CABINET

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

Date: **Wednesday, 9 April 2014**

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. Declarations of Interest.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th March, 2014 (copy supplied separately)

6. Minutes of a meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group held on 14th March, 2014 (herewith) (Pages 2 - 6)
    - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

7. Minutes of a meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel held on 17th March, 2014 (herewith) (Pages 7 - 13)
    - Chief Executive to report.

8. Outcome of Inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners (report herewith) (Pages 14 - 16)
    - Chief Executive to report.

9. Rotherham Voluntary Bus Partnership Agreement (report herewith) (Pages 17 - 21)
    - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

10. Response to the Planning Inspector's Changes to the Local Plan Core Strategy (report herewith) (Pages 22 - 45)
    - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

11. Approval of Revised Terms of Reference for the Local Plan Steering Group (report herewith) (Pages 46 - 51)
    - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

12. Outcomes from Youth Cabinet Review on Improving Access for Young People Seeking Help and Support Around Self-Harm (report herewith) (Pages 52 - 66)
    - Chief Executive to report.

13. Future of the Yorkshire and Humber Grid for Learning (YHGfL) Consortium (report herewith) (Pages 67 - 70)
    - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

14. Update in Respect of Selective Licensing Consultation (Officers to report)
    - Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services to report.

Extra Report:-

15. Exclusion of the Press and Public.
    The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006) (information relating to the financial or business affairs).

16. Property Searches Litigation (report herewith)(*) (Pages 71 - 75)
    - Director of Legal and Democratic Services to report.

In accordance with Section (7) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed that the item marked (*) contains a decision which needs to be acted upon as a matter of urgency and which cannot be reasonably deferred (see notice attached)

Agenda Annex

Cabinet Meeting – 9th April, 2014

Take notice, in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, that the following reports are to be considered in the private part of the meeting without having provided the required twenty-eight days' notice:-

- **Property Services Litigation**

  An exemption under Paragraph 5 (information in respect of which a claim for legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains commercially sensitive information.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed that this item is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.

Jacqueline Collins
Director of Legal and Democratic Services
4th April, 2014

Agenda Item 6

	ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	CABINET
2.	Date:	9th APRIL, 2014
3.	Title:	MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROTHERHAM LOCAL PLAN MEMBERS' STEERING GROUP HELD ON 14TH MARCH, 2014
4.	Directorate:	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 Rotherham Local Plan Members' Steering Group are submitted to the Cabinet.

A copy of the minutes of the Rotherham Local Plan Members' Steering Group held on 14th March, 2014 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 Plan under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The policy change of the coalition Government should be noted re: the Localism Act 2011 and implications for the Local Plan.

8. Finance

The resource and funding implications as the Local Plan 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 Rotherham Local Plan Members' Steering Group.

Attachments:-

- A copy of the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March, 2014.

**Contact Name : Karl Battersby, Strategic Director,
Environment and Development Services
ext 23815
karl.battersby@rotherham.gov.uk**

ROTHERHAM LOCAL PLAN STEERING GROUP
Friday, 14th March, 2014

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

together with:- Bronwen Knight, Andrew Duncan, Neil Rainsforth and Ryan Shepherd (Planning Service) and Ann Todd (Communications Office).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dodson, Godfrey, Lakin, Pickering, G. A. Russell and R. S. Russell.

29.   **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 14TH FEBRUARY 2014**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group, held on 14th February, 2014.

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

30.   **MATTERS ARISING**

With regard to Minute No. 26 of the meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group held on 14th February, 2014, discussion took place on:-

(a) the arrangements for ensuring that Ward Members are informed of issues and developments affecting the areas they represent; and

(b) membership of and representation on the Local Plan Steering Group.

31.   **CORE STRATEGY - DRAFT RESPONSE TO INSPECTOR'S MAIN MODIFICATIONS**

Further to Minute No. 24 of the meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group held on 14th February, 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Senior Planning Officer, providing an update on the draft response to the consultation on Main Modifications as part of the Examination in Public of Rotherham's Local Plan Core Strategy.

