

**THE CABINET**  
**4th September, 2013**

Present:- Councillor Stone (in the Chair); Councillors Doyle, Lakin, McNeely, Rushforth and Smith.

Also in attendance Councillor Whelbourn (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hussain, R. S. Russell and Wyatt.

**C62            QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

(1) A member of the public asked why it was no longer appropriate for Planning Officers to attend Area Assembly type meetings to enlighten the public on why sites such as the one at the top of Alma Road, the boarded area at the bottom of Hollowgate and the derelict area on the civic site were not being built out nor was the affordable housing application that had received permission on Boswell Street.

The Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services confirmed that the Development Control Team were more than happy to answer any queries from members of the public, but due to limited resources were unable to attend public meetings to answer questions.

Planning permission was granted for a period of three years and unless some form of development had commenced would expire and require a fresh application being submitted.

With regards to the sites referred to:-

- Top of Alma Road – this was a victim of the economic downturn and the Council were not the landowner.
- Bottom of Hollowgate – this site was acquired with Housing Market Renewal funds, but despite planning permission being granted twice, no developer had come forward to build this site out, which was why the site was fenced and secured.
- Side of the bus station – this was currently being cleared to make way for the new Tesco development, which had extensively been publicised.
- Further information would have to be sought with regards to the current position with the affordable housing application on Boswell Street.

In a supplementary question, the member of the public asked how

members of the public would be informed about the information above and how this could best be shared.

The Leader pointed out that this information would be officially recorded in the minutes which were circulated to all Members of the Council, who also attended Area Assembly meetings.

(2) A member of the public referred to the frequent episodes of anti-social behaviour on Albion Road involving in excess of fifteen people and asked if anything further could be done as the visits by the Police were not proving effective.

The Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods confirmed that she had been in contact with the questioner and had reported the concerns to the PACT Sergeant who had agreed to extra surveillance. This would again be followed up for the situation to be monitored.

In a supplementary question the member of the public confirmed that they had informed the Police at the times when the disturbance was taking place, but often the perpetrators of the disturbance were able to hide from the Police's view.

The Leader confirmed that the matters referred to would be followed up to see what action could be taken.

#### **C63        DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest to report.

#### **C64        SCRUTINY REVIEW ON RMBC RESIDENTIAL HOMES**

Further to Minute No. 28 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2013, Councillor Doyle, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, introduced the report by the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, which set out the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of RMBC Residential Homes, Lord Hardy Court and Davies Court. The full report had been endorsed by the Health Select Commission and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at their meetings on 18<sup>th</sup> April and 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2013 respectively.

The report gave a brief outline of the progress that had been made by Senior Management, Residential Managers and Human Resources Business Partner in line with recommendations from the review and progress from the proposed restructure of the homes and service in line with budget savings and proposals for 2013/2014.

The review reported under the five sub headings; staffing, catering and entertainment, buildings and maintenance, costs and comparisons and options for the future. Each of these sections of the review had its own recommendations. There were ten recommendations all of which have

been considered for the proposals within the revised structure for the residential homes and included within the response.

Resolved:- (1) The response to the Scrutiny Review of Residential Homes be approved.

(2) That the response to the Scrutiny Review be submitted to the next available meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Health Select Commission.

## **C65 CONTINUING HEALTHCARE SCRUTINY REVIEW RESPONSE**

Further to Minute No. 75 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 17th October, 2012, Councillor Doyle, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, introduced a report by the Director of Health and Wellbeing, which detailed the outcome of the scrutiny review into Continuing Health Care (CHC) which was led by the Joint Health and Improving Lives Select Commissions in 2012. A number of recommendations were made, which were all accepted, would improve the experience of citizens and ensure that a fairer share of Continuing Health Care funding was received within Rotherham.

Following receipt of the report, a senior management working group consisting of both RMBC and NHSR staff agreed a set of actions to ensure effective multi-disciplinary working and delivery of better outcomes for customers.

Continuing health care and social care assessments were completed by health and social care staff presently or recently involved in assessing, reviewing, treating and supporting the customer. A better working relationship existed and understanding of each professional's role in participating in a multi-disciplinary assessment and completing the Decision Support Tool (DST).

