ryan Shepherd, Senior Planning Officer, submitted a report outlining the broad approach and content of the above Strategy document. The issuing of the publication version was to allow for formal representations to be made in connection with issues of soundness and legal compliance only.

The points were highlighted:-

- Document title changed from the Local Development Framework in line with the changes introduced through the National Planning Policy Framework
- The vision for the future of Rotherham Borough was set out in the Strategy
- Underpinned by 17 objectives addressing the key issues facing Rotherham over the next 15 years
- Set out the level of future growth and its broad distribution
- Consultation on the formal protection of the Plan - not for comment on the content
- Subject to approval by Cabinet, published for statutory consultation in July, 2012 with submission to Government towards the end of 2012
- Independent examination expected to take place early in 2013 with a view to adoption by July, 2013

Discussion ensued on the report with the following issues raised:-

- o Specific site plans would sit within the Sites and Policies Document. There was full commitment to carry out consultation on the sites
- o New housing development targets
- o Public Rights of Way
- o Definition of the town centre

Agreed:- (1) That the Publication Core Strategy be supported.

{2} That the Cabinet be asked to approve the document for public consultation.

31. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF PUBLICATION CORE STRATEGY

Helen Sleight, Senior Planner, Forward Planning, verbally reported on the above. The Integrated Impact Assessment looked at the sustainability of the Core Strategy as well as including the Health Assessment and Health Inequalities Assessment.

The document had been submitted to the consultants for an evaluation which would be with the Council the following week. However, they had given a verbal update highlighting the following:-

- the general thrust of the Core Strategy not changed
- the emerging Public Health agenda was included but not moving at the same pace as the Core Strategy
- a significant change was the emergence of the National Planning and Policy Framework and its approach to the use of brownfield land. There would now be changed monitoring requirements
- Life Time Homes and homes for the elderly

The update was on track for completion and would be out for the statutory period of consultation. The document would then be submitted to the Secretary of State later in the year.

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

32. ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUBLICATION OF CORE STRATEGY

Neil Rainsforth, Senior Research and Spatial Analysis Officer, outlined the arrangements for the "publication" consultation on the Core Strategy.

Due to the formal nature of this stage of consultation, only representations received relating to issues of legal compliance or soundness could be considered. Responses must, therefore, be received via the Council's Online Consultation Portal or on a standard response form. A full explanation of legal compliance and soundness would be available to accompany the standard response form. Due to the formal nature of the consultation, public drop-in sessions would not be held.

A statutory notice would be placed in newspapers covering the whole Borough advising of the dates of the 6 weeks consultation period. All consultees who had made representations on previous LDF consultation documents and indicated that they wished to be kept informed would be advised of the latest consultation.

Agreed:- {1} That the arrangements being made for the formal "publication" consultation on the Core Strategy be noted.

{2} That it be noted that only formal representations regarding issues of legal compliance and soundness could be considered at this stage.

3 ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP - 20/04/12

33. INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY STUDY

David Edwards, Area & Environmental Planning Team Leader, gave a powerpoint presentation on the above highlighting the following:-

- Required under NPPF to demonstrate sound infrastructure planning for Core Strategy
- Types of Infrastructure assessed
 - Primary – needed to function as part of wider community
 - Secondary – for direct needs of new residents of development
- For each infrastructure type:-
 - What was the capacity or context shaping the infrastructure?
 - What were the infrastructure requirements generated by future growth?
 - When was infrastructure needed and who would provide it?
 - What were the costs?
 - How could new infrastructure be funded?
 - What were the priorities?
 - Were there any issues, dependencies and barriers to growth?
- Study Findings
 - Requirements, costs and funding

Once the Local Plan was adopted, it had to be updated and monitored. Part of its examination would be demonstration that it was deliverable.

Agreed;- That the report be noted.

34. ARCHAEOLOGY STUDY

David Edwards, Area & Environmental Planning Team Leader, presented a report on the completed Archaeology Scoping Study carried out of Local Development Framework preferred Site Allocations. The Study would form part of the evidence base for preparing the Local Development Framework and inform planning requirements for future development sites.

The scoping study was produced by consultants using recognised established data sources. The South Yorkshire Archaeology Service provided technical expertise in overseeing the project and approved all of the site assessments. It set out to establish the known or expected archaeological potential of the sites identified as preferred for future development within the emerging LDF. The existing archaeological and historic environment character data had been reviewed for all of the proposed preferred sites for new housing and employment.

The Study had identified:-

- 3 (2%) sites with major archaeological objections to development
- 17 (11%) sites with potential objections to development
- 72 (46%) sites with uncertain objections to development

65 (41%) sites with little or no objection to development.

Agreed;- That the report be noted.

35. SY GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Helen Sleight, Senior Planner, Forward Planning, presented a report on the above Infrastructure Strategy which proposed a 20 year vision for improving the sub-region's network of key green infrastructure together with proposals for preparing a detailed delivery plan up to 2015.

Transform South Yorkshire commissioned a Green Infrastructure Strategy in 2009 covering the sub-region. The second phase of the Strategy was timetabled to last from April, 2011 to March, 2016 during which a programme for its delivery would be developed. It envisaged a vital, productive and attractive green infrastructure network which had the capacity and strength to link South Yorkshire's communities, supporting sustainable change within a resilient and biodiverse ecological network whilst helping to deliver social cohesion.

A master plan had been prepared for the sub-region identifying initiative areas which may be restored or improved and possible project opportunity "hot spots". Potential actions for identified initiative areas were listed within the Strategy which would form the foundation of the delivery plan in Phase 2 and the basis of interventions as funding and capacity arose.

The adoption of the South Yorkshire Green Infrastructure Strategy would enable the full integration of sub-regional green infrastructure policy into the Local Development Framework.

Agreed:- (1) That the integration and implementation of the South Yorkshire Green Infrastructure Strategy into the Planning Framework be supported.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet for approval.

36. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Andy Duncan, Strategic Policy Team Leader, presented an update to the Local Development Scheme to reflect the Localism Act 2011 and the new National Planning Policy Framework published March, 2012.

The Scheme was last formally revised in March, 2007. Further updated had been put on hold pending clarification of the requirements of the Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework. At future examinations, 1 of the legal compliance checks that a Planning Inspector would carry out was that Development Plan Documents had been produced in conformity with the Local Development Scheme. It was important, therefore, that the Scheme was revised and updated for the Core Strategy's planned submission.

The revised Local Development Scheme was attached at Appendix 1 of the report submitted.

Agreed:- (1) That the revised and updated Local Development Scheme be endorsed.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet for approval.

37. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Andy Duncan, Strategic Policy Team Leader, submitted an overview of the changes between the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the final version.

The NPPF aimed to reduce the planning barriers to growth whilst at the same time involving people more in planning decision in their local area and had a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The draft NPPF had attracted criticism which the Government had taken account of in the revised version. The report set out the main changes in the final document.

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

38. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

David Edwards, Area and Environmental Planning Team Leader, gave a verbal report on a review of the Green Belt that had been undertaken as a matter of urgency following legal advice.

It had been considered that the issue had been incorporated into the Local Development Framework Site Surveys but Simon Bird QC had advised that Green Belt Purposes set out in the NPPF had not been explicitly assessed.

Methodology for the assessment had been produced in house, assisted by the Planning Advisory Service, for a 3 week limited consultation. The full review report would accompany the Core Strategy publication/submission.

Agreed:- That the issue be covered in the Core Strategy report to be submitted to Cabinet.

39. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING.

Agreed:- That the next meeting of the Rotherham Local Development Framework be held on Friday, 15th June, 2012, at 10.00 a.m.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	23 May 2012
3.	Title:	Publication Core Strategy
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

The report seeks Cabinet endorsement of the Publication Core Strategy and approval to undertake public consultation. Consultation would take place during summer 2012 and would focus on issues of soundness and legal compliance.

6. Recommendations

- 1. That Cabinet endorse the Publication Core Strategy.**
- 2. That Cabinet approve the Publication Core Strategy for public consultation.**

7. Proposals and Details

Purpose

As a statutory requirement the Council is preparing a Local Plan for Rotherham (previously called the Local Development Framework). The two key documents contained within the Local Plan are the Core Strategy, and the supporting Sites and Policies document.

Following significant community engagement and comment, much of which was site specific rather than raising concerns with the overall strategy and vision, a revised version of the Core Strategy has been produced. This is the Publication Version and, subject to approval from Members, is the version of the Core Strategy that we intend to submit to government for approval.

In preparing the Publication Core Strategy regard has been had to:

- Consultation comments and feedback
- Recommendations of the Integrated Impact Assessment including Sustainability Appraisal)
- The Localism Act and changes to national planning policy
- Whether any elements of the Regional Strategy should be retained (assuming that these documents will be abolished by the Government)
- Legal advice
- Feedback as a result of our involvement in the Planning Advisory Service's free Direct Support programme
- The outcome of cross boundary discussions with neighbouring authorities

The Publication Core Strategy sets out the Council's vision for the future development of the Borough between 2013 and 2028, and the strategic policies to guide investment and development decisions to achieve this vision.

Vision and objectives

The vision for the future of Rotherham Borough is:

Rotherham will be prosperous with a vibrant, diverse, innovative and enterprising economy. It will fulfil its role as a key partner in the delivery of the Sheffield City Region recognising the close economic, commercial and housing markets links with Sheffield and our other neighbouring authorities.

Rotherham will provide a high quality of life and aspire to minimise inequalities through the creation of strong, cohesive and sustainable communities. Rotherham will be successful in mitigating and adapting to future changes in climate. It will have a sense of place with the best in architecture, sustainable design and public spaces. Natural and historic assets will be conserved and enhanced. Rotherham will promote biodiversity and a high quality environment where neighbourhoods are safe, clean, green and well maintained, with good quality homes and accessible local facilities, making best use of existing infrastructure, services and facilities. A network of green infrastructure will link Rotherham's urban areas with the wider countryside, providing access to green spaces and acting as habitat links for wildlife.

The largest proportion of growth will be focused in the Rotherham Urban Area including major new development at Bassingthorpe Farm which is key to delivering growth in the heart of Rotherham. Regeneration of Rotherham town centre will enable it to fulfil its role as the borough's primary retail, leisure and service centre. Considerable development will take place on the edge of the urban area at Waverley, with the development of a new community and consolidation of the Advanced Manufacturing Park. Significant development will also take place in Principal Settlements for Growth: in the north around Wath, Brampton and West Melton, on the fringe of Rotherham Urban Area at Wickersley, Bramley and Ravenfield, and in the south-east at Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common. New development will also take place in the borough's principal settlements and local service centres. Throughout Rotherham development will aim to create self contained communities which support a network of retail and service centres, where the need to travel is reduced and communities enjoy good access to green spaces and the wider open countryside.

The vision is underpinned by 17 objectives, addressing the key issues facing Rotherham over the next 15 years, covering subjects ranging from the provision of sufficient new homes to protection of the environment.

Strategy

In anticipation of the abolition of regional strategies, the Council is proposing a **lower** local housing target (the only Council within South Yorkshire to do so) of **850 new homes a year**. This is in line with an assessment of the latest evidence on future household growth and the capacity available on suitable sites. This will require 12,750 new homes to be built over the 15 year plan period from 2013 to 2028. Provision will also be made to accommodate any backlog against the 850 homes per year between 2008 (the base date of key population and household projections) and adoption of the Core Strategy in 2013.

The local housing target will enable us to meet our housing requirements whilst also ensuring that we can reduce the need for the release of Green Belt land. This level of proposed growth is also broadly comparable with the Borough's growth over the last 15 years of more than 10,000 new homes.

Based on a review of employment land, it is considered appropriate to provide for around **230 hectares** of employment land for new economic development with up to an additional **5 hectares** of land to accommodate new office floorspace. The overall strategy will result in sensible growth across Rotherham which has regard to local characteristics. Most new development will be focused in the Rotherham Urban Area (including at Bassingthorpe Farm) and at Principal Settlements for Growth at:

- Wath, Brampton and West Melton,
- Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common, and
- Bramley, Wickersley and Ravenfield.

Within this plan period it is anticipated that development at Bassingthorpe Farm will deliver 1,700 homes and 11 hectares of employment land.

Green Belt Review

Local Plan preparation has been informed by a sustainability and constraints assessment of potential sites for development. This work has now been enhanced by an assessment of all Green Belt areas in the Borough to consider their relative contribution to the Green Belt Purposes as defined in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework:

1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
2. to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another.
3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

This work was guided by a methodology that was prepared in conjunction with the Planning Advisory Service and subject to stakeholder consultation.

Government Guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account when reviewing Green Belt boundaries. Development in areas important for Green Belt (i.e. those that strongly contribute to the defined Green Belt purposes) can still, depending on location, promote sustainable development.

The Green Belt Review has not itself decided which sites should be identified for new development. The Review is only part of the process of selecting site allocations as the Council must seek to combine consideration of sustainable locations with an assessment against Green Belt Purposes.

However, the Green Belt Review has helped informed selection of the Core Strategy's 'Broad Locations for Growth'. Some parcels of land at Bassingthorpe Farm and Dinnington East contribute strongly to some Green Belt Purposes but nevertheless these areas remain favoured because of their relatively sustainable location when considered against other areas.

The Green Belt Review and the Integrated Impact Assessment of potential alternative urban extensions has also helped identify the Core Strategy's areas of search for 'safeguarded land'. Safeguarded land will be removed from the Green Belt (through the Sites and Policies document) to ensure the longer term permanence of the Green Belt boundary and provide flexibility should further land for new development be required beyond 2028. Although removed from the Green Belt we will ensure that the current principles of Green Belt policy will apply to safeguarded land within this Plan period. Development of any safeguarded land would require a review of the Local Plan and assessment of the land in relation to the need for development at that time and the most appropriate locations for development to take place.

Our Core Strategy approach, including a local housing target, will mean that only 0.6% of the Green Belt will be required to meet our needs to 2028. Providing flexibility through safeguarded land to meet our potential long term requirements to 2033 would result in a maximum of 1.5% of the Green Belt being released over the next 20 years.

As part of ongoing work the Green Belt Review will be further progressed at a more detailed level to help identify the site allocations to be shown in the Sites and Policies document.

Core Strategy Policies

The Publication Core Strategy contains 33 policies grouped under seven themes designed to meet the main aims of the strategy, which are:

- to implement a strategy that **delivers new development in sustainable locations**
- to deliver housing developments which **create mixed and attractive places to live**
- to support developments, including business, industry, retail, leisure and tourism which **support a dynamic economy**, including Rotherham's network of retail and service centres
- to **support movement and accessibility** within Rotherham through successful public and private transport networks, as well as encouraging walking and cycling
- to **manage the natural and historic environment** to protect and enhance Rotherham's green infrastructure, bio and geodiversity and water environments, as well as guide minerals related development and deal with flood risk
- to **create safe and sustainable communities** by supporting safe, healthy, sustainable and well designed places, as well as the delivery of renewable energy and appropriate community facilities
- to **ensure that the necessary new infrastructure is delivered** to support the Plan's spatial strategy and that decisions are taken with regard to the national **presumption in favour of sustainable development**.

As well as providing for new homes and employment, the Publication Core Strategy's suite of policies covers a range of related subjects such as retail provision, heritage protection, flooding, biodiversity, greenspace and climate change.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The National Planning Policy Framework requires the Local Plan to be supported by work to assess the quality and capacity of existing infrastructure and its ability to meet future demands arising from new development. An Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (supported by a more detailed Study) is therefore included in the Core Strategy.

The Study has examined the costs and funding sources for the required infrastructure and identified a list of costed schemes. It also highlights periods where specific action on infrastructure will be required to enable development to take place.

Supporting documents

The Publication Core Strategy will be supported by:

- An Infrastructure Delivery Study which identifies the infrastructure required in order for delivery of the Core Strategy over the Plan period

- An updated Integrated Impact Assessment which will comprise Sustainability Appraisal, and Equalities and Health Impact Assessments.
- A number of background reports which provide more detail on the evidence base which justifies the strategy and policies.

The selection of sites to deliver the Core Strategy will be made through the Sites and Policies document, which will also contain more detailed Development Management policies. This document has not been finalised yet and will be subject to further public consultation; therefore there will be further opportunity for Members, stakeholders and residents to have their say on which sites should be developed and the policies to guide any new development.

Consultation

This “publication” stage allows for formal representations to be made in connection with specific issues of soundness and legal compliance (i.e. whether the Core Strategy is justified, whether it is effective, whether it is consistent with national policy, whether it has been positively prepared, and whether it has been produced in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations).

Subject to approval by Cabinet the Publication Core Strategy will be published for statutory consultation in June 2012 for a 6 week period. The document will be made available to view via the Council’s website, and at Council customer service centres and libraries throughout the borough. Given the nature of the consultation, community engagement events are not considered appropriate, however planning officers will be available to answer questions during normal office hours. An indicative timetable of consultation activity is set out below:

- May: Briefing note circulated to Members / MPs
- 15 June: Members briefing: drop in session
- June: Press briefing / press release
- Week beginning 18 June : Notification of consultation sent to consultees on Local Plan database
- 25 June: Start of consultation. Documents available on Council website, and at all libraries and customer service centres. Planning officers available throughout consultation period to answer queries and assist people in making their comments.
- 6 August : Consultation closes
- August / September / October: Consultation comments analysed, list of suggested amendments compiled and Core Strategy prepared for submission to Central Government

Future timetable

Following approval by Full Council, it is intended to submit the Core Strategy to Government towards the end of 2012, along with any objections received as a result of consultation on the Publication Core Strategy and any proposed minor changes.

Subject to a timetable to be established by the Planning Inspectorate, the independent examination is expected to take place early in 2013, with a view to adopting the Core Strategy by July 2013.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Costs of consultation will be met from existing budgets.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Endorsement by Members of the Publication Core Strategy is sought to enable public consultation and progress towards adoption.

- The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) express a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF allows a 12 month transition period after which our UDP policies will have diminished weight in decision making. It is important that Rotherham's Core Strategy is in place as soon as possible to provide an up-to-date planning policy framework for the Borough's future growth and development.
- A failure to achieve timely progress on the Local Plan could delay the spatial strategy required to guide future decision-making on planning applications.
- Having a Local Plan in place will provide a steer for any neighbourhood plans that may emerge under the provisions of the Localism Act.
- Failure to make progress with the Local Plan risks delayed provision of the new homes and employment opportunities that the Borough needs.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The implementation of the Local Plan will make a positive contribution to all of Rotherham's Regeneration priorities. When adopted, the Core Strategy and supporting documents will further the objectives of the Corporate Plan and support the delivery of the Rotherham Sustainable Community Strategy by:

- providing sufficient good quality homes
- ensuring well designed, decent affordable housing
- providing employment land to meet the needs of the modern economy and support sustainable communities through access to employment opportunities
- promoting the "town centre first" policy approach to help the regeneration and renaissance of Rotherham Town Centre and other retail and service centres within the borough.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

LDF Publication Core Strategy (July 2012)

Contact name:

Ryan Shepherd, Senior Planning Officer
01709 823888, ryan.shepherd@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	23 May 2012
3.	Title:	Local Development Scheme
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

The report outlines an update to the Local Development Scheme to reflect the Localism Act 2011 and the new National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012.

6. Recommendations

- 1. That Cabinet approve the revised and updated Local Development Scheme.**

7. Proposals and Details

It is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Planning Act 2008 and Localism Act 2011) that the local planning authority must prepare and maintain a local development scheme.

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out an updated and revised project plan for the preparation of the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that will comprise the Rotherham Local Plan. The LDS is intended to:

- set out the subject matter, geographic coverage, development plan status and inter-relationships of Local Plan documents and if any are to be prepared jointly with other local planning authorities
- establish and reflect priorities for the Local Plan to steer associated work programming and resource allocation
- give a timetable and set milestones for the preparation and review of documents

The LDS was last formally revised in March 2007. Further updates were on hold pending clarification of the requirements of the Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework. Now that these two major pieces of legislation and guidance affecting local planning are in place it is timely to revise and update the LDS.

At future examinations of the Council's DPDs, one of the legal compliance checks that the planning inspector will carry out is that the DPD has been produced in conformity with the LDS. It is therefore important to ensure a revised and up to date LDS is in place in time for submission of the Core Strategy programmed for later in 2012.

The revised Local Development Scheme is attached at Appendix 1.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Approval by Cabinet of the Local Development Scheme is sought to enable progress towards adoption of programmed DPDs.

- The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) express a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF allows a 12 month transition period after which our UDP policies will have diminished weight in decision making. It is important that Rotherham's Local Plan is in place as soon as possible to provide an up-to-date planning policy framework for the Borough's future growth and development.
- A failure to achieve timely progress on the Local Plan could delay the spatial strategy required to guide future decision-making on planning applications.

- Having a Local Plan in place will provide a steer for any neighbourhood plans that may emerge under the provisions of the Localism Act.
- Failure to make progress with the Local Plan risks delayed provision of the new homes and employment opportunities that the Borough needs.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The implementation of the Local Plan will make a positive contribution to all of Rotherham's Regeneration priorities. When adopted, the Core Strategy and supporting documents will further the objectives of the Corporate Plan and support the delivery of the Rotherham Sustainable Community Strategy by:

- providing sufficient good quality homes
- ensuring well designed, decent affordable housing
- providing employment land to meet the needs of the modern economy and support sustainable communities through access to employment opportunities
- promoting the "town centre first" policy approach to help the regeneration and renaissance of Rotherham Town Centre

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1: Local Development Scheme revised March 2012

Contact name:

Andy Duncan, Strategic Policy Team Leader
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Appendix 1: Local Development Scheme revised March 2012

ROTHERHAM LOCAL PLAN

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Updated March 2012

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Maps

Map 1: Rotherham DPD geographic coverage

Map 2: Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD geographic coverage

1. Introduction

Background

Rotherham's current development plan is the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), comprising a Written Statement, Proposals Map and Supplementary Planning Guidance. Until such time as the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 relating to revocation of Regional Strategies are enacted, the Yorkshire and Humber Plan (2008) also forms part of the development plan for Rotherham. The UDP was adopted in June 1999. The majority of the policies within the UDP were subsequently "saved" under the terms of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 by a direction from the Secretary of State (17/9/07).

The requirements for the Local Plan to replace the UDP are set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Local Plan consists of a portfolio of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) together with documents concerned with the management of the plan making process.

Rotherham Local Plan documents produced to date include:

- the Local Development Scheme (and subsequent revisions)
- the Statement of Community Involvement
- Annual Monitoring Reports
- the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Core Strategy (DPD)

The Statement of Community Involvement was formally adopted by the Council on 14 June 2006. The Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Core Strategy was adopted on 8 March 2012.