Specific reference was made to:-

: MM3 : the overall housing requirement and the requirement for the housing backlog to be dealt with during the first five years of the new Local Plan; the Council's response was that the backlog should be dealt with during the whole life of the Local Plan;

: use of percentage distribution of new housing across the whole Borough area;

: MM4 (Policy CS3) : objecting to the removal of phasing of new development;

: MM7 and MM8 : removal of the Bassingthorpe Farm area from the Green Belt;

: MM13 : the new development at Waverley : the area should remain as a local centre, rather than being designated as a district centre.

Members were informed that further legal advice is to be obtained on the Council's suggested response to the Inspector's main modifications.

It was noted that a number of further public hearing sessions were scheduled to take place with the Inspector.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That, subject to the receipt of the legal opinion noted above, the responses to the Inspector's main modifications to Rotherham's Local Plan Core Strategy, as now submitted, be approved insofar as this Steering Group is concerned.

32.   **SITES AND POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT - PROGRESS**

Further to Minute No. 25 of the meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group held on 14th February, 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Senior Planning Officer, providing an update on the continuing preparation of Rotherham's draft Sites and Policies Document.

Specific reference was made to:-

(i) the emerging Sites and Policies Document must be accord with and deliver the strategic priorities of the Core Strategy, including meeting the amended housing requirement;

(ii) a small number of sites have been reconsidered for their suitability as potential allocations, as a result of the consultation responses received;

(iii) an assessment of the impact of a number of draft allocations on the built historic environment is also required to ensure that this issue has been adequately and robustly assessed; the Council will consult with English Heritage on this issue;

(iv) subject to Cabinet approval, consultation on the Final Draft Sites and Policies Document is expected to take place from 7 July 2014 until 31 August 2014; the Council is preparing a detailed Green Belt Review to support this Document;

(v) the development management policies have been refined in the light of the representations received;

(vi) further work on Minerals is nearing its conclusion and the policies and accompanying map have been updated accordingly.

The Steering Group discussed the amendments to and the updating of the designations on the Policies Map. A draft of the Policies Map was presented to the meeting and highlighted the proposed draft allocations to meet the higher housing target proposed by the Inspector. The various tables, included within the submitted report, identified the changes to allocations which have been made, including the additions and deletions.

Members referred to a number of specific sites and areas of land around the Borough. Further briefing sessions for Elected Members will take place during the next few months.

Agreed:- That the report be received and its contents noted.

33.   LOCAL PLAN STEERING GROUP - CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Further to Minute No. 26 of the meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group held on 14th February, 2014, consideration was given to the revised constitution and terms of reference of the Local Plan Steering Group. Reference was made to the relationship with the Local Strategic Partnership.

Agreed:- That the revised terms of reference, as now submitted, be approved.

34.   DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That the next meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group take place at the Town Hall, Rotherham on Friday, 25th April, 2014, commencing at 10.00 a.m.

(2) That the next following meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group shall take place on Thursday, 5th June, 2014, commencing at 2.30 p.m.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	CABINET
2.	Date:	9TH APRIL, 2014
3.	Title:	MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL MINUTES
4.	Directorate:	RESOURCES

5. Summary

To consider Members' training matters.

6. Recommendations

To receive the minutes of the meetings of the Members' Training and Development Panel held on 17th March, 2014.

7.   Proposals and Details

To ensure implementation of the Council's Training and Development Policy in accordance with the meeting's Terms of Reference.

8.   Finance

The Panel has its own training budget.

9.   Risks and Uncertainties

Without proper training and support being in place there is a risk that Members' capacity to make decisions is not soundly based.

10.   Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

To consider best practice in relation to Member training and development.

The aim is for every Elected Member to be given suitable opportunities for development and training to help support all aspects of their role.

11.   Background Papers and Consultation

A copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel held on 17th March, 2014, are attached.

Contact Name : Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, Scrutiny and Member Development, Resources Directorate – Tel. 01709 822765
caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk

MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
MONDAY, 17TH MARCH, 2014

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Buckley, Dodson, Falvey, Havenhand, Smith and Wootton.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Gosling, Lakin and Pickering.

1.   **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Agreed:-   That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th September, 2013, were agreed as a correct record.