Resolved:- (1) The response to the Scrutiny Review Continuing Health Care be approved.

(2) That the response to the Scrutiny Review be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Health and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

(3) That the response to the Scrutiny Review be submitted to the next available meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Health/Improving Lives Select Commissions.

## **C66 ARMED FORCE COMMUNITY COVENANT**

Councillor Doyle, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, introduced a report by the Chief Executive which sought approval to support a bid by the Military Community Veterans' Centre to the Ministry of Defence Armed

Forces Community Covenant Fund.

The bid was for £22,088 to provide an outreach service to meet ex-service personnel and their families who may need assistance under the remit of the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

As lead organisation for the Rotherham Armed Forces Community Covenant any grant money awarded would be paid to the Council to manage and administer.

Resolved:- That the submission of the bid and the management and administration of any financial grant approved by the Ministry of Defence be approved.

**C67 THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DCLG TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT FOR 2014/15 AND 2015/16**

The Leader introduced a report by the Director of Finance, which detailed how on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2013 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) released a Technical Consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2014/15 and 2015/16. This consultation document provided some further clarity over figures included in the June Spending Round. The implications of the proposed settlements were:-

- An increase in the indicative 2014/15 Council Funding Gap of £0.4 million to £20.5 million.
- An increase in the indicative 2015/16 Council Funding Gap of £5.2 million to £20.3 million.

This revised the Council's cumulative funding gap to £40.8 million over the next two financial years.

A response to the Consultation Paper was required by the Department for Communities and Local Government by 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2013. The Cabinet was asked to support both an individual response from Rotherham as well as endorsing the SIGOMA response. If a decision was also taken to submit a South Yorkshire response, Members were asked to support inclusion of Rotherham's issues and concerns in this response also. Members were also asked to agree the sharing of any response with the Local Government Association.

Cabinet Members noted and were concerned about the clear north/south divide that was beginning to emerge mostly affecting the northern metropolitan councils. This was also highlighted by the research undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University regarding the financial impact on individual residents alongside reductions in Council services and spending forced by significant annual budget reductions.

Cabinet Members were, therefore, in support of a multi-approach response in order to best reflect the substantial concerns about the current proposals.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report and the implications on the Council's indicative funding gap for both 2014/15 and 2015/16 be noted.

(2) That the consultation responses be as follows:-

- (i) A Rotherham specific response.
- (ii) Input to/endorse the SIGOMA response.
- (iii) Input to a South Yorkshire response (should a decision be taken to submit one from the four South Yorkshire authorities).
- (iv) Share our response with the Local Government Association.

## **C68 LSCB ANNUAL REPORT**

Councillor Lakin, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families Services, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services, which detailed that since April, 2010, Local Safeguarding Children Boards have been required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding children in the local area. This report introduced the 2012-13 Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report and offered background information to it.

Key priorities included:-

- A multi-agency local protocol (framework) for the assessment of children.
- A performance and quality framework to measure the effectiveness of Early Help Services on outcomes for children and their families.
- A Learning and Improvement Framework to enable lessons learned to be translated into improved outcomes for children.
- Revised protocols for effective governance and partnership arrangements within the borough (for example between the LSCB and Health and Well Being Board).
- An updated LSCB constitution and revisions to its Sub Groups so that they can deliver the work and priorities of the Board.
- Ensure that the Child Sexual Exploitation Service, including other partners, are responsive to the need of young people involved in or vulnerable to CSE, through the implementation of the CSE Strategy and delivery of the CSE Action Plan.
- Continue to develop the importance of understanding the child's voice and journey through services, in particular the child protection process.
- Ensure that children subject to Child Protection Plan receive thorough multi-agency assessments of need and risk, effective care plans that address these and review them well.

Resolved:- (1) That this report as an introduction to the 2012-13

Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report be received and the contents noted.

(2) That the Improving Lives Select Commission receive the report at its meeting on 18th September, 2013.

**(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING URGENT ITEM IN ORDER TO COMMISSION THE PROPOSAL QUICKLY)**

**C69 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

The Leader condemns sexual exploitation and acknowledged the devastating impact this had had on the young victims and the people that loved and cared for them.