Purpose of the Local Development Scheme

This document sets out an updated and revised project plan for the preparation of the DPDs that will comprise the Rotherham Local Plan. The LDS is intended to:

- set out the subject matter, geographic coverage, development plan status and inter-relationships of Local Plan documents and if any are to be prepared jointly with other local planning authorities
- establish and reflect priorities for the Local Plan to steer associated work programming and resource allocation
- give a timetable and set milestones for the preparation and review of documents

2. Local Plan programme

Timetable

The Rotherham Local Plan programme is focused on the following development plan documents (DPDs):

- Core Strategy DPD
- Sites & Policies DPD and Proposals Map
- Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD

The programme is illustrated in the timetable overleaf and expanded in the subsequent detailed profiles for each DPD included within this section.

An up-to-date timetable will always be available on the Council's website under the Local Development Scheme page accessible via:

<http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/forwardplanning>

Rotherham Local Plan Timetable - Revised Mar 2012

	2012												2013												2014											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Core Strategy DPD																																				
Sites and Policies DPD & Proposals Map																																				
Joint Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham Waste Core Strategy DPD																																				

- Production & Consultation**
 - P** Preparation starts by consulting statutory bodies on the scope of Sustainability Appraisal
 - C** Consultation on options/continuous engagement
- Publication**
 - PSV** Publication of proposed submission version
- Examination**
 - S** Submission to Secretary of State, examination period starts
 - M** Pre-examination meeting (if required)
 - E** Examination hearings
 - R** Inspector's report
- Adoption**
 - A** Adoption

DPD profiles

Core Strategy DPD	
Document details	
Role and content	Sets out the vision, objectives and strategic policies for the future spatial development of the Borough, including targets for new housing and employment land
Status	DPD
Chain of conformity	To conform with national planning policy and the Regional Spatial Strategy (pending revocation)
Geographic coverage	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough
Timetable and milestones	
Commencement and pre-production	June 2005 – Feb 2006
Consultation with statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal	Feb – June 2006
Public consultation on Issues and Options	May – June 2006
Public consultation on Preferred Options and Sustainability Appraisal	Feb – Mar 2007
Public consultation on Revised Options and Sustainability Appraisal	May – Aug 2009
Public consultation on Draft Core Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal	July – Sept 2011
Publication of Core Strategy for "soundness" representations and Sustainability Appraisal	July – Aug 2012
Submission of Core Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal	Nov 2012
Examination in Public	Mar 2013
Receipt of Inspector's report	July 2013
Adoption of the DPD	Aug 2013
Arrangements for production	
Lead responsibility	Forward Planning Team, Rotherham MBC
Management arrangements	Production stages guided by Member Steering Group recommending endorsement by Cabinet and approval by Full Council
Resources required	Produced internally with consultant input in relation to certain evidence base studies
Approach to involving the community and stakeholders	Outlined in the SCI with emphasis on front loading and fully reflecting the aims and programmes of community strategy and other principal stakeholders
Post production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	Via the Annual Monitoring Report

Sites & Policies DPD and Proposals Map	
Document details	
Role and content	Identifies sites proposed for development to deliver the Core Strategy together with policies for the managed release of land
Status	DPD
Chain of conformity	To conform with national planning policy, the Regional Spatial Strategy (pending revocation) and the Core Strategy
Geographic coverage	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough
Timetable and milestones	
Commencement and pre-production	Jan 2007
Call for Sites	Jan 2007 – Nov 2008
Release of Sites as part of the evidence base to support public consultation on Core Strategy Revised Options and Sustainability Appraisal	May – Aug 2009
Public consultation on Issues and Options	July – Sept 2011
Consultation with statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal	June – Sept 2012
Public consultation on Draft Sites & Policies DPD and Proposals Map and Sustainability Appraisal	Oct – Dec 2012
Publication of Sites & Policies DPD and Proposals Map for "soundness" representations and Sustainability Appraisal	June – July 2013
Submission of Sites & Policies DPD and Proposals Map and Sustainability Appraisal	Oct 2013
Examination in Public	Feb 2014
Receipt of Inspector's report	May 2014
Adoption of the DPD	June 2014
Arrangements for production	
Lead responsibility	Forward Planning Team, Rotherham MBC
Management arrangements	Production stages guided by Member Steering Group recommending endorsement by Cabinet and approval by Full Council
Resources required	Produced internally with consultant input in relation to certain evidence base studies
Approach to involving the community and stakeholders	Outlined in the SCI with emphasis on front loading and fully reflecting the aims and programmes of community strategy and other principal stakeholders
Post production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	Via the Annual Monitoring Report

Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD	
Document details	
Role and content	Allocates strategic waste management sites within the three local authorities to deliver the Core Strategy together with supporting policies
Status	DPD
Chain of conformity	To conform with national planning policy, the Regional Spatial Strategy (pending revocation) and the Core Strategy
Geographic coverage	The Metropolitan Boroughs of Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham
Timetable and milestones	
Commencement and pre-production	Aug 2007
Consultation with statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal	Feb – Mar 2008
Public consultation on "Towards Publication" document and Sustainability Appraisal	Nov 2008 – Jan 2009
Public consultation on potential sites	Jan – Nov 2009
Public consultation on Draft Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD and Sustainability Appraisal	June – Aug 2010
Publication of Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD for "soundness" representations and Sustainability Appraisal	Apr – May 2011
Submission of Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD and Sustainability Appraisal	July 2011
Examination in Public	Oct – Nov 2011
Receipt of Inspector's report	Jan 2012
Adoption of the DPD	Mar 2012
Arrangements for production	
Lead responsibility	Joint Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Councils
Management arrangements	Approved by Joint Chief Executives and Council Leaders under delegated powers
Resources required	Combination of dedicated consultants managed by Steering Group with representation from the constituent authorities and in-house planning officers
Approach to involving the community and stakeholders	Co-ordinated approach to consultation drawing on a common specification from the adopted SCIs of the three local authorities
Post production	
Monitoring and review mechanisms	Via the Annual Monitoring Reports of the three local authorities

3. Monitoring and review

Annual Monitoring Report

Continuous monitoring and review are essential to the plan, monitor and manage process in the successful delivery of the spatial vision and objectives of the Local Plan. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) has an important dual role in tracking progress in the preparation of DPDs as well as monitoring outputs and trends, contributing to a broader evidence base against which policies and their implementation can be evaluated.

The AMR will be published at the end of each calendar year, reporting progress made in the preceding financial year. The AMR will:

- specify how the Council is performing within the timescales for DPD preparation set out in the LDS
- inform the rolling forward of the Local Plan programme in the LDS
- provide an update of the extent of the remaining parts of the UDP.

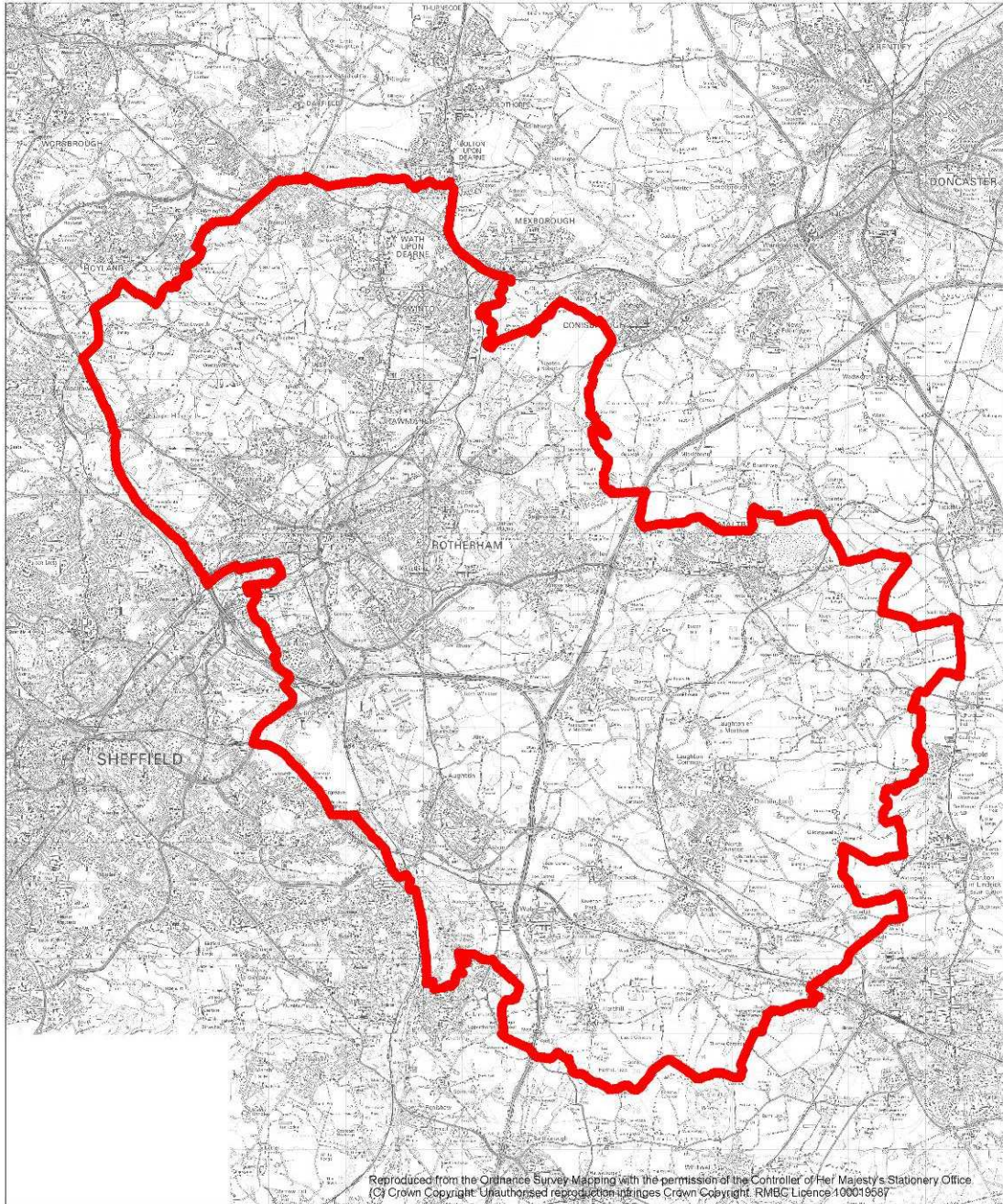
As well as assessing the Council's progress in implementing the Local Development Scheme the AMR will also:

- provide details of how well policies are being achieved by tracking the impact of policies on relevant targets and whether policies need adjustment in the light of changes to national policy. In particular, the AMR will include trajectories of forecast future housing supply against strategic housing requirements.
- Provide an updated list of technical studies, reports and other relevant publications contributing to the evidence base supporting Local Plan preparation.
- Indicate the performance of infrastructure providers against the infrastructure delivery planning requirements set out in the Core Strategy.

Annual Monitoring Reports will always be available on the Council's website under the Annual Monitoring Report page accessible via:

<http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/forwardplanning>

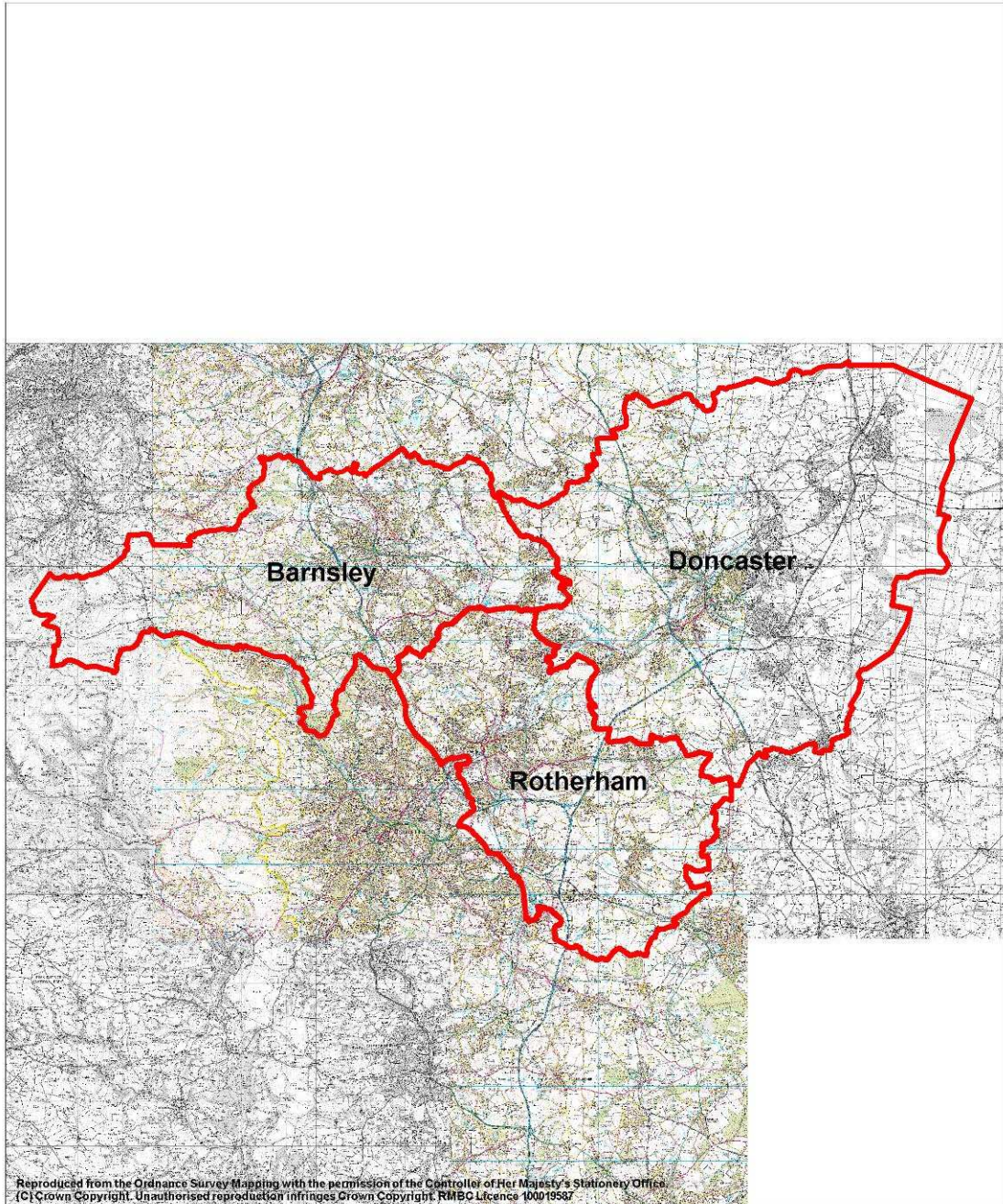
Map 1: Rotherham DPD geographic coverage



Core Strategy DPD
Sites & Policies DPD
Proposals Map

— Rotherham Borough Boundary

Map 2: Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD geographic coverage



Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham
Joint Waste Core Strategy DPD

— Borough Boundaries

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	23 May 2012
3.	Title:	Localism Act 2011 and Standards Regime
4.	Directorate:	Resources' Directorate

5. Summary

This report contains details of the changes to the standards regime in consequence of the enactment of Chapter 7 (sections 26 – 37) of the Localism Act 2011 (“the Act”); and the options for consideration by the Cabinet with a view to making recommendations to the full Council.

The report has been considered by the Standards Committee, which in response has prepared the paper attached as Appendix A to this report. The Committee’s views are also reproduced in the body of the report in bold italics with the monitoring officer’s comments immediately following.

6. Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – the composition of the standards committee:

- a. **That the standards committee be comprised of 8 elected members of the Council and 5 independent members.**
- b. **That the Leader of the Council be requested to consider whether to nominate to the standards committee one or more members who are members of the Cabinet.**
- c. **That the parish councils be invited:**
 - (I) **to indicate whether they wish to delegate their functions in relation to the standards of conduct of their members to the Council and to adopt the Council’s code of conduct, and if so**
 - (II) **to nominate a maximum of 3 parish councillors to be co-opted as voting members of the Committee.**

Recommendation 2 – “arrangements” for dealing with standards complaints:

- a. That the monitoring officer be appointed as the proper officer to receive complaints of failure to comply with the code of conduct.
- b. That having regard to the current Standard Committee's *Local Assessment Criteria* and in particular paragraph 6 (seriousness of the complaint) the monitoring officer be delegated to determine whether the complaint should be referred for consideration by a sub-committee of the standards committee, comprising not less than 3 and no more than 5 co-opted independent members of the standards committee, or otherwise dealt with by her.
- c. That the sub-committee's terms of reference be to consider complaints of failure to comply with the code of conduct and to make recommendations to the standards committee for consideration by the committee as to whether or not to direct the investigation of a complaint.
- d. That the monitoring officer be instructed to seek resolution of complaints without formal investigation wherever practicable and to report quarterly to the standards committee on the discharge of this function.
- e. Where the investigation finds no evidence of failure to comply with the code of conduct, the monitoring officer be instructed to close the matter, providing a copy of the report and findings of the investigation to the complainant and to the member concerned, and to the independent person, and reporting the findings to the standards committee for information.
- f. Where the investigation finds evidence of a failure to comply with the code of conduct, the monitoring officer, in consultation with the independent person, be authorised to seek local resolution, in appropriate cases, with a summary report for information to the standards committee. Where such local resolution is not appropriate or not possible, she be required to report the investigation findings to a consideration and hearings panel of the standards committee for hearing and determination by the panel, the panel having first sought and taken into account the independent person's views.
- g. That the full Council be requested to delegate to consideration and hearings panels such of its powers as can be delegated to take decisions in respect of a member who is found on hearing to have failed to comply with the code of conduct, such actions to include –
 - reporting its findings to the full , or to the parish council, for information;

- **recommending to the full Council publication of the decision that the member had breached the code of conduct;**
- **recommending to the full Council formal censure of the member through an appropriate motion;**
- **recommending to full Council for recommendation to the member's group leader (or in the case of ungrouped members, recommend to full Council) that he/she be removed from any or all committees or sub-committees of the Council;**
- **recommending to the Leader of the Council that the member be removed from the Cabinet, or removed from particular portfolio responsibilities;**
- **recommending to the full Council, or to the parish council, the removal of the member from all outside appointments to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the Council or by the parish council;**
- **instructing the monitoring officer to, or recommending that the parish council, arrange training for the member.**

Recommendation 3 – independent persons:

- a. **That the monitoring officer, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader and leader of the Opposition, and with the advice of the Director of Human Resources be authorised to set the initial allowances and expenses for the independent person, and this function subsequently be delegated to the Independent Remuneration Panel having regard to the views of the chair from time to time of the standards committee.**
- b. **That the monitoring officer be authorised to advertise a vacancy for the appointment of 1 independent person.**
- c. **That a sub-committee comprising the chair and three other members of the current Standards Committee be set up to short-list and interview candidates, and to make a recommendation to full Council for appointment.**
- d. **That the monitoring officer liaise with the monitoring officers of Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield councils, in relation to their respective appointment of an independent person or persons, with a view to agreeing an arrangement whereby each council may utilise the services of the independent persons appointed by the others in cases where its own independent person is conflicted from acting.**

Recommendation 4 – preparation of the registers

- a. That the monitoring officer be instructed to prepare and maintain a new register of members' interests to comply with the requirements of the Act and of the Council's Code of Conduct, once adopted, and ensure that it is available for inspection as required by the Act.
- b. That the monitoring officer be instructed to ensure that all members are informed of their duty to register interests.
- c. That the monitoring officer be instructed to prepare and maintain new registers of members' interests for each parish council to comply with the Act and any code of conduct adopted by each parish council and ensure that it is available for inspection as required by the Act.
- d. That the monitoring officer be instructed to arrange to inform and train parish clerks on the new registration arrangements.

Recommendation 5 – power to grant dispensations

That Council delegate the power to grant dispensations –

- a. on grounds 1 and 4 as set out in this report to the monitoring officer with an appeal to the standards committee; and
- b. on grounds 2, 3 & 5 as set out in this report to the standards committee, after consultation with the independent person.

7. Proposals and details

(1) BACKGROUND

The Localism Act 2011 makes fundamental changes to the system of regulation of standards of conduct for elected and co-opted councillors. The date for implementation of these changes was proposed to be 1st April 2012, but is now expected to be 1st July 2012.

This report describes the changes and recommends the actions required for the Council to implement the new regime.

(2) DUTY TO PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The Council will remain under a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for its elected and co-opted members.

(3) STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Act repeals Section 55 of the Local Government Act 2000, which provides for the current statutory Standards Committee. So, there will not be a requirement for a statutory standards committee, although the Council has opted to have a voluntary committee as there will still be a need to deal with standards issues and case-work. The new standards committee will be a normal committee of Council, without the unique features which were conferred by the previous legislation. As a result –

- the composition of the standards committee will be governed by proportionality, unless Council votes otherwise with no member voting against. The present restriction that only one member of the executive can sit on the standards committee will cease to apply;

The Standard Committee considers that public confidence may be damaged by having a standards committee composed solely of elected members, as the electorate is unlikely to view the committee's decisions as objective and impartial, and that application of the rule on proportionality (which applies to ordinary committees of the Council) may also create the perception that the committee's decisions are open to bias and may threaten public confidence in the objectivity and impartiality of the Council's standards regime. The current composition of RMBC is 63 members of whom 58 take the Labour whip. A standards committee of 7 members drawn proportionally from the political parties would result in 1 non Labour member. This strengthens the need to move away from proportionality in principle. The Committee suggest that the seats on the new standards committee are allocated equally between the majority group and opposition group.

The rules on proportionality are prescribed and require the Council to allocate the majority of the seats on its ordinary committees to the majority group. The remaining seats are allocated to each opposition group in proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of the Council as is borne by the number of members of the group to the membership of the Council.

The Council may however approve different arrangements if no member of the Council votes against them, and this has been the practice to date. It would therefore be possible to allocate half the seats on the Committee to the majority group and half to the opposition group providing no member of the Council objected to the arrangement. This would signal that the Committee is non partisan.

- the current co-opted independent members will cease to hold office. The Act establishes a new category of independent persons (see below) who must be consulted at various stages, but provides that the existing co-opted independent members cannot serve as independent persons for 5 years*. The new independent persons may be invited to attend meetings of the standards committee, and could be co-opted on to the committee but would not have voting rights;

The Standards Committee considers that it is imperative that there is an independent membership of the new standards committee in order to generate public confidence and that it is inappropriate and “unfair” to expect elected members to judge their peers without independent support.