2.   **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY - UPDATE (MARCH 2014)**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Caroline Webb, Senior Adviser (Scrutiny and Member Development) which provided an update on progress in respect of Member Development activity.

Further information was provided on the work being undertaken on Personal Development Plans for Members, the previously agreed Autumn/Winter Programme, the Spring/Summer Programme going forward and the generic requests that had been submitted.

Reference was also made to the Members' learning and development intranet pages and the migration of pages to ensure the site was fully accessible on the Council's intranet, accessed by Members on their Council laptops (when logged in) or via the GOOD app.

Other resources have been developed including the Member Online Resource Environment, (M.O.R.E) website. This was a resource listing events, news, information and development opportunities as well as a space to network and share ideas and good practice with other members in the Yorkshire and Humber Region.

In terms of regional and sub-regional working Officers were part of strong Member Development Officer Network in South Yorkshire and across the wider Yorkshire and Humber region. Through this network it provided opportunities to share good practice, resources and knowledge with other authorities to maximise value for money.

Discussions were also underway at a sub-regional level to utilize the training expertise of LGiU to deliver sessions locally. In addition, any free national and regional events would be publicised and arranged through Local Government Yorkshire and Humber and the Local Government Association.

Again as with previous years, every effort would be made to support Members in their leadership roles by meeting their specific training needs

(for example Leadership Academy or other bespoke programmes).

The previous Leadership Academy 'offer' included a number of free programmes and several which were heavily subsidised (for example the Young Councillor weekends.)   Decisions to support attendance at Leadership Academy (or external training) were based on the training support principals (as agreed on 17th December, 2012), identified need or issues arising from Personal Development Plans, in liaison with this Panel or the Deputy Leader.

Discussion ensued on the value of the previous programme, the previously agreed clear training principles, sessions aimed at practical skills for handling the media, Emergency Planning, the need for further training on the changing role of the Elected Member, chairing and questioning skills sessions and the potential for inviting trainers to Rotherham rather than sending Members externally.

It was also suggested that there should be further sessions on managing expectations for Councillors, with a further report on options being submitted to the next meeting in June, 2014.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be received and the contents noted.

(2) That the programme as submitted be noted.

(3)   That a further report on managing expectations be submitted to the next meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel in June, 2014.

3.   **INDUCTION PROGRAMME FOR NEW MEMBERS**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Caroline Webb, Senior Adviser (Scrutiny and Member Development) which requested that Members consider draft proposals for the induction programme for newly elected Members in 2014.

Further information was provided on the importance of the Members' Training and Development Panel having input into the induction programme, feedback and evaluation of the 2012 Programme and ICT support.

In taking the 2014 Programme forward it was suggested that a two-tiered approach be taken. The first part of the programme would be a concentrated two-day session covering 'essential' information in the days immediately following the election and following agreement of the Programme all prospective candidates be contacted prior to the election and asked to commit to these sessions (if successful).

The evaluation of the 2012 programme showed a number of Members had a very strong preference for evening sessions to accommodate their

working commitments. This practice had since been built into other programmes (subject to the availability of venue/facilitators) and it was, therefore, suggested that if possible, the sessions should be organised around an afternoon/early evening pattern to minimise disruption to employment or other day-time commitments.

If a two-tier approach to induction was approved, it was suggested that the in-depth programme covering the following areas:-

- Member's role in the community.

- Undertaking casework.
  - ➢ Understanding ward data.
  - ➢ Handling difficult situations.
  - ➢ Giving difficult messages.

- Understanding overview and scrutiny.

- Understanding Council priorities.

- Equality and diversity.

- Introduction to planning and licensing.

- Members' role as corporate parents.

- Safeguarding.

- Member's role in emergency planning.

- Communication and media (including social media).

- Council website – accessing information and services online.

- Speaking and contributing to meetings.

- Questioning skills.

  - ➢ Introduction to local government finance.

The Programme would be scheduled to run over the course of the municipal year, with elements forming part of the generic member development programme.

It was anticipated that the majority of sessions would be delivered in-house, with any additional costs for external facilitation met through the Member Development budget.

As with previous years, it was suggested that Members be involved in the

delivery of the 2014 Programme and views were sought on how this input could be best facilitated.