On behalf of the Council he apologised unreservedly to those young people who had been let down by Safeguarding Services prior to 2009.

The Police and Crime Commissioner had reported the commissioning of a three pronged inquiry into South Yorkshire Police's handling of child sexual exploitation cases.

Following detailed discussions with the Chief Executive it was proposed that an independent inquiry be commissioned into historic sexual exploitation cases in Rotherham.

Terms of reference for the inquiry would be drafted by the Chief Executive for approval with the proposal that an independent individual(s) be identified to lead on this importance piece of work.

Cabinet Members welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner's three pronged review and recommended that the Council's independent inquiry run parallel to the Police review with a broadly similar timetable for reporting.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposed commissioning of an independent inquiry into historic child sexual exploitation cases in Rotherham be approved.

(2) That a report setting out the draft terms of reference and detailed approach for the review be submitted to the next meeting of the Cabinet scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2013.

**C70 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to

the Local Government Act (as amended March, 2006) (information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person).

## **C71 GREEN DEAL DELIVERY OPTIONS**

Councillor McNeely, Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Neighbours and Adult Services, which detailed how the Green Deal (GD), including the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) was the latest Government scheme to improve energy efficiency in domestic and commercial buildings. This was a new initiative, therefore, the Council needed to respond swiftly to the emerging opportunities and market interest from Green Deal companies in working in Rotherham. It focused on residential buildings and set out the options the Council had to maximise the benefits of the Green Deal. Such benefits included tackling fuel poverty, improving the health of residents, encouraging job creation and retention and the regeneration of deprived communities through major capital investment. Energy Company Obligation alone could bring in £41 million of capital investment into qualifying fuel poor households.

Many homes in the Borough have already benefitted from either the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) or the Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP), however, the opportunity to scale up to a much larger programme existed with this new initiative. The report, therefore, set out the main options to achieve this and how to ensure the added value was captured that a large scale carbon reduction scheme brought.

The Council needed to ensure its strategic objectives were met whilst also removing the confusion and lack of confidence that currently existed in the community about energy saving schemes. This meant the Council must consider how it could influence and co-ordinate activity to deliver consistent high quality service to residents, but at the same time move rapidly, taking advantage of the available funding, to target the most vulnerable.

It was important that action was taken swiftly as the first phase of the Energy Company Obligation element of the scheme ended in 2015 and it was likely to be significantly nationally over-subscribed. The main steps and timetable necessary to implement the preferred option were set out in detail as part of the report.

Two issues that needed to be resolved, that were crucial to ensuring rapid progress, were selecting delivery partners in a timely way and establishing appropriate governance arrangements to protect the interests of communities and Council Housing stock.

Cabinet Members welcomed this report and were pleased to learn that the Scrutiny Review of Fuel Poverty had been used as reference.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and contents and the work done so far be noted.

(2) That the establishment of a Green Deal Partnership as outlined in Option 2 of this report be approved.

**C72 ACQUISITION OF 25 NEW COUNCIL HOMES AT BARBERS AVENUE, RAWMARSH**

Councillor McNeely, Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, which detailed the recent explorations into options to acquire twenty-five new affordable Council Houses, which were not built yet, on a privately owned site at Barbers Avenue, Rawmarsh.

Funding would be made available from the Housing Revenue Account Strategic Acquisitions budget (Cabinet Minute No. C160 of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 refers), but this would require a top-up.

The new homes would be built to the same specifications as other Local Authority New Build homes; meeting the required design and quality standards including Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4.

Resolved:- (1) That the principles of acquiring twenty-five new Council homes at Barbers Avenue, Rawmarsh be approved.

(2) That the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods be delegated to sign off details of the scheme and authorise acquisition if the development meets the key principles outlined in this report.

(3) That a top-up of the Housing Revenue Account Strategic Acquisitions budget to acquire these properties be approved.

**C73 DIGITAL REGION LIMITED**

The Leader introduced a report by the Chief Executive which provided an update with regard to the urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive regarding Digital Region Limited (DRL) in accordance with his delegated powers.

Resolved:- That the decision taken by the Chief Executive on 12th August, 2013, in accordance with his delegated powers be noted.