The Council could co-opt one or more independent members onto the Committee but these would not have voting rights. However, having discussed this issue with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee, the Leader supports the proposition that the new standards committee should have a number of independent members. Accordingly, it is suggested that the new standards committee should have 5 co-opted independent members, who would not have voting rights and who would form a sub-committee of independent members to consider and make recommendations to the parent standards committee as to the investigation or otherwise of complaints of failure to comply with the code of conduct referred to the sub-committee by the monitoring officer.

**The government has indicated that it is minded to make transitional provisions to enable an independent member to be appointed as an independent person during the first year in which the new standards regime takes effect (see letter dated 23 February 2012 from the Right Hon Bob Neill MP at Appendix B).*

- the Council will continue to have responsibility for dealing with standards complaints against elected and appointed members of parish councils, but the current parish council representatives will

cease to hold office. The Council can choose whether it wants to continue to involve parish council representatives and, if so, how many parish council representatives it wants. The choice is between establishing a standards committee as a committee of the Council, with co-opted but non-voting parish council representatives (which could then only make recommendations in respect of parish council members), or establishing a standards committee as a joint committee with the parish councils within the borough (or as many of them as wish to participate) and having a set number of parish council representatives as voting members of the committee (which could then take operative decisions in respect of members of parish councils, where the parish council had delegated such powers to such a joint standards committee).

(4) THE CODE OF CONDUCT

A report on the requirements of the new code of conduct was presented to the Cabinet on 25 April, which resolved to recommend to the full Council on 18 May the re-adoption, on the coming into force of the standards provisions in the Localism Act, (subject to any transitional period), of the current *Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members*, as revised by the monitoring officer, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy, to reflect the mandatory requirements of the Act.

Members will recall that the composition of the new code is largely a matter for the Council and that the only mandatory provisions are a requirement that the code is when viewed as a whole consistent with the seven principles of public life (the Nolan Committee principles) and contains appropriate provisions for the registration of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

There will be a requirement to register “disclosable pecuniary interests” (“DPIs”) (see below) which will be defined in regulations yet to be issued by the Secretary of State. DPIs are expected to be akin to the current prejudicial interests.

A member who has a DPI in an item of business will commit a criminal offence by failing to disclose it and taking part in the discussion and voting on that item. There will not however be a requirement to leave the room while the item is discussed. Consequently, one of the recommendations to the full Council is the amendment of standing order 28 to the effect that a member with a DPI must leave the room unless a special dispensation has been granted.

(5) DEALING WITH MISCONDUCT COMPLAINTS

“Arrangements”

The Act requires that the Council adopts “arrangements” for dealing with complaints of breach of the code of conduct both by members of the Council and by parish council members. Complaints can only be dealt with in accordance with such “arrangements”. Therefore the “arrangements” must set out in some detail the process for dealing with complaints of misconduct and the actions which may be

taken against a member who is found to have failed to comply with the relevant code of conduct.

The advantage is that the Act repeals the requirements for separate assessment, review and consideration and hearing panels referrals. The Council can establish its own process, which can include delegation of decisions on complaints. Indeed, as the statutory provisions no longer give the standards committee or monitoring officer special powers to deal with complaints, the Council will need to delegate appropriate powers to the standards committee and to the monitoring officer.

The Standards Committee is particularly concerned that public confidence in the handling of complaints and the promotion of standards may be damaged as a result of the changes made by the Localism Act, and that the electorate may perceive the new arrangements as a device to enable members to police themselves.

The Committee also consider that the potential for the monitoring officer and the independent person's views on the treatment of a complaint to differ would put the standards committee in that very position. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of sanctions for breach of the code of conduct.

The government has indicated that it is minded to make transitional provisions to enable an independent member to be appointed as an independent person during the first year in which the new standards regime takes effect (see letter dated 23 February 2012 from the Right Hon Bob Neill MP at Appendix B).

Decision whether to investigate a complaint

In practice, the Standards for England guidance on initial assessment of complaints provided a reasonably robust basis for filtering out trivial and tit-for-tat complaints. It may be advantageous to take advantage of the new flexibility to delegate to the monitoring officer the initial decision on whether a complaint requires investigation, subject to consultation with the independent person(s) and the ability to refer particular complaints to the standards committee where she feels that it would be inappropriate for her to take a decision on it, for example where she has previously advised the member on the matter or the complaint is particularly sensitive. The new arrangements would offer the opportunity for the monitoring officer to seek to resolve a complaint informally, before taking a decision on whether the complaint merits formal investigation. If this function is delegated to the monitoring officer, it is right that she should be accountable for its discharge. For this purpose, it would be appropriate that she reports quarterly to the standards committee, which would enable her to report on the number and nature of complaints received and draw to the Committee's attention areas where training or other action might avoid further complaints, and keep the Committee advised of progress on investigations and costs.

The Standards Committee considers that the new arrangements place inappropriate levels of responsibility on the monitoring officer, particularly as the independent person's role is only advisory. The Committee also considers that it is inappropriate for a council officer to be expected to handle and make

judgments on complaints alleging misconduct by members and that this would be “unfair” and even unethical. The Committee considers that work of this nature should be handled by a committee.

The Committee further considers that there is a lack of direction in the Act to address the situation where the monitoring officer and the independent person have differing views on the treatment of a complaint. And that the provision whereby a member who is the subject of an allegation and also the complainant may consult the independent person is “unacceptable and unethical and would “compromise their independence, objectivity and credibility”. Where the monitoring officer and the independent person disagree, it would be better to refer the case to a sub-committee of the standards committee for decision.

Other councils are advocating the filtering of complaints of allegations of misconduct by the monitoring officer. It is also an option for the standards committee to filter complaints, perhaps through a sub-committee of the committee, who would then make a recommendation to the standards committee. The current Standards Committee is of the view that this is the best way forward.

The Council must consult and take into account the views of the independent person before the decision is made following the investigation of an allegation of misconduct, and may consult him/her in other circumstances.

“No Breach of Code” finding on investigation

Copies of all investigation reports could be provided to the independent person to enable him/her to get an overview of current issues and pressures.

“Breach of Code” finding on investigation

Where a formal investigation finds evidence of failure to comply with the code of conduct, there may yet be an opportunity for local resolution, avoiding the necessity of a consideration and hearing. Sometimes the investigation report can cause a member to recognise that his/her conduct was at least capable of giving offence, or identify other appropriate remedial action, and the complainant may be satisfied by recognition of fault and an apology or other remedial action.

In all other cases, where the formal investigation finds evidence of a failure to comply with the code of conduct, it would be necessary for the standards committee (in practice a consideration and hearings panel constituted as a sub-committee of the standards committee) to hold a hearing at which the member against whom the complaint has been made can respond to the investigation report, and the consideration and hearing panel can determine whether the member did fail to comply with the code of conduct and what action, if any, is appropriate as a result.

Action in response to a consideration and hearing panel finding of failure to comply with the code of conduct

The Act does not give the Council or its standards committee any powers to impose sanctions such as suspension or requirements for training or an apology to members. So, where a failure to comply with the code of conduct is found, the range of actions which the Council can take in respect of the member is limited and must be directed to securing the continuing ability of the Council to continue to discharge its functions effectively, rather than “punishing” the member concerned. In practice, this might include the following –

- reporting its findings to Council or to the parish council for information;
- recommending to the member’s group leader (or in the case of ungrouped members, recommend to Council or to committees) that he/she be removed from any or all committees or sub-committees of the Council;
- recommending to the Leader of the Council that the member be removed from the Cabinet, or removed from particular portfolio responsibilities;
- instructing the monitoring officer to, or recommending that the parish council, arrange training for the member;
- removing, or recommending to the parish council that the member be removed, from all outside appointments to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the authority or by the parish council;
- withdrawing, or recommending to the Parish Council that it withdraws, facilities provided to the member by the Council, such as a computer, website and/or email and Internet access; or
- excluding, or recommending that the parish council exclude, the member from the parish council’s offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending council, committee and sub-committee meetings.

There is a particular difficulty in respect of parish councils, as the Localism Act gives the standards committee no power to do any more in respect of a member of a parish council than make a recommendation to the parish council on action to be taken in respect of the member. Parish councils will be under no obligation to accept any such recommendation. The only way round this would be to constitute the standards committee and consideration and hearing panels as a joint committee and joint sub-committees with the parish councils, and seek the delegation of powers from parish council to the consideration and hearing panels, so that they can effectively take decisions on action on behalf of the particular parish council.

(6) APPEALS

There is no requirement to put in place any appeals mechanism against such decisions. The decision would be open to judicial review by the High Court if it was

patently unreasonable, or if it were taken improperly, or if it sought to impose a sanction which the authority had no power to impose.

(7) INDEPENDENT PERSON(S)

The “arrangements” adopted by Council must include provision for the appointment by Council of at least one independent person.

“Independence”

The independent person must be appointed through a process of public advertisement, application and appointment by a positive vote of a majority of all members of the Council (not just of those present and voting).

A person is considered not to be “independent” if –

- he/she is, or has been within the last 5 years, an elected or co-opted member or an officer of the Council or of any of the parish councils within its area;
- he/she is, or has been within the last 5 years, an elected or co-opted member of any committee or sub-committee of the Council or of any of the parish councils within its area (which would preclude any of the current co-opted independent members of the Committee from being appointed as an independent person*); or
- he/she is a relative or close friend of a current elected or co-opted member or officer of the Council or any parish council within its area, or of any elected or co-opted member of any committee or sub-committee of the Council or parish council.

**The government has indicated that it is minded to make transitional provisions to enable an independent member to be appointed as an independent person during the first year in which the new standards regime takes effect (see letter dated 23 February 2012 from the Right Hon Bob Neill MP at Appendix B).*

For this purpose, “relative” comprises –

- the candidate’s spouse or civil partner;
- any person with whom the candidate is living as if they are spouses or civil partners;
- the candidate’s grandparent;
- any person who is a lineal descendent of the candidate’s grandparent;
- a parent, brother, sister or child of anyone in the first or second bullet point;
- the spouse or civil partner of anyone in the third, fourth or fifth bullet points; or

- any person living with a person in the fourth, fifth or sixth bullet points as if they were spouse or civil partner to that person.

Functions of the Independent Person

The functions of the independent person(s) are as follows –

- He/she must be consulted by the Council before it makes a finding as to whether a member has failed to comply with the code of conduct or decides on action to be taken in respect of that member (this means on a decision to take no action where the investigation finds no evidence of breach or, where the investigation finds evidence that there has been a breach, on any local resolution of the complaint, or on any finding of breach and on any decision on action as a result of that finding).
- He/she may be consulted by the Council in respect of a standards complaint at any other stage.
- He/she may be consulted by a member or co-opted member of the Council or of a parish council against whom a complaint has been made.

This causes some problems, as it would be inappropriate for an independent person who has been consulted by the member against whom the complaint has been made, and who might as a result be regarded as prejudiced on the matter, to be involved in the determination of that complaint.

How many Independent Persons?

The Act gives discretion to appoint one or more independent persons. However, there would appear to be little advantage in appointing more than one independent person, provided that a couple of reserve candidates are retained and can be activated at short notice, without the need for re-advertisement, in the event that the independent person is no longer able to discharge the function.

It has been suggested that the four sub-regional metropolitan district councils, Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield each appoint one independent person who would form a pool of reserve independent persons that each council could call upon from time to time and thereby avoid conflicts of interest.

Remuneration

As the independent person is not a member of the Council or of its committees or sub-committees, the remuneration of the independent person no longer comes within the scheme of members' allowances, and can therefore be determined without reference to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

In comparison to the current chair of the Standards Committee, the role of independent person is likely to be less onerous. He/she may be invited to attend all

meetings of the standards committee and consideration and hearings panels, but not to be a formal member of the Committee or panel (he/she could be co-opted as a non-voting member but cannot chair as the chair must exercise a second or casting vote). He/she will need to be available to be consulted by members against whom a complaint has been made, although it is unclear what assistance he/she could offer. Where he/she has been so consulted, he/she would be unable to be involved in the determination of that complaint. This report suggests that the independent person should also be involved in the local resolution of complaints and in the grant of dispensations. However, it would be appropriate to undertake a proper review of the function before setting the remuneration.

The Standards Committee considers that the independent person's remuneration should be set by the Independent Remuneration Panel having regard to the views of the chair of the Standards Committee, and should be within the limits of allowances currently paid to current independent members of the Standards Committee.

The Committee suggests that the independent person should report quarterly to the standards committee.

(9) THE REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Localism Act abolishes the concepts of personal and prejudicial interests. Instead, regulations will define "disclosable pecuniary interests" (DPIs). The monitoring officer is required to maintain a register of interests, which must be available for inspection and available on the Council's website. The monitoring officer is also responsible for maintaining the register for parish councils, which also have to be open for inspection at the Council's offices and on the Council's website.

At present we do not know what DPIs will comprise, but they are likely to be broadly equivalent to the current prejudicial interests. The intention was to simplify the registration requirement, but in fact the Act extends the requirement for registration to cover not just the member's own interests, but also those of the member's spouse or civil partner, or someone living with the member in a similar capacity.

The provisions of the Act in respect of the code of conduct require the Council's Code to contain appropriate requirements for the registration (and disclosure) of other pecuniary interests and non-pecuniary interests.

The monitoring officer is required by the Act to set up and maintain registers of interest for each parish council, available for inspection at the Council's offices and on the Council's website and, where the parish council has a website, provide the parish council with the information required to enable the parish council to put the current register on its own website.

Registration on election or co-option

Each elected or co-opted member must register all DPIs within 28 days of becoming a member. Failure to register is made a criminal offence, but would not prevent the member from acting as a member.

In so far as the code of conduct which the Council adopts requires registration of other interests, failure to do so would not be a criminal offence, but merely a failure to comply with the code of conduct.

There is no continuing requirement for a member to keep the register up-to-date, except on re-election or re-appointment, but it is likely that members will register new interests from time to time, as this avoids the need for disclosure in meetings. When additional notifications are given, the monitoring officer has to ensure that they are entered into the register.

The preparation and operation of the register, not just for the Council but also for each parish council, is likely to be a considerable administrative task, especially where different parish councils adopt different code requirements for registration and disclosure in respect of interests other than DPIs. There is no provision for the Council to recover any costs from parish councils.

Disclosure of Interests and Withdrawal from Meetings

As set out above, DPIs are broadly equivalent to prejudicial interests, but with important differences.

The duty to disclose arises whenever a member is present at a meeting of the Council, a committee or sub-committee, or a Cabinet or a Cabinet committee, and is aware that he/she has a DPI in any matter being considered at the meeting that has not been previously registered or notified to the monitoring officer.

In these cases the member must disclose the interest to the meeting (i.e. declare the existence and nature of the interest). However, in a change from the current requirements, the member does not have to make such a disclosure if he/she has already registered the DPI, or at least sent off a request to the monitoring officer to register it (a "pending notification").

Where the member does make a disclosure of an unregistered or non-pending DPI during a meeting, he/she must then notify it to the monitoring officer within the next 28 days, so that it can go on the register of interests.

If a member has a DPI in any matter, he/she must not –

- participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting. The Act does not define "discussion", but this would appear to preclude making representations as currently permitted under paragraph 12(2) of the model code of conduct; or
- participate in any vote on the matter,

unless he/she has obtained a dispensation allowing him/her to speak and/or vote.

Failure to comply with these requirements becomes a criminal offence, rather than leading to sanctions.

The Council's Code of Conduct must make "appropriate" provisions for disclosure of pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests, but failure to comply with these requirements would be a breach of the Code of Conduct but not a criminal offence.

The Cabinet has recommended to the full Council an amendment to standing order 28 to the effect that a member with a DPI must withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, while the item of business in which he/she has a DPI is being considered and voted on, except where he/she has been permitted to remain as a result of the grant of a dispensation.

Disclosure and Withdrawal in respect of matters to be determined by a Single Member

Matters can be decided by Cabinet members acting alone under delegated powers.

The Act provides that, when a member becomes aware that he/she will have to deal with a matter and that he/she has a DPI in that matter –

- unless the DPI is already entered in the register of members' interests or is subject to a "pending notification", he/she has 28 days to notify the monitoring officer that he/she has such a DPI; and
- he/she must take no action in respect of that matter other than to refer it to another person or body to take the decision.

Standing orders can then provide for the exclusion of the member from any meeting while any discussion or vote takes place on the matter.

Note that the Act here effectively removes the rights of a member with a prejudicial interest to make representations as a member of the public under paragraph 12(2) of the current Code of Conduct.

Sensitive Interests

The Act effectively re-enacts the existing Code of Conduct provisions on sensitive interests.

So, where a member is concerned that disclosure of the detail of an interest (either a DPI or any other interest which he/she would be required to disclose) at a meeting or on the register of members' interests would lead to the member or a person connected with him/her being subject to violence or intimidation, he/she may request the monitoring officer to agree that the interest is a "sensitive interest".

If the monitoring officer agrees, the member then merely has to disclose the existence of an interest, rather than the detail of it, at a meeting, and the monitoring officer can exclude the detail of the interest from the published version of the register of members' interests.

Dispensations

The provisions on dispensations are significantly changed by the Localism Act.

At present, a member who has a prejudicial interest may apply to the Standards Committee for a dispensation on two grounds –

- that at least half of the members of a decision-making body have prejudicial interests (this ground is of little use as it is normally only at the meeting that it is realised how many members have prejudicial interests in the matter, by which time it is too late to convene a meeting of the Standards Committee); and
- that so many members of one political party have prejudicial interests in the matter that it would upset the result of the vote on the matter (this ground would require that the members concerned were entirely predetermined, in which case the grant of a dispensation to allow them to vote would be inappropriate).

In future, a dispensation will be able to be granted in the following circumstances –

- that so many members of the decision-making body have DPIs in a matter that it would “impede the transaction of the business”. In practice this means that the decision-making body would be inquorate as a result (Ground 1);
- that, without the dispensation, the representation of different political groups on the decision-making body would be so upset as to alter the outcome of any vote on the matter. This assumes that members are predetermined to vote on party lines on the matter, in which case, it would be inappropriate to grant a dispensation to enable them to participate (Ground 2);
- that the decision-making body considers that the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council’s area (Ground 3);
- that, without a dispensation, no member of the Cabinet would be able to participate in discussion of the item (so, the assumption is that, where the Cabinet would be inquorate as a result, the matter can then be dealt with by an individual Cabinet member. It will be necessary to make provision in the scheme of delegations from the Leader to cover this, admittedly unlikely, eventuality) (Ground 4); or
- that the authority considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation (Ground 5).

Any grant of a dispensation must specify the dispensation period, which can be up to a maximum of 4 years.

The next significant change is that, where the Local Government Act 2000 required that dispensations be granted by the Standards Committee, the Localism Act gives discretion for this power to be delegated to a standards committee or a sub-committee, or to the monitoring officer. Grounds 1 and 4 are essentially objective, so it may be appropriate to delegate dispensations on these grounds to the monitoring officer, with an appeal to the standards committee, thus enabling dispensations to be granted “at the door of the meeting”. Grounds 2, 3 and 5 are rather more subjective and so it may be appropriate that the discretion to grant dispensations on these grounds remains with the standards committee.

8. Finance

There will be some costs associated with the transition from the current arrangement to the new arrangements including the costs of advertising and appointing independent persons.

9 Risks and Uncertainties

It is expected that the new arrangements will take effect from 1 July 2012. Consequently, in order to comply with the Council's obligations under the 2011 Act, it will be necessary to have a code of conduct and the democratic machinery in place to avoid breach of the Act.

10 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Having a standards committee and code of conduct for members and co-opted members supports the objective of being an effective council and is a component of good governance.

11 Background Papers and Consultation

Localism Act 2011

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APPENDIX A

**RMBC Standards Committee Response to the Localism Act
2011.**

March 2012

RMBC Standards Committee Response to Localism Act 2011

Executive Summary

Please note that the term “independent” is used within this document in its general sense, and should not be read as referring to Independent Members of the current Standards Committee.

1. The current Standards Committee has concerns about a number of areas of the Localism Act, finding the Act to be ill-conceived and poorly drafted. These areas of concern are identified in the accompanying report, along with the rationale supporting them.
2. Whilst a number of these areas are rendered rigid and inflexible by the legislation there are others that are more flexible, and offer an opportunity for alternative applications. These areas of concern and the alternative applications they offer are as follows:
 - a) The Act requires that only Elected Members of the Council can be voting members of the Standards Committee, and these Elected Members are to be appointed proportionally. It would seem unfair to expect members to judge complaints against their peers, and this arrangement may have a detrimental effect on public confidence in the impartiality and objectivity of the local standards regime. **The legislations does allow for Councils to delegate decisions on complaints** e.g. to form a separate sub-committee which could fulfil this role, or to form a separate committee under a different name and with a more balanced membership. These options could also offer an opportunity for the Standards Committee to widen its remit.
 - b) The Act places what the Standards Committee considers to be an inappropriate responsibility on the Monitoring Officer, as an officer of the Council, to consider complaints against Members. Having an Independent (Sub) Committee to consider such complaints would guard against this.
 - c) The role of the **Independent Person** is defined by the Act, and allows no flexibility. The role as outlined lacks credibility and is rendered ineffective because it is entirely advisory and lacks accountability. It is important for public confidence that the remuneration for this post is set at a prudent and thus publicly acceptable level.
3. The aim of the current Standards Committee is to ensure that, as far as is possible within the terms of the Localism Act, the RMBC standards regime operates effectively, generates public confidence and continues to be an example of good practice that best serves RMBC, its Members, Officers and Parish Councils, and last but not least the people of Rotherham. As a result it makes the following recommendations;

Recommendations for Consideration by RMBC

In Respect of the Composition of the Standards Committee, Public Confidence and the Handling of Complaints.

That, in the interest of fairness and of generating public confidence;

1. *Elected Members should **not** be appointed proportionally to the Standards Committee but rather that 50% of members be drawn from the dominant political party and 50% from other parties.*
2. *An **Independent** Sub Committee of the Standards Committee be formed to:*
 - *Be first point of call to consider and recommend resolution of complaints for approval by the Standards Committee.*
 - *Act as Impartial Mentor/Supporter for any officer invoking the Whistleblowing procedure.*
 - *Carry out further duties as deemed appropriate by the Standards Committee.*

In Respect of the Role of Independent Person

That, in order to maintain public confidence:

- *The post should be remunerated.*
- *Any remuneration for the Independent Person should be set at a prudent and realistic level by the Independent Remuneration Committee and Chair of the Standards Committee, and should be within the limits of allowances currently paid to Independent Standards Committee Members.*
- *The Independent Person should report as necessary/appropriate to the Standards Committee on the discharge of his/her functions.*

A meeting took place on 11th April 2012 between Councillor R. Stone (Leader RMBC), Mr. Martin Kimber (Chief Executive RMBC), Mrs. Angela Bingham (Chair RMBC Standards Committee) and Dr. Gill Musson (Vice-Chair RMBC Standards Committee), when the issues outlined in this document were discussed. At the conclusion of the meeting assurances were given by the Leader and the Chief Executive that:

RMBC would have a Standards Committee.