It was also noted that each newly Elected Member would receive an updated handbook after the election. This provided information on the day to day running of the Council, the support services available and contact details of relevant staff. Each new Member would also receive a hard copy of the Local Government Association's Guide for New Councillors.

Discussion ensued on the draft programme, which was comprehensive, and would provide the necessary information for newly elected Members. It was also suggested that the Planning and Licensing Regulatory sessions be held as soon as possible and that consideration be given to ensuring training for Licensing was received for new Members prior to meetings taking place, following the example set down by Planning.

It was particularly important for Cabinet Members to provide support to newly elected Councillors and to guide them through the democratic process.

Reference was also made to the Members' Handbook, its content and format and the value that should be shared again with the current Members electronically once refreshed.

Agreed:-   (1)   That the structure, timing and contents of the draft programme be noted.

(2) That there be a programme of established member involvement in the induction programme.

(3) That the contents of the handbook be refreshed and a hard copy provided to all newly elected Councillors, but that an electronic version be circulated to all Councillors as soon as practicably possible.

(4) That Officers be thanked for their input to the induction programme and the support they provide.

(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING URGENT REQUEST IN ORDER TO PROCESS THE MATTERS REFERRED TO)

4.   **LGA FREE CLIMATE LOCAL CONFERENCE: DELIVERING GROWTH AND SUPPORTING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES - MONDAY, 31ST MARCH, 2014 - LOCAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LONDON**

Consideration was given to a request submitted by Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Lead Member for Climate Change, for attendance at the above free conference with approval being required to cover travel and subsistence.

Reference was made to the criteria and training support principles as agreed at the meeting held on the 17th December, 2012 and the current budget provision for Members' training and development.

Discussion ensued on the criteria for such a request, the benefit to attendance and whether information could be obtained from David Rhodes, Corporate Environmental Manager, who was attending as a guest speaker.

Agreed:- That the request by Councillor Wyatt for travel and subsistence to paid from the Members' Training and Development Budget be refused.

5.   **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed:-   That the next meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel be held on Monday, 9th June, 2014 commencing at 11.00 a.m.

	ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS	

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	9th April 2014
3.	Title:	**Outcome of Inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners**
4.	Directorate:	**Resources**

5. Summary

A report on the findings on an inspection report by His Honour Norman Jones QC of the Office of Surveillance Commissioners (OSC).

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet:-

(1) Notes the outcomes of the inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners

(2) Approves the implementation of the recommendations from the Inspectors report

7. Proposals and Details

The Council was inspected on the 11th February 2014 by HH Jones in respect of its Regulation of Investigatory of Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) policy and procedures. These RIPA policies and procedures relate to the Council's use of covert surveillance in the carrying out of its functions and duties.

The Council has used powers under RIPA for the investigation of Housing Benefit fraud, Training Standards offences, Anti-social Behaviour, appropriate environmental crime such as fly tipping and employee offences which are investigated by internal audit. All of these uses have previously been confirmed as appropriate by the OSC. Applications in all of these areas are subject to judicial approval and meet the serious crime threshold.

This is the first inspection since the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, introduced judicial approval, i.e. by magistrates in respect of authorisations by the Council, and the serious crime threshold was introduced.

During the Inspection, HH Jones spoke to the Senior Responsible Officer, Jacqueline Collins, the RIPA Coordinator, Stuart Fletcher (Service Manager, Commercial and Governance, Legal Services) and 3 officers involved with RIPA operationally, namely Alan Pogorzelec (Business Regulation Manager), Lewis Coates (Community Protection Manager) and Shawn Senior (Fraud Investigation Manager).

The Inspector examined the relevant Policy and completed forms and found these to be largely commendable, although there was some room for improvement. The Inspector commented that the management of RIPA was appropriate but relevant processes could be improved by more robust procedures in respect of quality control.

In his report the Inspector stated that it was encouraging that the previous recommendations had been fully discharged and that the Council had developed an impressive training programme.

Although the Council does not currently use those parts of RIPA involving establishing covert relationship with suspects, it was recommended by the Inspector that the Council maintain and develop the ability to manage these situations and that the future training programme should reflect this. This was due to the likelihood in the future of using these technique for the investigation in particular involving social network sites, such as Trading Standards investigations involving illegally counterfeited goods.

The Inspector commented that the Council had established a good relationship with the magistrates' court in dealing with applications for judicial approval. Further the inspector found that the Council policy was fit for purpose and practical, and contained excellent prompts and guidance for officers. The Inspector was impressed that the improvements reported at the last inspection continue to be made.

The recommendations from the report were in respect of establishing a better "chasing up" procedure for the collation of forms from different services, to address weaknesses in the documentation through future training for investigating and authorising officers, to ensure all authorising officers attend RIPA corporate training courses, and to ensure that Councillors are kept to informed of RIPA activity.

These recommendations have been accepted, and acted upon by the Senior Responsible officer formulating an action plan to incorporate the following:

i)   A new "chasing up" procedure has been established and included in the RIPA policy.

ii)   Training has been organised which all appropriate officers will attend.

iii)   Councillors will be updated in terms of the number of applications, via the Deputy Leader's meeting. In relation to the policy and appropriateness of Council RIPA operation generally, as recommended by the new Code of Practice, Councillors will be kept informed by means of an annual report to Cabinet.

8. Finance

Not applicable

9. Risks and Uncertainties

If surveillance is not carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation, the evidence gathered during the investigations may not be admissible in subsequent court proceedings.

Further, if the Council does not comply with the appropriate legislation when carrying out surveillance of this nature, public trust could be undermined as to the way in which the Council operates, and in particular, investigates offences.

If these powers are not used there is the possibility that serious criminal offences will not be properly investigated.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

RMBC Strategy to Reduce Crime & Disorder

11.   Background Papers and Consultation

Office Surveillance Commissioners Report : 12th February 2014

Rotherham Borough Council RIPA Policy and Procedure : April 2013

Contact Name : *Stuart Fletcher (Service Manager Commercial & Governance)*
Legal Services, Telephone: 23523, e-mail: stuart.fletcher@rotherham.gov.uk

	ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS	

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	9th April 2013
3.	Title:	**Rotherham Voluntary Bus Partnership Agreement**
4.	Programme Area:	**Environmental and Development Services**

5. Summary

The report seeks agreement to enter into the Rotherham Voluntary Bus Partnership with the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTE) and major public transport operators regarding improvements to the bus offer in Rotherham, and to note the results of the consultation undertaken during the autumn of 2013.

6. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to resolve that:

(i)   **The proposal to enter into an agreement in respect of a Voluntary Bus Partnership for Rotherham is endorsed on the basis set out within the main body of the report.**

(ii)   **The results from the Consultation undertaken during the autumn of 2013 is noted.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1　Background

Buses play a key role in supporting economic growth by linking people to key facilities, education and job opportunities. This is particularly relevant in South Yorkshire where there is a dispersed population and relatively low levels of car ownership. This innovative Partnership aims to improve the service offer, grow patronage and in doing so support economic growth.

7.2　Research indicates customers are seeking an acceptable bus product, namely one that is simple to understand, easy to use, affordable and delivers the right customer experience. The current situation is variable in its delivery of these service attributes and as such hinders people's ability to use the bus to access employment and training opportunities as well as achieve social inclusion and environmental objectives.

If the bus network is sufficiently punctual, reliable and stable, such that customers choose to use the bus, then patronage in turn grows. This has been demonstrated through a similar partnership working in Sheffield.

7.3　The Partnership being proposed for Rotherham follows the model adopted for Sheffield, with minor local variations, it builds on the success of Sheffield Bus Partnership where we have seen the following achieved in the first year as a result of the overall improved package secured:

- 8.9% increase in adult fare paying passengers, 1.1% increase overall
- Punctuality and reliability consistently above that seen before the Partnership was in place
- Reduced customer complaints and increased satisfaction

7.4　The development of the Rotherham Voluntary Bus Partnership (RVBP) follows the discussions with the following key parties:

- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Bus operators, First, Stagecoach (Yorkshire and East Midlands), Powells, TM Travel
- Confederation of Passenger Transport UK, who have invited other operators to become involved
- SYPTE

The Development of the Partnership has been led by a Steering Group chaired by the Council and attended by SYPTE and the Rotherham ITA members.