That the Standards Committee would include an Independent element.

That the Independent element of the Standards Committee would have voting rights.

Introduction

RMBC has had a Standards Committee for a number of years, and before this was a mandatory requirement. Members have always aimed to fulfil their remit in a professional, fair and objective manner, with this objectivity being enhanced by the Committee's independent element. RMBC has never sought to weaken that independence, recognizing its importance in generating and maintaining public confidence in its standards regime.

Members of the Standards Committee believe it is incumbent on them to support RMBC in promoting the highest possible standards amongst its members. At this time, when government, via the Localism Act, is seeking to change the current standards regime, the Committee would be failing in its duty were it not to review the new regulations and offer to RMBC its considered response to them.

The Committee has concerns about the Act itself, finding it to be ill conceived and poorly drafted with a number of areas of weakness within it. These include; the composition of the Standards Committee; proportionality; the lack of sanctions for transgression; the situation in respect of Parish Councils; the role of the Independent Person; the responsibilities of the Monitoring Officer and the ability to generate and maintain public confidence in the local standards regime. The legal requirements of the Act render some of these areas rigid and inflexible, however in others there is the opportunity to consider alternative applications of the Act. The following response is based on the Committee's knowledge and practical experience of applying the Code of Conduct, and is intended to offer alternative applications of the Localism Act, and to explain the rationale behind them.

Composition of the Standards Committee

Currently Independent Members are in the majority on RMBC Standards Committee which has an Independent Chair and Vice-Chair. Within the terms of the Localism Act the Standards Committee will be a 'normal' committee of the Council, composed entirely of Elected Members. An Independent Person is to be appointed who will not have voting rights, but will offer advice to the Monitoring Officer, and, in the event of a complaint being received, will be available for consultation by both the Council and subject of the complaint.

To task a committee of Elected Members with hearing complaints against their fellow members is, the Committee believes, to place them in a very difficult position, which is unlikely to be perceived by the electorate as generating objective and impartial decisions. This perception is further bolstered by the fact that the Act determines that Elected Members should be appointed proportionally to the Standards Committee. The political make-up of the Committee may be perceived as leaving its decisions open to bias, and may threaten public confidence in the objectivity and impartiality of RMBC's standards regime. The knowledge and practical experience of existing Standards Committee members will be lost when, particularly at this time of transition, it could prove extremely valuable.

The present regime has worked well at a local level with its combination of Elected, Independent and Parish Council members. This balance of membership is considered crucial in generating public confidence and facilitating effective functioning. The Committee maintains that it is inappropriate and unfair to expect Elected Members to judge their peers without independent support. Indeed most, if not all, professional bodies have lay members on those committees and panels that are called to make judgements on members, and this is widely accepted as an example of good practice. Consequently the Independent element should, at least, equal the Elected element of the Standards Committee.

There is no restriction, within the Act, to prevent the new standards committee having co-opted independent support, or an independent sub-committee. This group could act in an advisory

capacity and perhaps be tasked with considering complaints where the view of the Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person differ. This would also provide an opportunity for the Committee to broaden its remit. The Localism Act allows for the Council to “establish its own arrangements which can include delegation of decisions on complaints” and the non-specific nature of this statement does not rule out delegation to an independent sub-committee.

A further alternative may be to replace the Standards Committee with a committee under another name e.g. Ethical Policy Committee, that would have a wider remit, and more balanced membership.

Widening of Remit of Standards Committee

The remit of the current Standards Committee extends far beyond the consideration of complaints and includes, for example, oversight of Council policies and analysis of Ethical Awareness Surveys of Elected Members, Officers, and Parish Councillors. The survey results were disseminated by a Working Group of the Standards Committee and this group identified a need for an Independent Mentor/Supporter to support any officer invoking the Whistleblowing procedure. This role would sit well within the remit of an independent cohort of the Standards Committee, and would extend the work and influence of the Committee.

Public Confidence/Handling of Complaints

The Standards Committee is particularly concerned that the changes demanded by the Localism Act may potentially affect public confidence in the process of handling complaints, and the promotion of standards. Professions that historically self-regulated now incorporate independent members, a move driven by the need to gain and maintain public confidence.

By reversing their current system RMBC would not only be out of line with current professional practice, but could also be perceived, by the electorate, as creating the means for Elected Members to ‘police’ themselves. Equally the potential for the opinions of the Independent Person and the Monitoring Officer to differ would be ever present, placing Elected Members of the Standards Committee in this very position. There is an alternative application of the Act that would allow this task to be delegated as discussed in the section “Composition of the Standards Committee”.

The Act advocates increased use of the criminal justice system for transgressions of the Code of Conduct. However, it does not clarify the process for reporting to the police instances where a Declared Pecuniary Interest is not registered or mandated.

The lack of sanctions available to the Standards Committee would seem to close the opportunity, currently afforded, to respond to identified gaps in members’ knowledge, and to invoke training where the need is identified, and could also give rise to a public perception of an ineffective system.

The Role of the Independent Person and the Monitoring Officer

The Standards Committee considers that the terms of the Localism Act place inappropriate levels of responsibility on the Monitoring Officer. The responsibility for decisions on complaints is delegated to the Monitoring Officer and relies predominantly on the thoughts and opinions of that person, with ‘advice’ from one other, (ie the Independent Person), who has no voting rights and thus no power. The Committee maintains that it is inappropriate for an officer of the Council to be expected to handle, and make judgements on, complaints against Elected Members who could be construed as their employer, and that this would be unfair and even unethical. The Standards Committee believes that advice/decisions of this nature should be made by a committee.

The appointment of an Independent Person is a requirement of the Act, however the role is ambiguous whilst the terms of the legislation render it ineffective. The Independent Person, along with the Monitoring Officer, decides whether complaints should be investigated, however this person has no voting rights and consequently no power. There will almost certainly be cases where the views of the Monitoring Officer differ from those of the Independent Person, and there is a lack of direction within the Act for resolving his situation. The provision it makes for the Independent Person to be consulted by both the Council and subject member of a complaint is considered to be unacceptable, unethical and to compromise their independence, objectivity and credibility. Despite being a legal requirement this role would seem to have little standing or value under the terms of the Act.

Provision is made within the legislation for remuneration for the Independent Person. To ensure that this is set at a realistic, prudent and publicly acceptable level the Standards Committee proposes that it should be set by the Independent Remuneration Committee, with input from the Chair of the Standards Committee. The Committee believes this to be crucial to maintaining public confidence in the good stewardship of RMBC.

It would be appropriate for the Independent Person to report as necessary/appropriate to the Standards Committee on the discharge of his/her functions.

Conclusion

The Standards Committee has given very careful consideration to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, and their implications for RMBC. The views expressed within this report represent those voiced by members of the Committee during their deliberations, and supplied to the Chair for the purpose of constructing this document. The Act itself is ill-conceived and poorly drafted, and presents many potential difficulties in its practical application.

The Standards Committee members believe it to be incumbent on them to utilise their skills, knowledge, and the standards experience they have gained to offer to RMBC their considered opinion of the most practical and effective way to interpret and implement the new legislation. Whilst there are many areas of the Act that cause concern some of these are rendered rigid and inflexible by the terms of the legislation. There are others that offer alternative applications of the Act, and it is these areas that form the subject of this report, and are offered for consideration. The ultimate aim of the Standards Committee is to ensure that, as far as is possible within the terms of the Localism Act, the RMBC standards regime operates effectively, generates public confidence and continues to be an example of good practice that best serves RMBC, its members, officers, and Parish Councils, and equally importantly the people of Rotherham.

Bob Neill MP
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Bob Neill

23 FEB 2012

LOCALISM ACT: NEW STANDARDS ARRANGEMENTS

Thank you for your letter of 25 January to the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on behalf of your constituent, [redacted] of [redacted] who is a member of Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Standards Committee. [redacted] is concerned about the exclusion, under the Localism Act, of certain people from being appointed as the independent person under the new standards arrangements. She is also concerned about the composition of standards committees under the new arrangements and the fact that co-opted members will no longer have a vote.

The exclusion of existing members of standards committees from being appointed as an Independent Person was put in place to provide a clear break with the old Standards Board regime, and ensures that no person who is an independent member or chair of a council's statutory standards committee can be appointed as the Localism Act's independent person while they continue to be a member of that committee.

The Department received a number of representations from councils about this matter, and after careful consideration, Ministers are minded that transitional provision should be made allowing a council to appoint a person as an independent person who, although not a member or chairman of a standards committee at the time of appointment (or thereafter), has held such a post within the last five years. This transitional provision would apply for the first year of the new arrangements, and any person appointed under the transitional provisions would be able to continue to hold office after the transitional period, for whatever term the council saw fit.

However, the Government has no plans to allow a relative or close friend of members, co-opted members or of an officer of a parish council within the council's area to be appointed as an independent person. Similarly, it has no plans to give co-opted members of non-statutory standards committees a vote, or to exclude them from the political balance rules.

Bob Neill

Bob Neill

BOB NEILL MP

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	23 May 2012
3.	Title:	Audit Committee Annual Report 2011/12
4.	Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

This report refers to the Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2011/12. The report is presented to Cabinet, and subsequently Council, in accordance with best practice. It shows how the Audit Committee has successfully fulfilled its terms of reference and has helped to improve the Council's governance arrangements and its overall control environment.

6. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked:

- **to note the Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2011/12 and in particular the Audit Committee's ongoing compliance with best practice and its successful achievement of its terms of reference**
- **to agree the proposal to present the report to the next full Council meeting.**

7. Proposals and Details

The Audit Committee's Terms of Reference and best practice as contained in the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance) document "A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees" require the Audit Committee to complete an annual report.

A copy of the Annual Report 2011/12 is attached at **Appendix A**. It shows key information relating to the Committee, its achievements during the year and key targets for 2012/13.

The Audit Committee has previously been commended by the external auditor and the Annual Report shows that it has successfully fulfilled its terms of reference and has helped to improve the Council's governance arrangements and its control environment.

In line with best practice it is proposed that the report is presented to the next Council meeting by the Chair of the Audit Committee.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The preparation of an Annual Report is in line with best practice.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Good Governance is wholly related to the achievement of the objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

"A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees", CIPFA, IPF, 2006

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Appendices:

Appendix A

Audit Committee Annual Report 2011/12

AUDIT COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

Councillor A Sangster, Chair
Councillor B Kaye, Vice-Chair

FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

I am pleased to present the Audit Committee's 2011/12 Annual Report. The report shows the contribution the Audit Committee has made to the achievement of improved governance and internal control within the Council.

The Audit Committee oversees the management of risks within the Council and the operation and effectiveness of the Council's internal control arrangements. It fulfils this role by considering and approving reports from officers responsible for financial management and governance within the Council and from the Council's external auditors. Where relevant, the Committee also makes recommendations for action to address any deficiencies identified by or reported to the Audit Committee.

This year we have considered various emerging risks and priorities, including several developments in respect of fraud and corruption. Members were made aware of new Bribery Legislation and a new Government-led strategy (Fighting Fraud Locally) to combat fraud and corruption in the UK. Against this background, the Council's own Anti – Fraud and Corruption Policy, Strategy and Action Plan were all updated and continue to comply with best practice.

We have continued to work with colleagues across Rotherham, including audit committee Members from the Health, Police, Fire and Probation Services. This is enabling us to look at cross-cutting areas of development and risk, including the implications of major change programmes in the Police Service and the NHS.

In my foreword last year I noted that 2011/12 would see the continuation of a prolonged period of austerity and this has well and truly been the case. Rotherham Council has had to achieve further savings of £20m to produce a balanced budget for 2012/13. As an Audit Committee we want to help the Council to manage the risks associated with the substantial changes brought about by this level of reduction. This will continue to be a key priority for us in 2012/13. We will also want to ensure the Council maintains the high standards of financial management and control it has achieved.



Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues sitting on the Audit Committee during the year (Councillors Barry Kaye, Vice-Chair, Neil License, Kath Sims and John Gilding) for the work they have done to help the Committee to fulfil its terms of reference effectively. And, I thank all officers and Members who have responded positively to the Audit Committee over the year, when questions have been asked and information requested.

***Councillor Alex Sangster
Chair, Audit Committee 2011/12***

AUDIT COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

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INTRODUCTION

This Annual report is produced in accordance with latest best practice*¹ and shows that the Council is committed to working as an exemplar organisation, operating the highest standards of governance. The report shows how the Audit Committee has successfully fulfilled its terms of reference and has helped the Council to improve its governance and control environments.

SOME KEY INFORMATION

Audit Committee Membership

The Audit Committee has 5 Members:

Councillor Alex Sangster	-	Chair
Councillor Barry Kaye	-	Vice-Chair
Councillor Neil License		
Councillor Kath Sims		
Councillor John Gilding		

In addition, Councillor Jahangir Akhtar, Deputy Leader (with responsibility for Resources), has an invitation to attend Audit Committee meetings. There is strong officer support to the Audit Committee, through the regular attendance of the Strategic Director of Resources, the Director of Legal Services, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Internal Audit & Asset Management. Other officers attend as and when appropriate, including the Chief Executive.

Key features of the Audit Committee and its operation

Comparison against best practice illustrates the Audit Committee's strengths:

Best Practice	Expectation	Met?	Comment
Independence	Independent from the executive and scrutiny	√	The Committee reports to the Council
Number of Members	3-5	√	The Committee has 5 Members
Number of meetings	Aligned to business needs	√	The frequency of meetings enables all business to be considered in a timely manner
Co-option	To be considered relative to skills	√	Training is provided to increase Members' skills
Terms of Reference	Accord with suggested best practice	√	The Committee has adopted the model ToR
Skills and training	Members have sufficient skills for the job	√	General and, through the PDR process, specific training is provided to increase Members' skills

¹ Best practice as contained in the CIPFA, IPF document "A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees"

Meetings and attendance

The Audit Committee meets normally on the penultimate Wednesday of each month. There have been 10 meetings between May 2011 and April 2012 (no meeting was held in August and November 2011). Attendance by Members was a very good 86% (80% in 2010/11).

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY 2011/12

Terms of Reference

The Audit Committee's terms of reference cover 6 main areas and are copied at **Appendix 1** to this Annual Report. The Committee's work and outcomes in each of its areas of responsibility are summarised in the following sub-sections.

Internal Audit

The Audit Committee:

- Approved the Chief Auditor's audit plan
- Considered quarterly reports produced by the Chief Auditor, highlighting internal audit work completed, internal audit performance against key indicators, management's response to recommendations and any significant issues arising during the period
- Considered the Chief Auditor's annual report and opinion on the Council's control environment
- Considered the statutory review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit
- Ensured internal and external audit plans were complementary and provided optimum use of the total audit resource
- Received and considered information on the performance of the internal audit team.

We continue to provide support to the Internal Audit service to ensure management is responsive to recommendations made and agreed.

External Audit

The Audit Committee:

- Considered the external auditor's audit plan
- Considered progress against the plan presented by the external auditor
- Received and considered all external audit and inspection reports issued in the year and considered management's response to them, ensuring robust and thorough responses
- Reviewed the Council's progress on all external audit and inspection recommendations on a regular basis and asked managers to explain progress, thereby holding them to account.

We continue to provide support to external audit to ensure management is responsive to recommendations made and agreed.

Risk Management

The Audit Committee:

- Received and considered reports on the corporate risk register
- Enquired about specific risks and the application of risk management arrangements within directorates.

Internal Control and Governance

The Audit Committee:

- Agreed the Council's Annual Governance Statement and action plans to improve identified weaknesses
- Considered and supported changes to the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy
- Reviewed the effectiveness of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption arrangements and progress in implementing the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Plan
- Encouraged the adoption of the Audit Commission's National Fraud Initiative
- Approved the production of the Council's Annual Fraud Report.
- Considered developments including the Bribery Act 2010, the Government's 'Fighting Fraud Locally' Strategy, and the Audit Commission's 'Protecting the Public Purse'.

The Annual Governance Statement is a key document which summarises the Council's governance arrangements and the effectiveness of the arrangements during the year. The Audit Committee received a draft Annual Governance Statement prior to its inclusion in the Council's Statement of Accounts. This was intended to ensure the Audit Committee could more thoroughly review the robustness of the process for producing the Statement and the content of it. The Audit Committee was satisfied that:

- There was a comprehensive assurance framework in place to safeguard the Council's resources
- The framework was reliable and applied during the course of the year, including financial reporting, internal and external audit the Audit Committee's own arrangements.

Accounts

The Audit Committee:

- Agreed the Council's accounting policies

- Agreed the annual statement of accounts
- Received and considered the external auditor's report on the accounts, and ensured that the Council responded to the auditor's comments

The Audit Committee received regular reports on the Council's Treasury Management arrangements in the context of the economic downturn and also received the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2012/13 to 2014/15.

Specific Issues

The Audit Committee also considered reports on the following specific issues which arose in the period:

- Consideration of a range of publications relevant to the Audit Committee's terms of reference, including Consultation on the Future of Local Public Audit [DCLG]
- Received a report on the performance of the sundry accounts function and how changes in the computer system and working practices had contributed to improved collection rates and more efficient account management.
- Considered a report summarising the Customer Inspection Service.

A full list of the reports considered by the Audit Committee can be found in **Appendix 2**.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

We have had 3 meetings during the year with colleagues across Rotherham, including audit committee Members from the Health, Police, Fire and Probation Services.

By looking collectively at governance related issues, we are able to identify cross-cutting areas of development and risk that could affect all of the services. This year we have considered, amongst other things, the implications and risks for partners of major change programmes in the Police Service and the NHS.

OUTCOMES

The Audit Committee aims to focus on adding value through its activity. By concentrating on outcomes the Committee can identify the benefits of its work. In particular this year the Audit Committee:

- Oversaw work on the Statement of Accounts which received a clean opinion from the external auditor

- Oversaw further development of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption arrangements and the production of the Council's Annual Fraud Report
- Continued to meet with colleagues and reviewed Rotherham wide governance issues through the '*Rotherham Audit Committee*'
- Ensured there was appropriate focus on the risks associated with substantial budget reductions
- Encouraged and presided over a strengthening control environment, specifically by overseeing reviews of the Local Code of Corporate Governance, Risk Management and responses to external audit recommendations.

In addition, individual Members and the Audit Committee collectively continued to develop and learn about our roles, and deliver these roles effectively. We have received refresher sessions this year on International Financial Reporting Standards and Anti-Fraud and Corruption developments.

PLANS FOR 2012/13

We want to continue to develop and build on our current status. For 2012/13 we will:

- Continue to review all governance arrangements to ensure the Council adopts the very latest best practice, in particular relating to partnerships' governance
- Continue to support the work of Internal and External Audit and ensure appropriate responses are given to their recommendations
- Ensure we maintain and further improve our standards in relation to the production of accounts
- Continue to help the Council to manage the risk of fraud and corruption
- Continue to work with colleagues in other statutory services to collectively identify and manage cross-cutting risks arising from major developments.
- Equip existing and any new Members to fulfil our responsibilities by providing refresher training on financial arrangements and risk management.

During 2011/12 we have continued the progress we have made in previous years, and going forward we look to continue to be a champion of good governance at both a local and sub-regional level.

Councillors Alex Sangster (Chair) and Barry Kaye (Vice-Chair)
Rotherham MBC Audit Committee
April 2012

APPENDIX 1
AUDIT COMMITTEE

Statement of Purpose

To provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the audit and risk management frameworks and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment and to oversee the financial reporting process.

Terms of Reference

Internal Audit

To approve (but not direct) the internal audit manager's proposed strategy plan and performance and ensure that this gives an adequate level of assurance over the Council's main risks.

To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary.

To consider reports from the internal audit manager on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.

To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the internal audit service.

To consider the internal audit manager's annual report and opinion.

To ensure that there are effective relationships between internal and external audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies.

External Audit

To consider and comment upon the external audit plan.

To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.

To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.

To consider the adequacy of management response to external audit advice, recommendations and action plans.

To consider issues arising from the external auditor's annual management letter prior to its submission to the full council.

To commission work from internal and external audit.

To liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the Council's external auditor.

To provide feedback to the external auditor upon external audit performance.

Risk management

Consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements and control environment.

Seek assurances that action is being taken on risk related issues identified by auditors and inspectors.

Review the robustness of risk registers.

Internal control arrangements and Corporate Governance

To consider and review the statement of internal control prior to recommending it to the full Council.

Be satisfied that the Council's assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.

Review the procedures followed in compiling the Annual Governance Statement and supporting documentation to determine the robustness of the evidence and assurances upon which the statement is based.

Consider and monitor action plans for addressing any significant internal control weaknesses disclosed.

To consider the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and agree necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice.

To maintain an overview of financial regulations and contract procedure rules.

To review and consider the adequacy of the Council's anti-fraud and corruption policy and to monitor its effectiveness throughout the Council.

To review and consider the statement of internal control prior to recommending.

Accounts

To consider and review the annual statement of accounts prior to recommending it to the full Council.

To consider the external auditor's report on the audit of the annual financial statement prior to recommending the audited statement of accounts to the full Council.

To consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statement or from the audit.

General

To review any issue referred by the Council, a Council body, the Chief Executive, an Executive Director, the Section 151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer.

To submit for consideration by the full council an annual report as to the work of the committee at the end of each financial year.

To liaise with the Audit Committees of partner organisations and other South Yorkshire authorities over the mutual exchange of views, good practice and approaches to issues of common concern.

AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTIVITY – 2011/12

Function / Issue	June 2011	June 2011	July 2011	Sept 2011	Oct 2011	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	March 2012
Internal Audit									
Internal Audit Plan 2011/12	Approved								
Annual Report of Head of Internal Audit Services	Received								
Internal Audit Progress Report				Received		Received			Received
Annual Fraud Report			Received						
Bribery Act						Received			
Anti Fraud and Corruption arrangements							Approved		
Protecting the Public Purse 2011 – Fighting Fraud Against Local Government							Received		
Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy - revision							Approved		
External Audit									
External Audit Plan 2011/12 - proposed		Approved							
External Audit Plan 2011/12									Received
Audit and Inspection Recommendations Update			Received		Received			Received	
External Audit Report 2010/11 [Interim)			Received						
Grants Report 2011/12								February	
Annual Audit Letter 2010/11						Received			

AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTIVITY – 2011/12

Function / Issue	June 2011	June 2011	July 2011	Sept 2011	Oct 2011	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	March 2012
Risk Management									
Corporate Risk Register					Received			Received	
Governance									
Annual Governance Statement 2010/11	Received								
Accounts									
Statement of Accounts 2010/11 [unaudited]			Approved						
Statement of Accounts 2010/11				Approved					
Annual Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2010/11				Approved					
Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2011/12 [mid - year]					Received				
Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2012/13 to 2014/15								Approved	
Closure of the 2011/12 Accounts 2011/12									Approved
Sundry Accounts Performance 2010/11		Received							
Customer Inspection Service					Received				

AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTIVITY – 2011/12

Function / Issue	June 2011	June 2011	July 2011	Sept 2011	Oct 2011	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	March 2012
General and Committee Working Arrangements									
Communities and Local Government – Consultation on the future of Local Public Audit	Received								
Audit Committee Work Programme	Approved								
Audit Committee Update – issue 5 – various issues		Received							
Audit Committee Update – issue 6 – Partnerships' Governance						Received			
Audit Committee Self Assessment						Received			

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	23 May 2012
3.	Title:	RBT Liquidation
4.	Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

This report asks Cabinet to authorise Councillors Rose McNeely and/or Alex Sangster to act on behalf of the Council in the liquidation of RBT.

6. Recommendation

Cabinet is requested to authorise Councillor Rose McNeely and/or Councillor Alex Sangster to act as the authorised representative of the Council in its capacity as shareholder in RBT (Connect) Limited and accordingly to do anything which in his or her discretion is necessary or desirable in connection with the processes outlined in paragraph 7 of this report and for the voluntarily winding up of the company.

7. Proposals and Details

On 1 February 2012 the Council and BT signed a legal agreement to end the RBT partnership. During the period 1 February 2012 to 31 March 2012 the final transactions between the Council and RBT were completed, enabling the preparation of the RBT financial accounts as at 31 March 2012 to be completed.

As the partnership has now ended and the accounting transactions have been completed, there is now a need to liquidate the RBT Company.

Two Councillors (Councillors Rose McNeely and Alex Sangster) have been appointed by the Council as directors of the Company. They will be able to agree decisions on behalf of the Company in respect of the liquidation.

However, neither of the Councillors has been authorised to act as the authorised representative of the Council in its capacity of shareholder. The articles of association for the company require the Council to appoint a duly authorised representative to attend meetings of the company and either Cllr McNeely or Cllr Sangster could fulfil that role and it would be administratively logical and convenient for one of them to perform this task.

Briefly, the process for liquidation is:

- Directors of the Company make a statutory declaration of solvency, stating that the Company will be able to pay any debts in full within 12 months from the start of the winding up
- Directors of the Company then pass a resolution to wind up the Company voluntarily, and appoint a liquidator
- The liquidator takes control of the Company and conducts various statutory financial procedures, primarily in this case ensuring there are no outstanding claims / invoices to be made against the Company
- On completion of the statutory financial procedures the liquidator arranges a final meeting of the directors, where he/she explains the Company's final position
- When the shareholders (the Council and BT) are happy that the statutory financial procedures have been satisfactorily completed, they will ask directors to complete the liquidation process
- The liquidator is then required to file various documents with the Registrar of Companies, and the Company is dissolved three months later.

The first liquidation meeting is expected to take place in late May / June, following an appropriate delegation of authority by Cabinet.

8. Finance

It is expected that there are sufficient funds held by the Company to pay the liquidator's fees (estimated to be £6,000). The Council is not expected to have to make any payments in relation to the liquidation.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Due diligence work carried out during the ending of the RBT partnership has minimised risks associated with the completion of the partnership and liquidation of the Company. There are no known significant risks associated with liquidating the Company.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The liquidation of the RBT Company is the final step in ending the Council's partnership with BT. The re-integration of former RBT services back into the Council will facilitate more direct decision making by the Council in relation to its service development and delivery.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Cabinet Report, 8 June 2011
RBT Company documentation
RBT Partnership documentation

Contact Names:

Colin Earl, Director of Audit & Asset Management, x22033

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	23rd May 2012
3.	Title:	Update on the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
4.	Programme Area:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

This report updates Cabinet on progress to date with the operation of the Sheffield City Region (SCR) LEP; including their management of the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) Round 3, the Growing Places Fund and the setting up of a sub-regional development fund using ERDF JESSICA money.

6. Recommendations

- To note the report
- To agree to Rotherham MBC underwriting investment in the South Yorkshire Development Fund, along with the 3 other South Yorkshire local authorities, subject to endorsement of the final inter-authority agreement by Legal Services

7. Proposals and Details

The SCR LEP was approved in October 2010 as part of the Government's first wave of 24 LEPs. This number has now risen to 39; covering all but one of England's local authorities

The SCR LEP Board comprises a mixture of private and public sector reps; with the Chair being from the private sector. The current membership of the Board is

- James Newman , Finance Yorkshire **(CHAIR)**
- Philip Bartey, The Adsetts Partnership Ltd
- Nigel Brewster, Brewster McBride Recruitment
- Simon Carr, Henry Boot Construction
- David Grey, OSL Group Holdings
- Deborah Egan, The Electric Village
- Chris Scholey, Manufacturing Sector and Chairman of Doncaster & Bassetlaw NHS Trust
- Lee Strafford, PlusNet PLC and Co-founder of Project Sheffield

- Prof Philip Jones, Vice Chancellor Sheffield Hallam University

- Cllr Roger Stone OBE, Leader Rotherham MBC
- Cllr Stephen Houghton CBE, Leader Barnsley MBC
- Cllr Graham Oxby, Leader Bassetlaw DC
- Cllr John Burrows, Leader Chesterfield BC
- Mayor Peter Davies, Mayor Doncaster MBC
- Cllr Graham Baxter MBE, Leader North East Derbyshire DC
- Cllr Julie Dore, Leader Sheffield CC

Sector Groups

The LEP has set up 7 groups covering those sectors which have been identified as being of greatest importance to the City Region for creating jobs and growing the productivity of the local economy.

The Groups and their chairs are set out below:-

- **Advanced manufacturing and materials** – Pam Liversidge, Master Cutler
- **Creative and digital industries** – Professor Mike Holcombe, University of Sheffield
- **Low carbon** - Nick Tovey, Wardell Armstrong
- **Property and construction** – Alex Pettifer
- **Retail** – Robert Lane, Lane Walker
- **Sports, leisure and tourism** – Yuri Mateschen, MLS
- **Healthcare technologies** – Neil Garner, Neo Garner Ltd.

The remit of these groups, which all have Rotherham representation on them, is to produce sector strategies for the City Region. They will then advise and assist the LEP in the implementation of the strategies.

Enterprise Zone (EZ)

The LEP has successfully applied to set up an EZ in the City Region, which became active on 1st April 2012. It is based around 3 agreed areas:-

- Markham Vale, around J29A of the M1. Focused on complementary manufacturing and supply chain
- Barnsley, around J36 on the M1. Low carbon technologies and related growth
- Sheffield/Rotherham corridor – sites include parts of Templeborough, the AMP at Waverley, Sheffield Business Park and around J34 of the M1. The focus is on R&D, higher technology engineering and manufacturing and related activities.

Each of these areas can provide a range of support to new and existing businesses located on agreed sites, helping them to grow and create jobs. This support includes:-

- ✓ 100% enhanced capital allowances for businesses making major capital investment
- ✓ Business rate relief for SMEs up to a value of £75,000 per annum for 5 years.
- ✓ A simplified planning regime
- ✓ Provision of superfast broadband.

By 2020 the EZ is expected to deliver:-

- 8,400 additional jobs
- £400m of increased economic output
- £6.3m per annum uplift in business rates

Increased business rate receipts from the EZ, will be used by the LEP to support future economic development and sustainable growth of the Economy across the City Region.

Inward Investment

The LEP has taken a strategic lead on inward investment within the City region. A city-region wide inward investment team comprising a newly recruited director and secondments from local inward investment teams has been established. The team has responsibility for targeting companies across the UK and overseas to generate new inward investment leads in a number of the SCR's identified priority sectors and also promotion of the Enterprise Zone.

Once the initial leads have been secured; responsibility for each project will be handed to the various local inward investment teams (RiDO for Rotherham), to identify specific sites and support and to persuade the companies to sign up.

Regional Growth Fund (RGF)

The 3rd round of RGF has taken the total amount of money available through this initiative to £2.4bn over the period 2011-15.

SCR projects have secured some money over the first two rounds, although they did not perform as well as other northern regions. The Visions of China project was unsuccessful under Round 2.

The LEP is seeking to improve on this performance in the third, and potentially final, round. As such the LEP has been working with the local authority Economic Development teams to develop an RGF programme bid; enabling companies to seek less than £1 million RGF funding via a large combined bid. To date over 60 Round 3 applications have been received.

Growing Places Fund (GPF)

GPF is money from central government provided to LEPs to support economic growth and job creation. SCR was originally awarded £12.5m, which has recently been boosted by a further £6.0m

The LEP decided that this money be allocated in the form of loans, to allow its recycling for reinvestment in other projects. Sheffield City Council are acting as accountable body for the allocation and monitoring of this funding.

£7m of this money was used to provide match funding for a JESSICA project (see below). The remainder was awarded via competitive bidding round, with the successful projects being

- Bus Rapid Transit North (£3.0m)
- Chesterfield Waterfront (£2.4m)
- FARRRS Airport link road (£2.0m)

A private sector bid for works at the AMP was given reserve status and a RMBC housing bid was unsuccessful. Both of them are now being revised for possible inclusion under Round 2, which is being run with the additional money the LEP has received.

City Deals

SCR is one of a number of areas being offer “City Deals” by the government. These deals “free up” cities from the control of Whitehall, giving them the powers they are seeking in order to attract private sector investment, create jobs and rebalance the economy. In return the cities must provide strong and accountable leadership, improved efficiencies and outcomes and have an innovative approach.

SCR “asks” include:-

Skills - a genuinely demand-led system and a fully funded 3 year Skills and Employment Plan

Transport – decentralization of major scheme funding powers; northern rail franchise devolved to northern cities and increased powers in running the SCR transport network

Finance – set up an SCR Investment Fund; get approval for the proposed JESSICA scheme; retain assisted area status until 2020 and set up Tax Increment Financing (TIF) schemes

Governance – explore the scope for a combined authority covering the SCR

JESSICA

Jessica is European funding used to provide a rolling fund for development of sites and property. As mentioned above, £7 million of GPF money was allocated to the City Region’s JESSICA, allowing a further £13m of European Funding to be drawn down; providing a total pot of £20m.

This money will be used in the form of loans targeting capital projects that will provide job creation and increase the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the City region.

Sheffield CC will act as the accountable body for this money; although all four South Yorkshire authorities will be asked to sign up to a risk sharing agreement (see risks section.) Those authorities which do sign up will have a seat on the Investment Board and will contribute to the production of an investment strategy for the Fund. The day to day running of the Development Fund will be the responsibility of a Fund Manager procured via OJEU.

It is expected that the Fund will be set up and approved by autumn 2012, allowing funds to start being allocated to projects.

A wider development fund covering the whole of the SCR will be run in conjunction with the JESSICA, although this cannot use any of the ERDF money, which is only eligible for South Yorkshire.

8. Finance

Central government funding was secured to run the LEP until 31st March 2012. These costs are now being picked up by the Local Authorities, with the understanding that these will be reimbursed by the increased business rates take from the EZ, which will come to the LEP.

With a number of the EZ sites located in Rotherham, predominantly around the AMP/Waverley area, any uplift in business rates for the EZ going to the LEP will have an impact on future receipts coming into RMBC coffers.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There are potentially a number of risks in delivery of the South Yorkshire Development Fund under the JESSICA, which could make RMBC, as one of the underwriting bodies, responsible for repayment of a proportion of grant.

Details of the risks are set out below, along with the mitigating actions that will be put in place; making it very unlikely that any of the grant will be clawed back.

The Fund invests in projects which are not eligible for ERDF support – Experience of ERDF projects will be a criterion in appointing the Fund Manager. Conditions of all loans include clawback of any grant award if the money is spent on ERDF ineligible activity.

The Fund fails to meet the agreed ERDF outputs – Project outputs will be monitored on a regular basis allowing early identification of any underperformance and suitable corrective measures to be put in place. The level of outputs currently agreed are very low in comparison to the amount of ERDF the project is accessing.

The procurement process for appointing the Fund Manager does not meet EU requirements – SCC and the other local authorities all have a depth of experience in OJEU procurements. The ERDF audit team will be invited to comment on the procurement process.

The Growing Places Fund money is not defrayed in line with government requirements – There are very few conditions on the grant; plus SCC has a depth of experience in managing unringfenced grants.

An inter-authority agreement will be entered into by all the Councils which will set out the respective proportions in which any losses are to be borne by each of the Councils.

If any clawback can be shown to be due to negligence, wilful misconduct, fraud or reckless disregard on the part of Sheffield CC as the accountable body, then the costs will not be shared amongst the other partners.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The LEP have taken the lead on economic strategy and development for the City Region. This work links to a wide range of policy and activity within both the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership. These links being strengthened through the Economy Board of the Partnership, which seeks to add local value to and complement the work done by the LEP.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Colleagues from Finance, Legal and Chief Executives have been consulted on, and contributed to, this report.

Contact Name:

Simeon Leach, Regeneration Manager, simeon.leach@rotherham.gov.uk tel 01709 823828.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting	Cabinet
2.	Date	23rd May 2012
3.	Title	Scrutiny Review Regeneration Funding and Neighbourhood Renewal
4.	Directorate	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

On 21st December 2011 Cabinet agreed that the Scrutiny Review of Regeneration Funding and Neighbourhood Renewal be noted and a response be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

This report, in the main, accepts the recommendations, many of which are being addressed as part of the Council's Deprived Communities work.

6. Recommendations:

Cabinet is asked to agree the proposed response to the Scrutiny report.

7. Proposals and details

The scrutiny review was commissioned following the publication of the latest indices of multiple deprivation, which showed a deterioration for a number of areas in Rotherham.

The initial scoping and research in July and August was followed by review sessions at Dinnington Resource Centre (6th October) and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (21st October).

The main aims were to:

- assess the effectiveness of past neighbourhood-based regeneration programmes in Rotherham and identify good practice and key lessons
- see whether learning could be applied to the planning or delivery of existing or future projects to ensure the greatest impact is made
- analyse, in particular, the various intensive neighbourhood management schemes (i.e. Chesterhill, Local Ambition Programme) and assess the potential for further roll out.

Following detailed consideration the commission made 13 recommendations, all of which, bar one are accepted. The attached action plan gives full details of these recommendations and the proposed actions.

Many of the recommendations will be met in part or in full by the emerging approach to tackling the problems of the 11 most deprived neighbourhoods, Community First and Troubled Families activity. This work is being given the highest level of priority and is being led by the Council's Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team.

The one recommendation which has not been accepted but deferred relates to preparing a report on the feasibility of establishing community budgets. At this present time funding has been secured as part of the Big Lottery and Community First Initiatives, for the most deprived areas of the borough. It needs to be noted that whilst extremely welcome, these funds are relatively modest compared to the scale of the challenge faced by these communities, and in comparison with monies that have previously been invested in to some of these communities. This is particularly the case given that they are spread over periods of up to 10 years. Beyond this resource, in view of the current climate faced by the Local Authority and its partners, it will prove extremely difficult to establish community budgets. What may be more likely is that existing limited resources are diverted to tackle the boroughs most pressing problems. There will also be an opportunity to consider this issue further as part of a review of the medium term financial strategy and forthcoming budget discussions.

8. Finance

Funding of £770k (over 4 years) has been secured as part of the Community First Programme, and up to £1m (over ten years) as part of the Big Lottery fund. No specific other financial resources have been identified at this time.

9. Risks and uncertainties

The main risk relates to the scale of the challenge faced by a significant number of Rotherham's neighbourhoods and the diminishing resources available to tackle such problems. Additional funding from two government initiatives is extremely welcome, but likely to be limited in its impact. To be successful, the Local Authority and its partners will need to channel sufficient resource into the most 'needy' communities. This may negatively impact on remaining areas outside of the 11 most deprived categorisation.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

This work will have significant impact on a number of the council's key priorities, in particular ensuring that no community is left behind. The problems faced by Rotherham's deprived communities are multi-faceted and as such the issues arise within a wide range of other policy and performance agendas.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Appendix 1: Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review – Regeneration Funding and Neighbourhood Renewal.
- Scrutiny review of regeneration funding and neighbourhood renewal – final report. Cabinet, 21st December 2011

Contact Name: Dave Richmond
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Ext.54958
dave.richmond@rotherham.gov.uk

Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review: Regeneration Funding and Neighbourhood Renewal

Recommendation	Cabinet Decision <i>(Accepted/ Rejected/ Deferred)</i>	Cabinet Response <i>(detailing proposed action if accepted, rationale for rejection, and why and when issue will be reconsidered if deferred)</i>	Officer Responsible	Action by (Date)
<p>1. More proactive work needed with private sector landlords to foment a more responsible approach to letting – to be picked up via the <i>scrutiny review of private landlords</i>.</p>	Accepted	<p>A detailed action plan has been drafted to respond to recommendations raised following the Scrutiny review of the Private Rental sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlords utilising the rent in advance loan and paper bond guarantee schemes are aware of the need to ensure PRS properties are free from Category 1 hazards prior to occupation by tenants. • Borough wide and locality based Landlord Forum's will continue to be offered to landlords. Agenda items will encourage landlords to undertake a more responsible approach to letting. • Analysis will be undertaken on the cost benefits of a local landlord accreditation scheme, taking account of available resources, prior to a decision being taken. • RMBC's PRS web-pages will be improved to ensure landlords are well informed of RMBC's approach towards improving standards in the PRS. • Robust action will continue to be taken to deal with unacceptable housing standards. • Appointing an advisor to the cabinet member to monitor progress (Cllr Goulty) 	Paul Benson	30 th June
<p>2. Review the council's approach to housing allocations to ensure existing policy and practice are helping to create sustainable communities – this to be referred to the <i>Improving Places</i> commission.</p>	Accepted	<p>A review of the Allocation Policy is under way. This will take into account the flexibilities proposed in recent government consultations and the imperative to ensure that we promote community sustainability. In addition the letting process has been reviewed and an "Its Your Move Meeting" is now being implemented which will enable a more constructive approach to sustainable lettings.</p> <p>A number of Local Lettings Policies have been put in place to improve local management issues. These are generally proving successful in creating more sustainable neighbourhoods. These are reviewed on a 6 monthly basis or when specifically required as was the case recently at Greenwood Crescent, Wickersley</p>	Sandra Tolley	30 th Sept

<p>3. Investigate how existing area-based staff, across partner agencies, can take on the role of dedicated “coordinator” for specific areas, working with communities and partner agencies to ensure joined-up, responsive service delivery</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The Council is developing an intensive approach to tackling the problems of the most deprived 11 neighbourhoods. The coordination of this is currently planned to come from the Local Authority. Responsibilities for coordinating activity across the borough could be shared amongst partner agencies from the public or voluntary sector. This would be particularly pertinent in areas that have specific issues to address, rather than a wide range of critical problems. Levering in support from other agencies may allow existing resources to be deployed into the most vulnerable communities.</p> <p>This work will be aligned with the programme of work to respond to the troubled families initiative and work in the Borough to address health inequalities.</p> <p>In the most challenging areas however, this role needs to be undertaken by a statutory agency with powers to compel cooperation or of enforcement. This will predominantly fall to the L.A.</p> <p>As part of the ‘Deprived Neighbourhoods’ initiative, SLT level officers have been identified to coordinate this work in 11 neighbourhoods. These staff will be assisted by senior staff from within the L.A. (predominantly Neighbourhood Partnership staff) and an appropriate range of officers from other organisations. This will include a designated co-ordinator for each of the 11 most deprived areas.</p>	<p>Tom Cray</p>	<p>Done</p>
<p>4. Ensure reviews of neighbourhood management / area assemblies address the issue of how area-based teams can more effectively target their efforts and resources where they are most needed.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p>	<p>Work has begun to scope the review of Neighbourhood Partnership working. This will consider how the councils partnership resources can be diverted to focus on the Boroughs most deprived areas. It will seek to ensure that across the Borough there is a ‘baseline offer’ level of partnership working focussing on services which are universal. This service level will be available to all areas but in the neediest neighbourhoods, this universal level of service will need to be enhanced, with input from a range of differing services. Any reassignment of Neighbourhood Partnership Services will need to take into account the funding sources underpinning the service.</p>	<p>Dave Richmond</p>	<p>31st July 2012</p>

<p>5. Consider whether the council and – where appropriate – partner agencies should move to an explicitly targeted, rather than universal, approach to service delivery, concentrating resources where they are most needed and withdrawing services from relatively affluent areas.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>See above. This work is ongoing, and will form part of the Neighbourhood Partnership review. Resources are already being diverted to support the 11 most deprived wards and the Community First areas.</p> <p>Partner agencies, particularly SYPF are also reviewing how they can maximise their support to the most resource hungry areas, whilst still maintaining the capacity to quickly respond to issues that arise across the entire borough.</p>	<p>Tom Cray</p>	<p>31st July 2012</p>
<p>6. Ensure that the approach to supporting deprived areas is based as far as possible on the principles of prevention and early intervention so that resources target those areas that are at risk of becoming severely deprived, as well as those that are already suffering severe deprivation.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted in principle and wherever possible the Council and Partners will work at the earliest stage possible to prevent neighbourhood decline. For example, Prevention and early intervention has been identified as an overarching strategic priority for the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and as such will also inform wider partnership activity.</p> <p>However whilst the two approaches are not mutually exclusive, there is a balance to be struck between targeting resources at those areas and those problems which are most in need and intervening early as problems arise across the Borough.</p> <p>In the most deprived neighbourhoods, activity will include a range of targeted measure, some of which will be seen to be preventative. New initiatives such as those developed in response to the national 'Troubled Families' programme and activities developed as part of the 'Community First' Programme will afford the opportunity to intervene early with families to tackle a range of problems, in some instances before they have been allowed to develop into significant neighbourhood problems. Other activities such as environmental enforcement are operated on a zero tolerance level and will address issues which may seem minor, but which if left unchallenged will grow.</p>	<p>Tom Cray</p>	<p>ongoing</p>