7.5　The network proposals have been the subject of public consultation, following approval by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development (Minute number G54 of the meeting of 7th October 2013 refers) between 4th November and December 2013. Responses to the proposed network could be made by either completing an on line questionnaire, or by completing a hard copy of a questionnaire which was available at Travel South Yorkshire Information Centres at Rotherham and Meadowhall Interchanges. Six drop in sessions, where representatives from SYPTE and the operators were available to answer questions from the public, were held in

November at various locations across the borough where the proposed network was subject to most change as detailed below:

- Thurs 7th – 1600-2000 - Harthill Village Hall
- Mon 11th – 0900-1200 – Rotherham Interchange
- Tues 12th – 1200-1500 – Rotherham Interchange
- Wed 13th – 1600-1800 – North Anston Parish Hall
- Thurs 14th – 1100-1300 – Dinnington Interchange
- Tues 19th – 1400-1700 – Kiveton Park and Wales Village Hall

The key points arising from the consultation can be summarised as follows:

- 1,160 responses were received. Of these, 116 respondents did not specify a specific bus service.
- 79% of respondents did not support the proposed changes, 9% of the consultation responses referred to services that are were not subject to change.

Further discussions have now taken place with the partners and revised proposals have been agreed which it is considered will address 88.8% of the concerns raised at consultation.

7.6 The outcome of this collaborative work proposes the partners enter into a non-binding Voluntary Partnership Agreement, covering the following:

- Work together to improve services, to grow patronage, improve access to support economic growth and encourage modal shift. This has been based on the existing network, influenced by the South Rotherham Bus Vision consultation (2010); and the recently completed public consultation linked to this project.
- Provide a stable bus network built on customer consultation, linked to customer demand with changes (other than minor timings) to be agreed with SYPTE/RMBC officers. Route or frequency changes will be limited to once per year with minor changes and timetable corrections limited to a maximum of 3 dates per annum.
- An affordable, more understandable ticketing arrangement, whilst having the advantage of retaining the operators' own tickets, ensuring that few customers will lose out.
- Supported by a customer service plan, joint promotion and information strategy.
- Agreed minimum standards and progressive improvements to bus specifications though the provision of environmentally friendly low floor accessible vehicles and highway improvements to make predictable journey times.
- Where bus resource is saved through the revised network this will be reinvested in the customer offer by agreement, in the first stage this is through fare reduction.
- Investment also made by RMBC/SYPTE to support these objectives and enhance the customer offer.
- Measured through agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- The duration is a <u>minimum</u> of 5 years from 19 July 2014 with exceptions in extreme circumstances linked to financial or other undermining Partner actions.
- That the Agreement is subject to competition rules/laws.

7.7 <u>Network</u>

The network has been developed with the key objective of delivering passenger growth by improving journey opportunities, particularly through the provision of new

access to employment journeys and network stability whist retaining established customer base and revised ticketing.

7.8 Investment

(i) The base fleet and LTP investment is known, operator investment is still being negotiated but the aim is to offer a higher quality bus offer so that customers feel safe and comfortable whilst the service operates reliably and to time.

(ii) RMBC and SYPTE will invest in enforceable bus priority schemes to reduce or maintain a consistency in bus journey times

7.9 Ticketing

The ticket discussions aimed at introducing a simplified ticket range offering more affordable fares to customers is centring on improving the multi-operator Travelmaster range of products, with Operators free to maintain their own ranges. The advantages of going through Travelmaster is that it allows more influence over future price rises, and includes other Operators, encourages the move to 'Smart' and has a moderating effect on individual Operator price rises/fare levels.

7.10 Information & Promotion

It is proposed to jointly undertake production of information and promotional material, to help both existing and potential customers know the travel options on offer and understand that is now easier and more cost attractive to use than the bus.

7.11 Intelligence & Management

It is intended that the Partnership is supported by a Legal Agreement that retains the confidentiality of 'data sharing'.