<p>7. Investigate whether: a) existing funds can be redirected AND/OR b) additional external funds can be secured to provide short-term support that will help prevent areas that are vulnerable to becoming severely deprived from reaching “tipping point”.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>This will be a consideration as part of the deprived neighbourhoods work. As a first stage, whilst it is recognised that areas have the potential to decline further and become critical, it will be important to determine what additional support can be secured for the most deprived areas. The council (and partners) have worked to secure Community First monies and Big Lottery fund. These are medium to long term funding pots which will assist deprived areas to sustain and in some instances increase the support that are available to these areas to tackle their most pressing problems.</p>	<p>Andrew Bedford</p>	<p>ongoing</p>
<p>8. A range of measures are recommended to address the issue of low aspirations:</p> <p>8.1. Investigate whether the Inspire-Aspire toolkit can be used to evaluate the impact of commissioning activity on the aspirations of families</p> <p>8.2. In conjunction with Jobcentre Plus (JC+) and drawing on any evaluation of the impact of outreach sessions held in the LAP areas, look at how the council, JC+ and other partners can work together to help people in deprived areas overcome barriers to employment</p> <p>8.3. Refer this issue to the <i>Improving Places</i> commission as part of their examination of the Rotherham Economy Board and economic plan.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>This toolkit is yet untested and work is ongoing to incorporate this within the quality assurance process of contract management of commissioned services to improve outcomes for families.</p> <p>8.2 The 11 Community First panels are now established and have determined their initial priorities. Access to employment and skills issues are featuring as priorities in several areas. Work is underway to determine how best each of these priorities can be addressed, in specific neighbourhoods, and monies have recently been allocated to address these issues. Further work is required with JC+ to develop a programme to tackle barriers to employment. In addition, employment is a key priority in the Troubled Families initiative; as part of the work programme and ESF provision support will be given to families to enter, or move closer to the job market</p> <p>Done</p>	<p>Chrissie Wright</p> <p>Shaun Mirfield</p> <p>Deborah Fellowes</p>	<p>30th Sept. 2012</p> <p>31st May 2012</p> <p>Complete</p>

<p>9. In the absence of a focused neighbourhood renewal strategy or working neighbourhoods plan, consider whether the economic plan – as part of its refresh – should have an increased focus on addressing relevant issues in the borough’s most deprived communities.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The Economic Plan already identifies reducing the gap between communities within Rotherham as a requirement for the borough economic development, and the priorities identified within it would be applicable to the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainable neighbourhoods with quality housing and services, along with their own economies of small businesses serving local needs. 2. Action plans set out each of the priorities in terms of target areas and communities and key delivery partners. 3. Closing the prosperity gap between Rotherham and elsewhere, but also between areas and communities within the borough. <p>There is still a need to ensure that work to address the needs of the most deprived neighbourhoods is fully integrated within the economic plan.</p>	<p>Simeon Leach</p>	<p>30th September 2012</p>
<p>10. Reflecting the council’s corporate priority of “making sure no community is left behind”, ensure specific actions are planned within key council policies/strategies to reduce area-based inequalities. This should ensure a long-term focus - within the most deprived communities - on underlying issues such as poor health, employment and skills.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p>	<p>Each departmental service plan is now required to specifically address inequalities and identify support for the most deprived areas.</p> <p>See above. Area assemblies have traditionally developed area based plans. As part of the review of neighbourhood working and as a requirement of Community First funding , specific neighbourhood plans will be required in the most deprived areas. As a baseline for these plans an assessment will be made of the range of underlying issues which have contributed to the areas low Index of Multiple Deprivation Score, and an appropriate action plan developed to address salient issues. The draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy focuses on dealing with addressing the health inequalities across the borough> This strategy is now out for consultation.</p>	<p>Dave Roddis</p> <p>Shaun Mirfield</p>	<p>complete</p> <p>31st May 2012</p>

<p>11. Making links with the council's community budget pilot for families with complex needs, and with reference to the government's community budgets prospectus and local integrated services initiative, prepare a report on the feasibility and possible benefits of establishing community budgets for specific Rotherham neighbourhoods. This should consider the need for effective local governance arrangements that enable genuine community involvement and partnership working.</p>	<p>Deferred</p>	<p>This recommendation has been partially enacted with the establishment of the Community First Budgets. However at this time it is not feasible to consider diverting essential mainstream financial resources to establish community budgets.</p>	<p>Andrew Bedford</p>	<p>31st March 2013</p>
<p>12. Consider the benefits of identifying "champions" at member and senior officer level who can advocate for deprived areas and help to ensure that obstacles to effective, locally-led service delivery are swiftly overcome.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>This has been enshrined in the approach to Deprived Neighbourhoods working. Strategic Directors and Cabinet Members have been identified for all 11 Deprived Communities and also Community First Ward Panels.</p>	<p>Tom Cray</p>	<p>complete</p>
<p>13. The focus of this review and many of the related initiatives highlighted in this report is on place-based deprivation. It is important to ensure that the particular issues faced by communities of interest within targeted geographical areas are also addressed, to ensure that all diverse groups benefit from the outcomes of interventions. Consideration needs to be given to groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. These include older people and young</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Equalities analysis would need to be carried out on this plan to ensure this happens.</p>	<p>Zafar Saleem</p>	<p>30th June 2012</p>

<p>people, disabled people, women, men, different ethnic groups, faith groups and lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender people. Otherwise, there is a danger of “double disadvantage” with certain groups disadvantaged by where they live and facing further barriers if services or interventions are not inclusive of their particular needs and requirements.</p> <p>We would recommend that all actions arising from this review and any related initiatives to improve conditions in Rotherham’s most deprived neighbourhoods are subject to equality analysis and ongoing impact assessments and monitoring. This is to ensure that actions are inclusive of all groups with protected characteristics. Specific approaches to engage diverse communities will also be required.</p>				
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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	23 rd May, 2012
3.	Title:	Early Help Strategy
4.	Directorate:	Children & Young People's Services

5. Summary

The new Early Help Strategy is attached. This is a refreshed strategy to set out Rotherham's partnership approach to delivering prevention and early intervention services for children, young people and families in the borough.

6. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to endorse the new Early Help Strategy.

7. Proposals and Details

Background

The Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy was launched in April 2010 following multi-agency endorsement. It was agreed that the current strategy should be refreshed in the light of recent independent reviews and new government policy (including the Comprehensive Spending Review) which change the context for delivery. The findings of the recent CYPs Peer Challenge endorsed this view and recommended that the work should proceed as a matter of urgency in order to sustain the multi-agency commitment to this agenda. The purpose of the strategy is to provide the strategic framework for operational delivery.

Early Help Strategy

The new strategy adopts the terminology used by Eileen Munro in her influential review of child protection published in May 2011. The term 'early help' is adopted to show that we will seek to support children, young people and families across the continuum of need (or windscreen) as their needs shift between preventative services delivered through universal provision, to more targeted, complex or acute needs. Further details are in the strategy on page 6.

The multi-agency **pledge** that was agreed for the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy published in April 2010, is maintained for the Early Help Strategy:

We are committed to identifying need and supporting children, young people and families at the earliest possible stage. We will change our focus to a preventative and early intervention approach with a radical shift of ways of working and resourcing to support this. This is a significant step forward for integrated working in Rotherham.

The **strategic objectives** for the Early Help Strategy are:

- To identify the needs of children, young people and their families (across the continuum of need or windscreen)
- To understand and respond quickly to the needs of children, young people and families across the continuum of need
- To support the re-focusing of resources from crisis intervention to prevention;
- To mitigate the effects of child poverty (including health inequalities) by supporting families to fulfil their potential)
- To provide the context for multi-agency partnerships to work together to improve outcomes for children young people and families for generations to come

8. Finance

The case for shifting resources to support a 'predict and prevent' approach instead of a 'find and fix' approach is outlined in the strategy (page 27). Delivering early help services is more cost effective than responding to crisis,

however, to establish operational delivery systems will require short-term investment (invest to save methodology).

For 2012/13 3% (£0.96m) of the Net Revenue budget (10% (£8.51m)) of the total gross budget of Children and Young People's Services will be directed towards services focused on Prevention and Early Intervention.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There is a risk that the continued focus on reducing the national budget deficit will have a negative impact on the ability of families in the borough to thrive and on the local authority and its partners to support them.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The national policy agenda continues to emerge. Government have announced that they will legislate in response to the Support and Aspiration Green Paper in this Parliament.

The Early Help Strategy is aligned with other local strategies, including Rotherham's Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, Children and Young People's Plan as well as the priorities identified for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (page 14).

11. Equality and Diversity

Equality Assessment to follow.

12. Background Papers and Consultation

Early Help Strategy

Contact Name: Jenny Lingrell on behalf of the Think Family Steering Group
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E-mail: jenny.lingrell@rotherham.gov.uk

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES' PARTNERSHIP

Early Help for Children, Young People and Families

Rotherham's Strategy to Reduce Inequalities for Families

(A refresh of the Prevention & Early Intervention Strategy
April 2012)

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INTRODUCTION

The Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy was launched in Rotherham with the endorsement of senior leadership across the partnership. There was commitment and excitement about moving from a 'find and fix' approach to one that would allow us to 'predict and prevent.' This was in April 2010.

Two years later the commitment of everyone working with children, young people and families is undiminished. However the context in which we must deliver has changed significantly.

The implementation phase of the strategy has been accompanied by a change in government and a series of reviews that have built a sound evidence base for prevention and early intervention. At the same time, locally we have all worked hard to embed the practice that we launched in April 2010. Across the borough the characteristics of a Learning Community are becoming clear in a context which will not see the brand new infrastructure that we expected through the Building Schools for the Future programme. We have piloted a multi-agency leadership programme (called Better Together), launched our Think Family Board (now the Think Family Steering Group) and embedded awareness of the Common Assessment Framework as a tool to support multi-agency support for children and young people who are vulnerable. Taken together, our local learning, the new national evidence base, and the context created by the Coalition government's Comprehensive Spending Review, all insist that what we do next must deliver complete clarity and clear impact.

The intention of this document is to set out our strategic position – our vision for children, young people and families in the borough, and for what they can expect from a multi-agency offer of early help. Here we will set the tone for the operational developments that will unfold in 2012. Our approach will balance the needs of all the children, young people and families in our borough, across the range of need and from pre-birth up to age 25 – and beyond as we recognise that we must work with partners who deliver support to parents who may have their own problems and areas of vulnerability.

As you read and commit to this strategy it is important that you identify yourself as part of the wider partnership, the 'we', who are entering the next phase of a journey to get the offer of early help right for children, young people and families in Rotherham. We are, perhaps, a little less naïve, but our partnership remains strong and our commitment to getting this right is absolute.

Cllr Paul Lakin

Chair of Children, Young People and Families Partnership

Joyce Thacker

Strategic Director, Children & Young People's Service

OUR VISION

We recognise how important it is that everyone in Rotherham shares a common vision. We would like to share with everyone who is involved in the lives of children, young people and families, as well as children, young people and families themselves, this simple statement of what it is that we are trying to achieve:

‘Working together to improve the lives of all Rotherham’s children and young people.’

OUR PLEDGE

Our pledge represents a multi-agency commitment to how we are going to work together to realise the vision. This commitment has been in place since our first prevention and early intervention strategy was published. We wish to renew it here:

We are committed to identifying need and supporting children, young people and families at the earliest possible stage. We will change our focus to a preventative and early intervention approach with a radical shift of ways of working and resourcing to support this. This is a significant step forward for integrated working in Rotherham.

DEFINITION OF EARLY INTERVENTION

Rotherham will adopt the definition of early intervention proposed by the C4EO expert group:

‘Intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families or with a population most at risk of developing problems. Effective intervention may occur at any point in a child or young person’s life.’

This definition includes both interventions early in life (with young children, including pre-natal interventions) and interventions early in the development of a problem (with children or young people of any age). It includes universal interventions that are offered to an entire population to prevent problems developing, and targeted interventions that are offered to particular children, young people and families with existing risk factors, vulnerabilities or acknowledged additional needs in order to protect them from developing problems or reduce the severity of problems that have started to emerge.

Eileen Munro’s report uses the terminology of ‘early help’ which we will adopt in Rotherham to demonstrate our commitment to offering support across a continuum of need.

THE FOUR BIG THINGS

Rotherham's Children and Young People's Plan identifies 'four big things'. What these 'big things' have in common is that their impact will be felt across our partnership in every aspect of how we deliver services to children and young people; they will run through all activities and areas of focus outlined in this plan and require the involvement of every partner.

The following descriptions are intended to provide an overview of each 'big thing' and make it clear that, although each one will have an impact across outcomes, this will be in different ways and for distinct reasons.

Each of the four big things has an icon so that the golden thread that runs through planning at every level of our partnership can be demonstrated easily. Often the icons will be displayed together to show that the work is interlinked. This is especially true for our work to deliver effective early help; if we get prevention and early intervention right, children and young people will be safer, learn more and inequalities will be reduced.



Keeping Children & Young People Safe:

Integral to the activity of all partners; specific arrangements put in place to keep the most vulnerable safe from harm.



Prevention and Early Intervention:

A new focus to help us target our activity effectively; underpinned by the Early Help Strategy.



Tackling Inequality:

The work we will do to narrow the gap between the life experience and outcomes for the least and most deprived families in Rotherham.



Transforming Rotherham Learning:

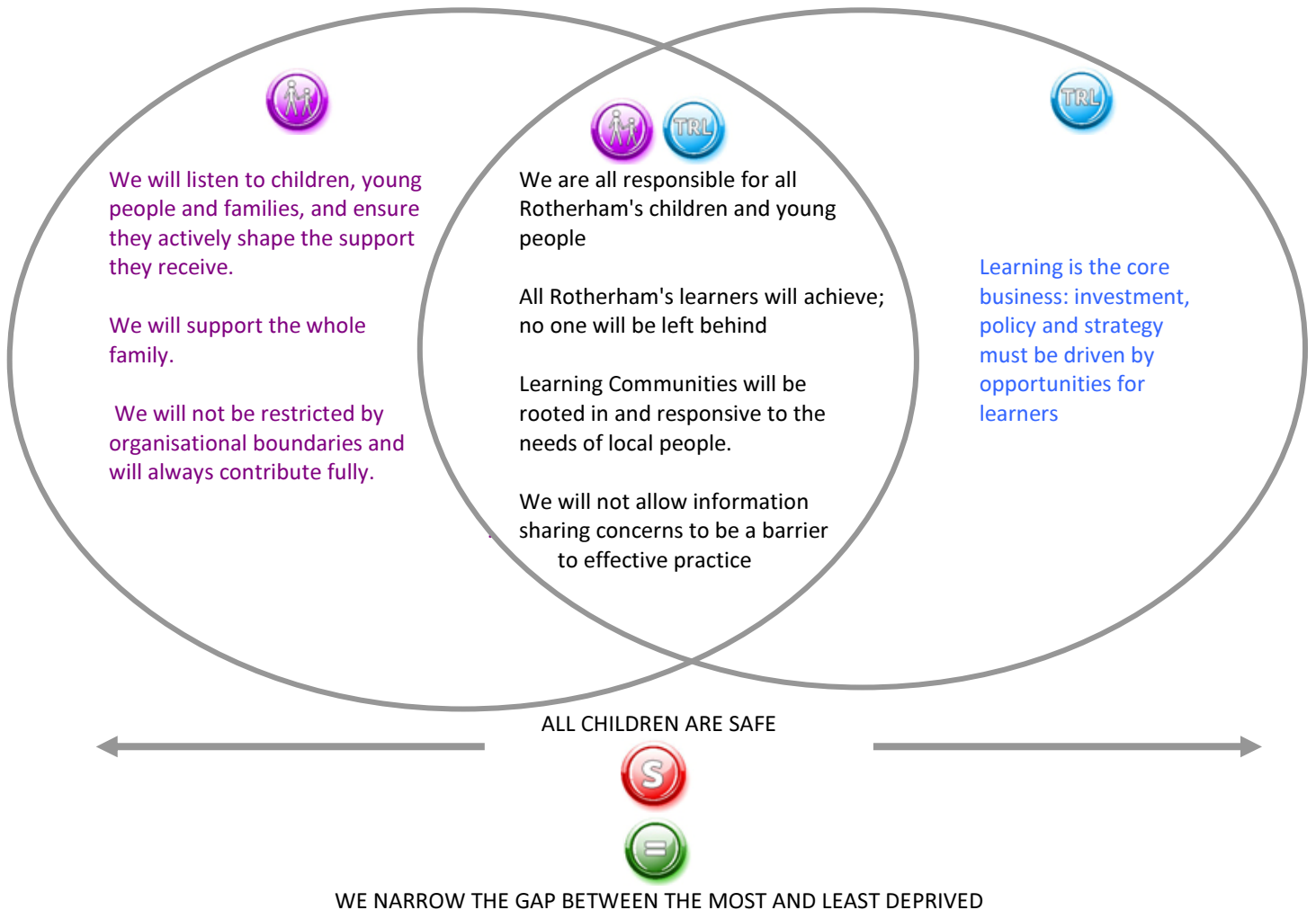
A delivery vehicle that will support us to achieve our vision by developing multi-agency learning communities.

ROTHERHAM'S PRINCIPLES OF EARLY HELP

The most important principle that underpins the approach set out in this strategy is that we will support children and young people in every aspect of their lives. For the purposes of delivering support it is necessary to create organisational structures that will focus on specific areas of development. Each of these organisational structures may have their own principles. For example, Transforming Rotherham Learning is one of the four big things featured in our Children and Young People's Plan. Our approach to learning is underpinned by the Transforming Rotherham Learning principles.

But what we emphasise here is that our principles are interdependent and mutually supportive. Together they provide a coherent approach to supporting children, young people and families.

To demonstrate this interdependence we have set out the principles of prevention and early intervention and Transforming Rotherham Learning together; the overlapping section of the diagram shows where our principles are shared. Our commitment to keep children and young people safe, and to narrow the gap between the most and least deprived underpins all our work.



INFORMATION SHARING

The principle of information sharing requires particular comment. Rotherham has a long-standing multi-agency information sharing protocol that has strategic sign-up at the highest level. However, we acknowledge that information sharing can still be a barrier at an operational level. We want to be honest and up-front about identifying barriers where they exist and resolute in our commitment to overcoming so that we can deliver effective and appropriate practice with the needs of children, young people and families at the centre.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To identify the needs of children, young people and their families (across the continuum of need).
- To understand and respond quickly to the needs of children and young people and families (across the continuum of need).
- To support the re-focusing of resources from crisis intervention to prevention (from find and fix to predict and prevent).
- To mitigate the effects of child poverty (including health inequalities) by supporting families to fulfil their potential.
- To provide the context for multi agency partnerships to work together to improve outcomes for children, young people and families for generations to come.

AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) began in 2007; it is a national programme supported jointly by the Department of Education and the Department of Health. The core offer was published in 2008 and echoes the principles and strategic objectives of this strategy. Its purpose is to improve access to services by ensuring that disabled children, young people and their families:

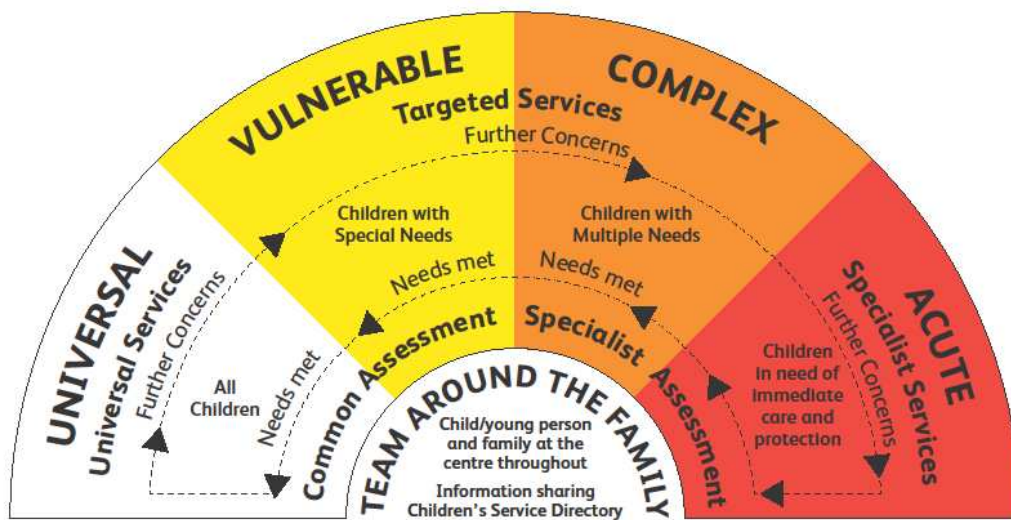
- Are aware of services available to them in their area
- Understand how the services of their choice can be accessed
- Will undergo only the minimum possible assessment to qualify for services
- Are actively involved in the planning and delivery of services in their local area
- Are aware of the ways in which they can give feedback on their experiences of services.

WHICH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES?

THE CONTINUUM OF NEED

Many children, young people and families in Rotherham will thrive; they will access and benefit from the excellent universal services that are available such as schools and nurseries, parks, libraries and leisure activities and health services delivered by GPs, midwives, health visitors and school nurses. But some families may need to access additional support at some time; they might need short-term help to address a specific problem or longer-term support with more complex or stubborn needs, particularly if a family member has special educational needs, disabilities or impairments. The purpose of this strategy is to set the context for delivering early help to these families.

We recognise that the needs of children, young people and families are not static. It is so important that there is a shared understanding, between all partners, of thresholds and triggers for providing early help, support and intervention. But it is equally important that we do not become constrained by the 'levels of need' that we use to represent these thresholds. Rotherham has adopted the Continuum of Need or 'windscreen' as a helpful way to communicate different levels of vulnerability whilst acknowledging the fluidity of a family's situation over time.



Continuum of Needs
(Commonly known as The Windscreen)

Eileen Munro has also included helpful definitions in her review, which describe the levels identified by the Rotherham Continuum of Need. She proposes that levels of prevention can be categorised as:

Rotherham Continuum of Need	Munro Definition
Universal	Universal Primary Prevention – addressing the entire population and aiming to reduce the later incidence of problems, for example, the universal services of health, education, income support;
1 Vulnerable	Selective Primary Prevention – focusing on groups which research has indicated are at higher than average risk of developing problems. Many of the interventions recommended in Graham Allen’s review fall into this category, for example, offering additional support services to teenage mothers;
2 Complex	Secondary Prevention – aiming to respond quickly when low level problems arise in order to prevent them getting worse. This area of multi-agency work has been the focus of policy development since the last Conservative Government’s ‘re-focusing’ policy in 1995 and the Labour Government’s policy of ‘Every Child Matters’;
3 Acute	Tertiary Help / Prevention – involving a response when the problem has become serious, for example, child protection, hospital care, criminal justice.

NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

In April 2010 when Rotherham launched its first prevention and early intervention strategy the national policy context was still emerging. The Marmot Review, 'Fair Society – Healthy Lives' had only just been published (in February 2010). Since then the policy arena has become crowded with independent reviews that provide a body of evidence that any local approach to improving outcomes for children and young people must feature prevention and early intervention.

The Marmot Review: 'Fair Society – Healthy Lives' provides evidence that there is a disproportionate impact on health for those living in deprivation. Marmot recommends action in six specific areas:

- Give every child the best start in life.
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.

These recommendations will form the basis of Rotherham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Particularly relevant to this strategy is Marmot's focus on intervening early in a child's life. He says that, *'the foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood. What happens during these early years (starting in the womb) has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status . . . later interventions, although important, are considerably less effective where good early foundations are lacking.'*

Frank Field: The Foundation Years, Preventing Poor Children Becoming Poor Adults' was published in December 2010. Field says that,

'We have found overwhelming evidence that children's life chances are most heavily predicated on their development in the first five years of life . . . A shift in focus is needed towards providing high quality integrated services aimed at supporting parents and improving the abilities of our poorest children during the period when it is most effective to do so. Their prospects of going on to gain better qualifications and sustainable employment will be greatly enhanced.'

Field's findings from his independent review on poverty and life chances led him to propose two overarching recommendations:

- Establishing a new data set of better life chance indicators, and
- Establishing the foundation years to cover the period from pregnancy to five years as 'the first pillar of a tri-partite education system.'

Graham Allen has published two reviews on Early Intervention. The first, published in January 2011, reported that early intervention is an approach that can offer lasting improvements to children's lives, limit many persistent social problems, stop them passing from one generation to the next and, ultimately make long-term savings in public spending. In July 2011, Allen published his recommendations of how early intervention might be funded. His proposals emphasise the importance of implementing programmes with absolute fidelity and ensuring that outcomes (particularly cost savings and cost avoidance) are recorded with precision.

Allen says, 'I recommend that the nation should be made aware of the enormous benefits to individuals, families and society of early intervention – a policy approach designed to build the essential social and emotional bedrock in children aged 0-3 and to ensure that children aged 0-18 can become the excellent parents of tomorrow.'

Allen's recommendations have informed national and local policy, and will underpin the operational development of Early Help in Rotherham, including our approach to the Troubled Families initiative.

Tickell Review, The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning was published in March 2011. The review makes forty six recommendations under the headings:

- Strong foundations for all children,
- An inclusive, access and flexible Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Equipped for life, ready for school,
- Keeping children safe, and
- A professional, well-supported workforce

Early Years professionals have welcomed Tickell's work for its recognition of the success of the EYFS and her 'common sense' proposals for slimming it down, reducing its bureaucratic burdens and making it more accessible to parents whilst retaining its core purpose. There is, however, significant concern about the potential impact of spending cuts on the early years sector – an issue acknowledged by the review.

Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability was published as a Green Paper in March 9th 2011 to outline a new approach to special educational needs and disability. The stated intention is to respond to the frustrations of children and young people, their families and the professionals who work with them.

The vision for reform includes wide ranging proposals to improve outcomes for children and young people who are disabled or have SEN, minimise the adversarial nature of the system for families and maximise value for money. Specifically, it proposed:

- a new single assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plan by 2014;
- that local authorities and other services should set out a local offer of all services available;

- the option of a personal budget by 2014 for all families with children with a statement of SEN or a new Education, Health and Care Plan;
- to give parents a real choice of school, either a mainstream or special school;
- to introduce greater independence to the assessment of children's needs,
- and a well supported transition to adulthood, including advice and opportunities related to education, training and work and a well coordinated transition from children's to adult's health services.

The consultation ended in June 2011 and the proposals are currently being piloted in some local authorities. However, the legislative framework has not been announced in time for publication of this strategy.

Eileen Munro published her final report, '**The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report, a child-centred system**' in May 2011. Munro looks at the whole system, with a relentless focus on the safety and welfare of children and young people. Her recommendations are wide-ranging and support effective practice and meaningful professional development. She devotes a chapter to, 'Sharing responsibility for early help.'

Munro notes the growing body of evidence of the effectiveness of early intervention with children and families and emphasises the importance of providing such help, she says:

'Preventative services can do more to reduce abuse and neglect than reactive services. Many services and professions help children and families so co-ordinating their work is important to reduce inefficiencies and omissions.'

Within preventative and other services good mechanisms are needed to help identify those children and young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, harm from abuse or neglect and who need referral to children's social care. The association between child abuse and neglect and parental problems, such as poor mental health, domestic violence and substance misuse, is well established. It is not easy to identify abuse and neglect. Signs and symptoms are often ambiguous and so it is important that those working with children, young people and adults have ready access to social work expertise to discuss concerns and decide whether a referral to children's social care is needed.'

Government have accepted Munro's recommendations and this strategy responds directly to those recommendations related to early help; these are outlined in the Next Steps section of this Strategy.

Families in the Foundation Years & Supporting Families in the Foundation Years

This document was published by the Coalition Government in October 2011. It responds to the focus on the early years of a child's life that was highlighted by several influential independent reviews including Marmot, Allen, Field, Tickell and Munro. The document, developed jointly by the Department for Education and the Department for Health, outlines a vision for how the system should meet the needs of parents, children and families from conception until the age of five and

recommends a programme of reform for all those who lead, commission and deliver services.

- Expectant mothers will be supported through universal, high-quality maternity care from early pregnancy.
- All new parents will be supported in their transition to parenthood, through pregnancy and into the first months of life, in a way that responds to their individual preferences and needs.
- Health visitors will provide expert preventative healthcare for parents and children until they are five.
- Children's centres, based in the community, will provide access to a range of integrated universal and targeted services to meet local need.
- When a child is aged about two, nurseries, pre-schools and childminders will give parents a short summary of their child's progress alongside the health-visitor-led Healthy Child Programme health and development review.
- All three and four-year olds will continue to be entitled to 15 hours of free early education per week for 38 weeks of the year, and this will be extended to children aged two from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- A new Early Years Foundation Stage framework will help practitioners to get children more ready for all of the opportunities ahead of them, and for parents to better understand their child's development.
- Parents should have a good choice of primary schools in their area, and reception classes will consolidate and extend children's learning before moving to key stage one.

Children should start school healthy, happy, communicative, sociable, curious, active, and ready and equipped for the next phase of life and learning.

Positive for Youth was published by the Government in December 2011. It is a new approach to cross-Government policy for young people aged 13-19 in England and aims to bring together all of the Government's policies for this age group, presenting a single vision across the interests of at least nine departments. It sets out a shared vision for how all parts of society – including councils, schools, charities, and businesses – can work together in partnership to support families and improve outcomes for young people, particularly those who are most disadvantaged or vulnerable.

The policy specifies that:

'Supportive families and good schools are key, but young people who are particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable need effective additional early help.

Providing early help is not just about intervening early in a child's life. The teenage years are another critical period of growth and change, and not all problems in these years can be predicted.

It is therefore essential to identify when additional help is needed in the teenage years, and to provide it to young people and their families promptly to prevent issues escalating and causing further harm.'

National Strategies for Social Mobility and Child Poverty

Improving social mobility is the principal goal of the government's social policy. In March 2011 the Deputy Prime Minister launched, 'Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility' linked to child poverty through the establishment of a National Child Poverty and Social Mobility Commission. The strategy sets out leading indicators of success in improving social mobility for each life stage and areas of responsibility, placing a new requirement on all government departments to consider the impact of policies on social mobility. The commission will continue research into the impact of government policies on social mobility.

The coalition government has pledged to maintain the aspirations to reduce child poverty that are set out in the Child Poverty Act (March 2010).

The child poverty targets for 2020 are:

Relative poverty – to reduce the proportion of children who live in relative low income (in families with income below 60% of median) to less than 30%.

Combined low income and material deprivation – to reduce the proportion of children who live in material deprivation and have a low income to less than 5%.

Persistent poverty – to reduce the proportion of children that experience relative poverty, with the specific target being set at a later date.

Absolute poverty – to reduce the proportion of children who live below an income threshold fixed in real terms to less than 5%.

However, in October 2011, the **Institute of Fiscal Studies** published a report: **Child and Working Age Poverty from 2010 to 2020**. This seeks to forecast what might happen to poverty under current government policies and shows that governments cannot rely on higher employment and earnings to reduce relative measures of poverty. The results suggest that there can be almost no chance of eradicating child poverty on current government policy.

The most significant reform to state benefits proposed by the government is to replace all means-tested benefits and tax credits for those of working age with a single, integrated benefit to be known as Universal Credit. Considered in isolation, Universal Credit should reduce relative poverty significantly (by 450,000 children and 600,000 working-age adults), but this reduction is more than offset by the poverty-increasing impact of the government's other changes to personal taxes and state benefits.

A major programme of research conducted by the Family and Parenting Institute (IPF) working in partnership with the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) interrogates the impact of cutbacks on local services as well as exploring how fluctuations in household income are affecting family life. Part of the work analyses family income, poverty rates and impact of tax and benefit changes on work incentives. In relation

to child poverty the research concludes there is evidence of more financial strain to come:

Incomes for families with children are set to fall in real terms by 4.2% between 2010-11 and 2015-16 (equivalent to a £1,250 reduction for a couple with two children compared to those with no children where the reduction is equivalent to a £215 fall in income). This is largely driven by a package of benefit reforms which will affect families with children.

As a result of changes being introduced between January 2011 and April 2014 working age households with children are set to lose out more than pensioners and working age households without children – looking at the picture before introduction of universal credit families with children lose just over 6% of income.

Families with lowest incomes losing the most from reforms – non working lone parents lost more than 12% of income – equivalent to £2,000 per year

The research also evidences that the cuts package will impact most on the least resilient family types:

- Income falls for families is greatest for those with three or more children, households with young children and those in private rented accommodation.
- Families with children under 5 – between 2010-11 and 2015-16, 500,000 more children will fall into absolute poverty.
- Larger families will also be hit hard largely driven by the imposition of the cap on the total amount of benefits families can receive which will be introduced in 2013-14. This has a marked consequence in terms of child poverty rates with 100,000 of the overall increase in absolute child poverty of 500,000 comes from families with four or more children.
- Rise in poverty rates for Pakistani and Bangladeshi children (who often tend to live in larger families).

We will seek to develop an in depth understanding of how welfare reform will impact on families in the borough and design appropriate activity to respond to and support the most vulnerable.

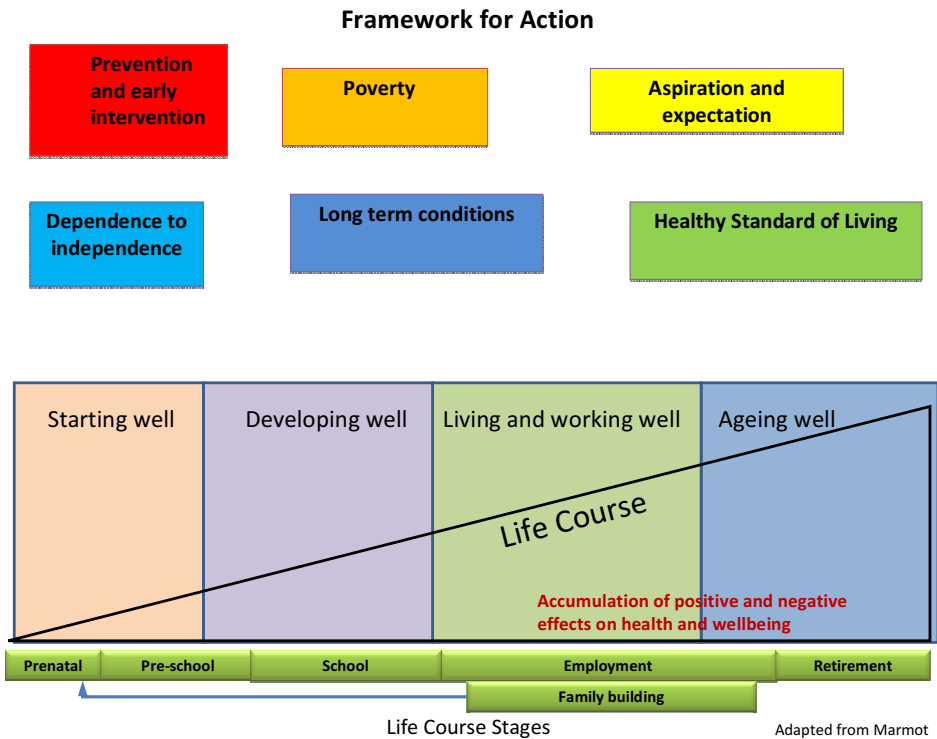
LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

Health Inequalities in Rotherham

Health inequalities can be defined as differences in health status or in the distribution of health determinants between different population groups. Some health inequalities are attributable to biological variations or free choice and others to external environment and conditions mainly outside the individual’s control. (World Health Organisation)

There is a need to ensure that there is a fair and just delivery of health to avoid the development of the inverse care law, where those who least need services use services the most. There may need to be incentives used to close the gap and target resources to those most needy and/or least able to make health improvements.

Much of the work to address health inequalities is structured around the high level priorities for action identified by Sir Michael Marmot. The annual report from the Director of Public Health draws our attention to two things: first the importance of tackling all of the social determinants of health taking a ‘life course’ approach and, second, doing more than just targeting the most disadvantaged, but addressing the whole social gradient. This approach, and the high level priorities identified by Marmot inform this Early Help Strategy. They will also provide the structure for Rotherham’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which identifies six high level strategic outcomes and adopts a life course approach to addressing public health priorities.



South Yorkshire Local Policing Plan

The South Yorkshire Local Policing Plan identifies five strategic policing priorities, of particular relevance to this strategy are to:

Improve confidence and satisfaction: focusing on the service that residents receive; listening to concerns and dealing with them in a way that shows we take them seriously.

Enhance community safety: focusing on addressing antisocial behaviour and low-level disorder as well as other environmental and 'quality of life' issues such as vandalism, where we and our partners have a responsibility to work with communities.

Tackle crime at all levels: the focus is not only to solve those crimes that have been committed, but also work with communities to prevent them being committed, and with our partners to deter those who may turn to offending.

Use resources effectively: in order to enable a better understanding of the relationship between allocation of resources and matching them to demand.

Community Strategy

Rotherham's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has agreed three strategic priorities for the Community Strategy 2011-2014. These are:

- Ensuring the best start in life for children and families
- Supporting those who are vulnerable in our community
- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy

The LSP will sponsor several key projects, linked to the Early Help Strategy, in order to deliver improved outcomes for each of these priorities. The Family Recovery Programme and 100 Families research project are both managed by the Think Family Steering Group on behalf of the LSP.

RMBC Corporate Plan

The Council's corporate plan has five key priorities, these are:

- Making sure no community is left behind
- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job.
- Ensuring care and protection are available for those people who need it most;
- Helping to create safe and healthy communities.
- Improving the environment.

Rotherham Literacy Strategy

Improving literacy in Rotherham is a crucial part of unlocking wider wellbeing for children, young people and families. Research shows that people with strong literacy skills are more likely to have greater self esteem, better health, and higher salaried jobs. Adults who can't read properly earn 30% less than those who can, while illiteracy is estimated to cost the UK £81 Billion in lost GDP every year.

Rotherham has a long history of low literacy levels which can be seen in adult qualification outcomes and children's attainment levels. Rotherham's literacy strategy builds on learning from the 'Learning from families and communities

evaluation report' to identify actions that will have a significant, measurable and cost effective impact on literacy in the borough.

The literacy strategy underlines the importance of the family in developing communication skills. The attitude, confidence levels, views on learning, aspirations, skills and levels of reading pleasure that the family has will affect the child's communication skills and their potential to thrive. It focuses on the following elements: diverse literacy, raising aspirations and reading for pleasure, family engagement, collaboration and literacy, whole school literacy approaches, professional development and creating a literacy rich community.

Financial Inclusion Strategy

Financial exclusion impacts significantly on health and well-being, child poverty, housing, the ability to take up and retain employment opportunities and has been shown to be a major barrier to engaging fully and positively in society.

There are a range of private, public and voluntary sector organisations either contributing to, or who have the potential to promote financial inclusion activity. A co-ordinated approach to bring these agencies together to share skills, ideas, achievements and opportunities for joint working is vital if we are to secure the best and most cost effective outcomes for Rotherham people.

The Financial Inclusion Strategy (led by Voluntary Action Rotherham) promotes the core message that, to reduce the numbers of families in Rotherham who are financially excluded we must work together to simultaneously improve access to face to face advice and affordable credit and other financial services. Underpinning this is the need for improved financial capability for children and young people as well as adults. The strategy also outlines areas of focus that overlap with plans to deliver early help by:

- working with partners to improve coordination and cooperation
- increasing the number of joint initiatives
- targeting the most vulnerable and
- focusing on housing, employment and health

Rotherham Volunteers Strategy

Voluntary Action Rotherham has recently produced Rotherham's first ever volunteering strategy on behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership. It aims to provide a vision for the future of volunteering in the borough that is shared by all partners. It also looks to raise awareness of volunteering, bring greater levels of coordination to bear and to align our strategic approach to volunteering to high level local priorities; in particular those promoted in the Rotherham Partnership's Community Strategy. The focus is on enhancing the volunteering experience for both the volunteer and the host, rather than simply on increasing the numbers participating. The Strategy has aligned its timescales to those of the Community Strategy, 2012-2015 and implementation will be led by a cross-sector group with progress reported to the Rotherham Partnership Board.

Our operational plans to deliver early help to children, young people and families will align with this strategy – to harness the value of volunteers to provide support and advocacy – and the opportunities for families to benefit from volunteering themselves.

LOCAL DELIVERY CONTEXT

Learning Communities

Rotherham developed the concept of Learning Communities in response to the Building Schools for the Future programme of investment into schools' capital infrastructure. Rotherham's plans are ambitious and far-reaching - to transform each of our secondary schools into the hub of a vibrant learning community. Although there are now no plans to invest in the physical infrastructure of Rotherham's schools we remain committed to developing learning communities as the organising principle that will allow us to deliver services to children, young people and families.

Rotherham has 16 learning communities, 14 mirror the non-faith secondary schools and academies and their catchment areas, and there will also be two non-geographical faith-based learning communities. Learning communities are developing flexibly and organically. It is unlikely that two learning communities will be exactly the same but some features will be shared, not least the need for strong local leadership and ownership of the issues affecting the wellbeing of families in each community.

Learning communities will be at the heart of how we keep children safe; they will help us to identify problems early and respond with appropriate support for the whole family. And, crucially, with learning at the core, they will provide opportunities to raise aspirations and develop innovative, inspirational approaches to building skills and confidence in communication. These are the skills that young people and families need to be successful and prosperous in the future.

Children's Centres: Core Purpose

The provision delivered by a Children's Centre is not purely about a building or childcare. A Children's Centre delivers a way of working in an integrated multi-agency partnership. Different service providers, including voluntary organisations, all contribute to the delivery of the Children's Centre 'Core Purpose'- in order to meet the needs and improve outcomes for children, parents and families, with a specific focus on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, parents and families. Key statutory partners in Children's Centre service delivery are Health and Job Centre Plus.

The Government believes that Children's Centres should have a clear core purpose, focused on:

Improving outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities in:

- Child development and school readiness;

- Supported by improved parenting aspirations, self esteem and parenting skills; child and family health and life chances.

Through consultation and analysis of good practice it has been determined that core purpose can be achieved, by:

- Assessing need across the local community
- Providing access to universal early years services in the local area including high quality and affordable early years education and childcare
- Providing targeted evidence based early interventions for families in greatest need, in the context of integrated services
- Acting as a hub for the local community, building social capital and cohesion.
- Sharing expertise with other early years settings to improve quality.

Sector Leaders believe that all children's centre activity should be underpinned by the principles of:

- Respecting and engaging parents
- Working in partnership across professional/agency boundaries

In Rotherham we have identified the potential of developing strong local ownership and leadership through a shared commitment to meeting the needs of local families through effective information sharing in multi-agency Children's Centres and Learning Communities.

Think Family Practice

Think Family was a policy initiated by the previous government. Their Think Family Toolkit (2009) states that *'Think Family practice – making sure that the support provided by children's, adults' and family services is co-ordinated and focused on problems affecting the whole family – is important for everyone, and is the **only** effective way of working with families experiencing the most significant problems.'*

Rotherham adheres to this model, and puts it into practice through programmes of support such as the Family Nurse Partnership and Family Recovery Programme. We have also embedded it into our governance structures; Rotherham's Think Family Steering Group oversees programmes and projects that identify and challenge barriers to a Think Family approach.

We are committed to initiating continued system change so that a Think Family approach is embedded into the way we engage with families across our organisations.

Common Assessment Framework

The CAF is a shared assessment and planning framework for use across all children's services and all local areas in England. It aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and promote coordinated service provision to meet them. It is aimed at children and young people with additional needs who have needs that are not being met by their current service provision.

Since 2009 Rotherham has made a significant investment in CAF through the delivery of multi-agency training, provision of back-office systems to monitor and record CAF outputs and outcomes and support for practitioners undertaking the lead professional role. This investment has led to a significant increase in awareness of the CAF process and in the number of CAFs initiated.

However, our work to embed CAF has also made us aware of some of the challenges associated with imposing a centrally prescribed tool to facilitate local delivery. These challenges were highlighted by Eileen Munro in her report, she says,

'There is conflicting evidence on whether the (CAF) form is contributing to improved practice or not. . . . the review considers that local areas should have the flexibility to make local decisions on revising the form to suit local needs. In doing so, they should work closely with other professionals involved with children and families and agree both the evidence and theoretical basis for their offer of early help.'

Munro goes on to recommend that, *'Local arrangements should take account of the cross-boundary work of health and police services. Arrangements should also make it clear whether a child or their parents have consented to sharing personal and sensitive information with other services and always take account of the child or young persons' perceptions of their circumstances and their wishes and feelings in line with their evolving capacities.*

In developing local and shared arrangements to identify and record the early help needed by children, young people and families, it is the provision of an early help offer, where their needs do not meet the threshold for children's social care services, which will continue to matter and make the most difference to them.'

In Rotherham we remain committed to a having a shared **family assessment tool** that supports practitioners to deliver outcome-focussed solutions to children, young people and families. We will explore Munro's recommendations in the context of local need, understanding and practice.

Aiming High for Disabled Children

Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) began in 2007, it aims to transform the way services are set up and delivered for disabled children and their families. From 1st October 2011 every local authority had a duty to publish a short breaks statement. This statement should give disabled children, young people, families and local services information of how Rotherham is working to achieve the full service offer.

The focus points for AHDC include:

- Increase provision and better access to short breaks services
- Support access to childcare services
- Better transition from children's to adult services
- Parent participation
- Community equipment and wheelchairs
- Palliative and continuing care

- Individualised budgets.

Troubled Families Initiative

In December 2011 the Government announced that it had set up a Troubled Families Unit, led by Louise Casey, to turnaround the lives of 120,000 of the country's most troubled families by the end of this Parliament. Local authorities are expected to identify the troubled families in their areas and to work with Government to achieve successful outcomes for those families – parents into work, children attending school, reduced crime and anti-social behaviour and cutting costs for the State.

Rotherham's plan to respond to the Troubled Families Initiative will be underpinned by this strategy. The activities will be drawn from three aligned components:

- Plans to work with Rotherham's Troubled Families (as determined by the Government Troubled Families Unit).
- The elements of this Early Help Strategy that require partnership-wide and service-wide change management.
- The multi-agency approach to targeting resources to Rotherham's most deprived communities.

EXISTING PROGRAMMES OF EARLY HELP IN ROTHERHAM

Family Nurse Partnership (FNP)

The FNP is a preventive programme of structured home visiting for young first-time mothers, provided by specially trained nurses, from early pregnancy until their child is 2 years of age. The FNP offers high-intensity support through home visits, using methods to build self-efficacy and promote attachment and positive parenting with practical activities that change behaviour and tackle the emotional problems that prevent some mothers and fathers caring well for their children. It has been particularly successful in connecting with those most disaffected with and distrustful of services.

The FNP team in Rotherham has been appointed and delivery commenced on December 1st 2011; the programme will support 100 Rotherham families.

Early Support

Early Support is a national programme to improve the way that services for young children with disabilities in England work with families. The focus of Early Support is:

- to promote services for families and children that work in partnership with parents and carers, so that families are at the heart of discussion and decision-making about their children, and to
- integrate service planning and delivery, particularly when families are in contact with many different people and agencies.

The success of Early Support is reliant upon a wide range of multiagency practitioners being supported to develop their skills and qualities to support families with disabled children by applying the principles of Early Support. Rotherham has invested time and commitment in developing these skills to ensure that the programme is sustainable and accessible to all families with a disabled child.

100 Families

The '100 Families' project has been designed to provide local understanding of how well we are working together to support a child's development before they are 3 years old in order to improve life chances and stop inequalities passing from generation to generation.

The project will track 100 families to provide that evidence base and, at the same time, will help us to identify where we can better align our delivery to avoid duplication and increase the impact of our investment.

Family Recovery Programme (FRP)

The Rotherham FRP offers an intensive evidence based approach to whole family support. FRP aims to recover families from a dependence on statutory services and improve the life chances for some of the most vulnerable families in Rotherham. These are families who have complex needs, a history of poor engagement with services and whom, despite high levels of support being in place, have failed to

achieve positive change. However, for FRP to be successful, families must have accepted the need to change.

Intensive intervention is delivered by an FRP Outreach Worker who provides direct whole family support and coordinates specific and high level support from appropriate services. Alongside this support, FRP families may need to be coerced and challenged strongly to improve the issues of concern within the family, and will be made aware of the consequences and sanctions of failing to engage.

Rotherham's Family Recovery Programme is led by a multi-agency steering group and delivered by Children and Young People's Services. It aims to engage 40 families in a 12 month period.

Voluntary and Community Sector

Rotherham's strong voluntary and community sector is often well-placed to engage with families who are sometimes deemed 'hard to reach' and who may experience difficulties in accessing statutory services for a variety of reasons.

By necessity the sector is responsive to national and local priorities so the following example of existing programmes can provide nothing more than a snapshot. These are services that are commissioned by the local authority, in the context of local needs analysis and priority setting:

YOURS (Short Breaks)

An innovative model of joint service delivery which provides a range of high quality short breaks for disabled children and young people and which has been heralded by parents and commissioners as highly successful and good value.

Ace Project

The Alternative Curriculum Education (ACE) project is run by Youth Workers from Kimberworth Park Community Partnership (KPCP) who work with young people and their families, many of whom are at crisis point.

GROW

GROW provide packages of support that are tailored to ensure the needs of families are identified and met. The unique holistic service ensures Rotherham women and their families have the information and support to connect to the services they need. Activities include informal drop in sessions, one to one support and advocacy when dealing with specialist services – ensuring all information is understood. The activities are delivered through a number of projects, including the Family Early Help Project which links to the Early Help Strategy and Family First Initiative, as well as the Sexual Exploitation Project, Teenage Parents Care Pathway Project, Maternity Forums, Maternity Services Liaison Committee, The Crèche Project and Footprints – support for families living with the death of a baby.

Home Start

Home-Start deliver local family support and provide regular, targeted, practical early intervention which reduces parental stress, increases self esteem and parent's

confidence in their parenting ability and skills, thereby contributing to better outcomes for children. The service is available to all families in Rotherham with children under 5 years, and is delivered by trained volunteers.

Rotherham Mind

Rotherham Mind Young Persons Service promotes positive mental health, emotional well-being and self esteem for children, young people and their families who are experiencing emotional distress through an accessible and supportive environment. The service provides one-to-one counselling and mental health support across a number of primary, secondary and special schools in Rotherham as well as building capacity within frontline professionals by offering training on a range of issues. The Intense Family Support Project is co-located with health and social care in Maltby Service Centre and liaises closely with a wide range of agencies including schools to provide services which aim to prevent escalation to acute need. The service also provides a route for families to 'step-down' from acute need and to assist with the transition to universal services.

UNDERSTANDING AND MAPPING LOCAL NEED

ONS population estimates (2010) show there were approximately 62,100 children and young people aged 0-19 living in Rotherham, representing 24.4% of the population. The gender split for children and young people is consistently 51% male and 49% female.

In 2011 20,400 people in Rotherham received Disability Living Allowance (DLA) (8% of the population, which is higher than the national figure of 4.5%). Information from the DLA team estimates there are around 2,330 children and young people aged 0 to 17 years of age in Rotherham with a disability although there are currently only 440 children (18.7%) registered on the Voluntary Children's Disability Register. Information from Rotherham Special Educational Needs Team indicates there are 1,072 statemented children registered on the Special Educational Needs Register.

Deprivation in Rotherham is now increasing according to Communities for Local Government. Rotherham ranked 68th most deprived district in England in the 2007 index and is now the 53rd in 2010 index. This demonstrates how deprivation has increased in Rotherham. Rotherham still ranks amongst the top 20% most deprived districts.

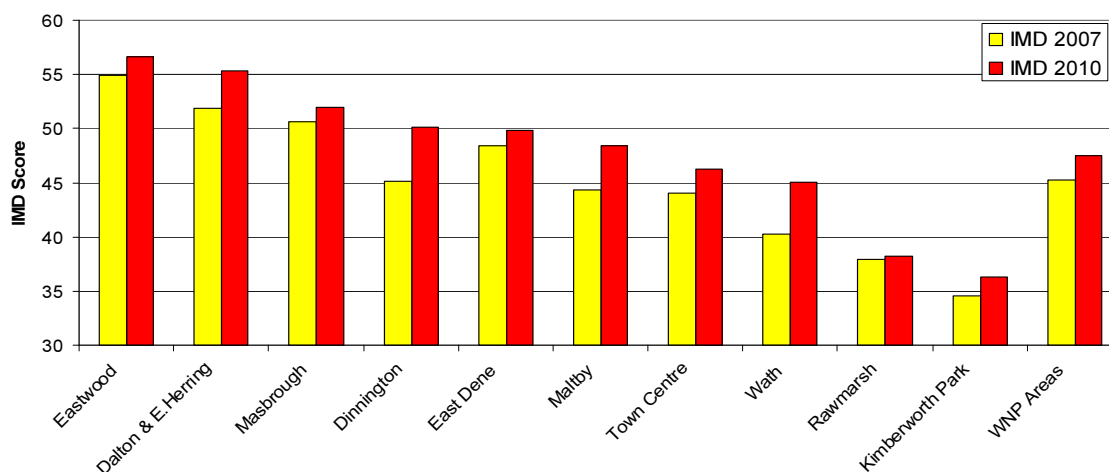
The key drivers of deprivation in Rotherham remain Education and Skills, Health and Disability and Employment although only relative Health and Disability has deteriorated since 2007. Improvements are most evident in Education and Skills, Living Environment and Employment. The greatest deterioration is in Crime although this is based on changes between 2005 and 2008 and does not reflect the most recent trends. The improvement in Education and Skills continues to be reflected in the most recent attainment data. However, the Employment Domain has deteriorated since the baseline used for the ID 2010

Deprivation tends to have reduced or stayed the same in the least deprived areas, whilst it has increased most in those areas with the highest deprivation. For Income, Health and Crime there is evidence of polarisation between the most deprived and least deprived, at least in relative terms. Children are more likely to be deprived than adults.

Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

This is an index within the Income Domain which shows the proportion of children in households deprived of income (using the percentage of children aged 0 to 15 living in households dependent on means tested benefits or receiving the highest rates of Child Tax Credit – applicable to very low waged parents).

Rotherham is still the above average percentage of children affected by income deprivation at 23.4% in 2010 and 24.6% in 2007. The level of polarisation within the Borough is even higher than with income deprivation as a whole, ranging from 61% in East Herringthorpe North to 0% in Whiston North. More recently, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, published in 2010, showed that Rotherham’s most deprived areas are falling further behind more affluent areas in terms of outcomes, assessed using data from domains including education, health, employment, income crime and environment.



There is a striking variation in vulnerability and life chances for a child who grows up in one of Rotherham’s most deprived areas compared to one of the least deprived. As a hypothetical way to demonstrate the levels of inequality in the borough, Rotherham Children and Young People’s Plan 2010 utilised the local concept of 500 babies, born and raised in Rotherham. These were separated into two groups, 317 who were born in the ten most deprived areas and 183 who were born in the ten least deprived areas. This pattern is based on the higher percentage of babies born in the most deprived parts of the borough. (For the purposes of this illustration it is assumed that each baby experiences no significant change in background circumstances throughout the course of its life.)

This profile (Figure 3) provides a lucid picture of the vulnerabilities and inequalities for children, young people and their families living in different circumstances. Evidence indicates that the children living in the most deprived areas of the borough are also more likely to be at risk of significant harm, requiring Child Protection Plans and are subsequently more likely to become Looked After Children.

Of the 500 babies	183 live in the least deprived areas	317 live in the most deprived areas
Are boys	93	161
Are girls	90	156
Are minority ethnic	10	105
Live in Christian families	144	198
Live in Muslim families	5	72
Are disabled	5	15
Live in a council house	1	122
Grow up in a lone parent family on Income Support	5	77
Will be classed as a 'Child in Need'	2	20
Grow up in a workless or very low waged household	10	178
Are eligible for free school meals	7	138
Gain at least 5 GCSEs A-C (including English and Maths)	113	75
Stay on at school or college after 16	152	159
Become NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training)	4	34
Live in a household where highest qualification is NVQ 4/5 or degree	33	23
Become a professional or manager	31	16
Earn £30k+	193	79
Claim housing / council tax benefit	15	159
Qualify for a means tested DWP benefit	9	143
Become pregnant before 18	3	11
Experience low birth weight or still birth	13	33
Can expect to live until age (males)	80.8	72.4
Can expect to live until age (females)	87.2	78.1
Will experience (annually)		
Violent crime	1	15
Deliberate fire	1	5
Anti-social behaviour	4	38

Figure 3

However, in Rotherham we are anxious to dig deeper to understand the complex issues that face children, young people and families in the borough. This process has begun. Rotherham undertook a comprehensive consultation on health inequalities. This consultation identified 5 themes that affect the health of Rotherham people. These are; cost of living, health services, skills for life, Rotherham communities and the look and feel of Rotherham. There were some key issues raised under each theme.

Health: Nudge doesn't work, we need to move away from short term projects, increase the value attached to services and social support for service use.

Rotherham Communities: People from Rotherham don't always feel pride in their community or have a shared recognition of community assets. The consultation raised issues including negative views of the town centre and the way that Rotherham communities are changing.

Cost of Living: Families are anxious about the increased cost of living at a time when incomes may be shrinking. Activities seem expensive and its hard to decide how to spend the household budget.

Look and Feel of Rotherham: There is a lack of pride in some local areas, residents highlighted to poor quality of private housing stock and were concerned that some areas feel unsafe.

Skills for life: Opportunities in Rotherham are perceived as low skilled and poorly paid, life skills opportunities are required to help people become ready for living alone and living healthily.

We will build on this feedback by gathering data and local knowledge to help us understand the complex combination of factors that make families vulnerable? What are the local (neighbourhood) issues that should dictate the services we deliver? We will seek to answer these questions by undertaking an Audit of Need, specific to children, young people and families. This work will be informed by the JSNA, the data we have on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, as well as by the principles of this strategy.

UNDERSTANDING AND MAPPING THE ROTHERHAM RESPONSE

In order to meet the strategic objectives of the strategy, particularly to understand and respond quickly to the needs of children and young people and families (across the continuum of need) and support the re-focusing of resources from crisis intervention to prevention, we urgently require a multi-agency map of services by age group and level of need.

Rotherham's Directory, www.rotherham.gov.uk/thedirectory provides a good starting point and is already a helpful tool for parents and practitioners to understand what is available locally.

The operational phase of implementing this strategy will see us develop this tool to provide a clear strategic picture of how services in Rotherham are delivered to meet need, and how these services improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

The table on the next page is a **preliminary** and very high level representation of how we will use the Continuum of Need across the age range from 0-25 to structure understanding of our early help offer. It is by no means representative of the full range of what's on offer, merely a helpful starting point.

Tier	0-3	3-5	5-11	11-19	19+
UNIVERSAL	GP Health Visitor Midwives Comprehensive childcare offer including: Local VCS Children's Centres PVI sector childcare provision Wider family learning Imagination Library	GP School Nurse Comprehensive childcare offer including: Local VCS Children's Centres PVI sector childcare provision Educational Psychology Wider family learning Inclusion outreach Imagination Library Jobcentre plus	GP School Nurse Learning Communities Local VCS, including sports clubs Educational Psychology Extended Services Wider Family Learning	GP School Nurse Learning Communities Local VCS, including sports clubs Educational Psychology	GP Local VCS, including sports clubs Learning Communities Wider Family Learning
VULNERABLE	Children's Centres (2 year old places) (Outreach Family Support) Autism support Local VCS (Homestart / GROW / MIND) Health Visitor Outreach Family Support Parenting STEPS Play therapy Portage Inclusion Outreach	Children's Centres (Outreach Family Support) Autism support Local VCS (Homestart / GROW / MIND) Health Visitor Parenting STEPS Play therapy Portage Inclusion Outreach Autism support Educational Psychology Parenting Behaviour Support Education Welfare SEN assessment Jobcentre plus	Learning Communities GP Autism support Local VCS (Homestart / GROW / MIND) Educational Psychology Extended Services Parenting STEPS Behaviour Support Education Welfare SEN assessment	Learning Communities GP Autism Support Local VCS (Homestart / GROW / MIND) Educational Psychology STEPS Behaviour Support Education Welfare Youth Work Connexions	Learning Communities GP Adult Learning Local VCS (Homestart / GROW / MIND) Children'sCentres Parenting STEPS Connexions Jobcentre plus Connexions Peer support
COMPLEX	Children's social care Family Recovery Project Parenting Family Support Autism support Portage	Children's social care Family Recovery Project Parenting Family Support Educational Psychology Autism support Short Breaks for families Risky Business Jobcentre plus	Children's social care Family Recovery Project Parenting Family Support Educational Psychology Autism support Short Breaks for families Risky Business	Children's social care Family Recovery Project Parenting Family Support Educational Psychology Autism support Short Breaks for families Risky Business Youth Offending Connexions	Adult Learning Jobcentre Plus Short breaks for families Family Recovery Project
ACUTE	Children's Social Care Adoption LAC Team LAC Team FRP	Children's Social Care Adoption LAC Team LAC Team FRP	Children's Social Care Adoption LAC Team Safe at Last Risky Business FRP	Children's Social Care Adoption LAC Team Safe at Last Risky Business Youth Justice FRP Connexions	Wider social services Wider Social Services

OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Since Rotherham's first Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy was published it has become clearer and clearer just how important it is to understand the impact of our work to deliver early help for children young people and families. It is this understanding that will enable us to get it right, so that our efforts and resources are targeted appropriately.

Our challenge is to agree multi-agency, coordinated delivery models for early help that respond to local need *and* maintain fidelity to evidenced practice. The Family Nurse Partnership and the Family Recovery Programme are good exemplars.

We have begun our journey to understand our outcomes by looking at the impact that the Common Assessment Framework process has had on children and young people. Analysis of this work has enabled us to develop a framework which will provide a structure to help us to assess need and capture outcomes consistently across the partnership.

The framework is structured using seven outcome areas, underpinned by more detailed indicators of need. Early help will be designed to demonstrate positive impact against a single or multiple categories of need for the whole family.

Developing the outcomes framework, and aligning this with the process to identify need, is a key component of the Early Help Operational Plan. Equally, embedding understanding and use of a shared framework across the partnership will be a key feature of the workforce development plan, aligned to this strategy.

UNDERSTANDING AND MAPPING RESOURCES

The financial imperative for targeting prevention and early intervention activity has been widely articulated. Effective early help for families (whether this is in a child's early years or as problems emerge at any age) can generate significant cost avoidance in terms of services delivered to children in later life and at the higher tiers of need. C4EO's, Cost Effectiveness Model for Children's Services (Figure 4), sets out how a looked after child in foster care costs £25,000 per annum, in comparison to a parenting programme costing only £900- £1,000 per family. Rotherham's cost pressures are being felt at the higher end of the scale, focussing scarce resources on a smaller number of families.

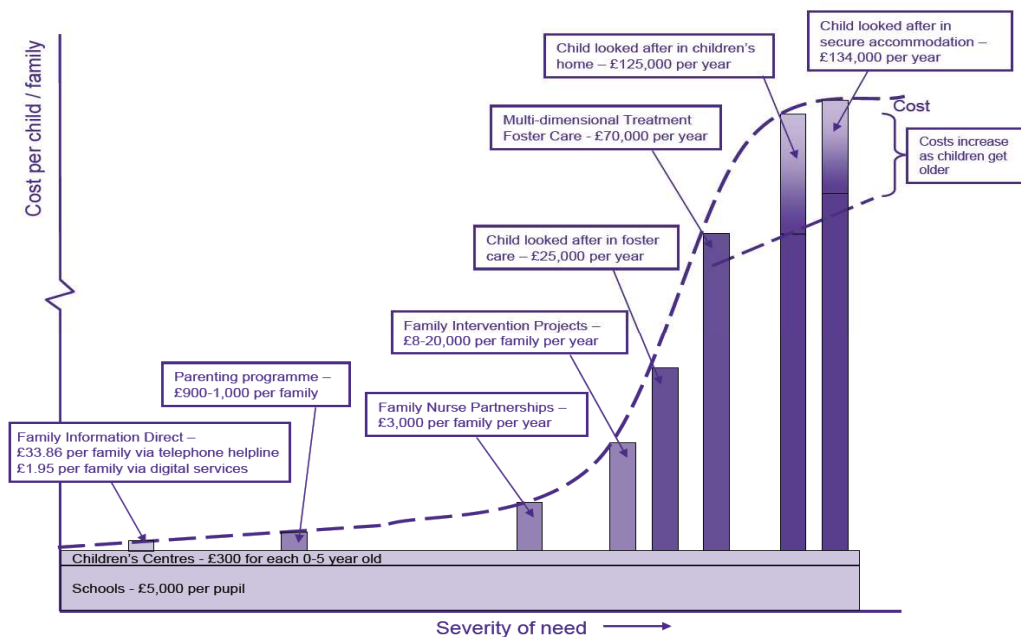


Figure 4: C4EO's, Cost Effectiveness Model for Children's Services

The Children, Young People and Families Partnership have requested that all partners commit a portion of their spending to the prevention and early intervention agenda. The analysis prepared for the purposes of the Children and Young People's Plan was organised using the four big things.

The financial methodology to support the delivery of early help continues to emerge in the context of shrinking local budgets following the publication of Graham Allen's second report. This document provides our commitment to aligning budgets to deliver prevention and early intervention services and developing our understanding of cost savings and cost avoidance so that we can make the case for shifting financial commitments from acute services to provide early help. We acknowledge that this will also be a funding requirement if we are to resource services through innovative financing including social impact bonds and payment by results arrangements. We also recognise that it will require all partners to hold their nerve in a climate where, to invest in the causes of vulnerability, will require disinvestment in spending on the symptoms.

WHAT NEXT?

Rotherham is proud of the multi-agency commitment that has led to the publication of this revised strategy re-stating our commitment to prevention and early intervention, or early help. However, if the 'early help' offer in Rotherham is not well-organised, well-articulated and well-understood, then the principles stated in this document will be empty.

The next steps are, therefore, to put our strategic objectives into action. In so doing, Rotherham will be responding to Eileen Munro's recommendations related to 'early-help' (which were accepted by Government in July 2011).

She says that, '*Government should place a duty on local authorities and statutory partners to secure sufficient provision of local early help services for children, young people and families.*' She goes on to recommend that the partnership should,

- *Specify the range of professional help available to local children, young people and families, through statutory, voluntary and community services, against the local profile of need (set out in the JSNA);*
- *Specify how (we) will identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, including the availability of social work expertise to all professionals working with children, young people and families who are not being supported by children's social care services and specify the training available locally to support professionals working at the frontline of universal services;*
- *Set out the local resourcing of the early help services for children, young people and families; and most importantly;*
- *Lead to the identification of the early help that is needed by a particular child and their family, and to the provision of an 'early help offer' where their needs do not meet the criteria for receiving children's social care services.*

To implement these recommendations Rotherham has developed an Operational Plan for Early Help. This sets out our vision for delivery and identifies key workstreams to oversee the developments of:

- The referral and screening process, allocation process and tools for assessment and review;
- The Early Help outcomes framework
- The Early Help reporting framework
- Early Help systems
- Early Help quality assurance
- Local leadership, and
- Workforce development.

The governance and accountability for delivery of the strategy will come from the Think Family Steering Group, acting on behalf of the Children, Young People and Families Partnership. The Local Strategic Partnership and RMBC Cabinet are also committed to ensuring that Early Help is successfully delivered across the borough.

But, more than anything, our success relies on the collective ownership and commitment of every single person whose work will contribute to improving the lives of families in our borough.

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