7.12 The key differences between the Rotherham and Sheffield Agreements can be summarised as follows:

- The network redesign does not reduce overall bus resource.
- Service change dates will only occur 3 times a year (currently 4) but are more flexible, due to the number of cross-boundary services and adjacent change dates, the need to manage the volume of changes at any one time reflecting the significant staff reductions made within SYPTE. However the principle of not being able to alter individual service routing or frequency more than once a year is retained.
- Fare reductions may not be as significant in Rotherham as in Sheffield. This is in part due to the geography of area and a consequence of the overall bus resource which has not been reduced. As a consequence no network operational savings can be unlocked and passed onto customers.
- Information and promotional materials are biased towards electronic availability above more costly paper based products.

8. Finance

Each partner in the voluntary agreement would absorb their own costs in terms officer time requirements. Bus operators would be responsible for investment costs in terms of fleet upgrading. The costs incurred in terms of highway infrastructure improvements would be met from the South Yorkshire Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and the Local Transport Plan Fund (LTP) future allocations.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Should the Council not enter in to the Voluntary Partnership Agreement then the potential for improvements to the bus offer in Rotherham may not be realised.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The scheme accords with the policies contained in the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2015, the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy and the Traffic Management Act 2004.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation has taken place with the Director of Financial Services and Director of Legal Services.

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Agenda Item 10

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	**9 April 2014**
3.	Title:	**Rotherham Local Plan: Response to Inspector's Main Modifications to the Core Strategy**
4.	Directorate:	**Environment & Development Services**

5. Summary

The report seeks approval of the Council's response to the Inspector's Main Modifications to the Core Strategy, as part of the Examination in Public (EIP) of Rotherham's Core Strategy.

6. Recommendations

1. **That Cabinet approve the Council's consultation response to the Inspector's Main Modifications to the Local Plan Core Strategy.**

7. Proposals and Details

Background

Rotherham's Local Plan consists of two main documents – the Core Strategy setting out the broad amount and distribution of future growth and the Sites & Policies document identifying the detailed sites and setting out development management policies to deliver this growth. The Local Plan will replace the existing Unitary Development Plan in guiding planning decisions and determining planning applications.

Preparation of the Core Strategy has taken place over a number of years. Consultation on previous drafts culminated in the Cabinet approving submission of the document for examination in 2013 (Cabinet minute C198; 24 April 2013).

On 6 June 2013 the Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination to determine whether the Core Strategy is "sound", ie legally compliant and fit for purpose. Following hearing sessions in October and November 2013 the Inspector's preliminary findings are that the plan as it stands is not sound but can be made so through a number of changes to the policies and supporting text (called "Main Modifications"). Members will recall the summary of these changes provided in the report to Cabinet of 5 February 2014.

The Inspector's Main Modifications have been published for consultation between 7 March and 17 April (as endorsed by Cabinet minute C182; 5 February 2014). This provides an opportunity for the Council, the general public and other interested parties to provide comments on the Main Modifications. The Inspector will take these into account in preparing his final report. Full details of the Main Modifications can be read in the consultation document on our website:

http://rotherham-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/cs/core_strategy_proposed_modifications/mm

The implications of the Main Modifications proposed by the Inspector are:

- **Housing numbers -** the Inspector proposes to increase the housing requirement for the Plan period (2013-2028) from 14,370 to 17,133. The Inspector accepts the Council's use of a local housing target set below the previous Regional Strategy figure. But he considers we should do more to make up the shortfall from under delivery in previous years (ie make up the 'backlog').

- **Phasing of development sites –** policies would be reworded to remove reference to the phasing of sites (ie which development sites should come forward first).

- **Commitment to Co-operation -** the Core Strategy would be modified to include a commitment to ongoing co-operation with relevant bodies and neighbouring authorities and to an early / immediate review of the Core Strategy if required by fresh evidence of higher housing need.

- **Bassingthorpe Farm -** Bassingthorpe Farm would be included in the Core Strategy as a Strategic Allocation, allowing it to come forward ahead of other sites in the Sites and Policies document.

Recognising local residents' concerns about loss of Green Belt, we will continue to argue for a housing target that is lower than the previous government-imposed regional target. We will also continue to argue for a phased approach to development to try and recycle brownfield land first before greenfield or Green Belt land. Our communities were very clear that they supported this approach and we feel strongly that this would allow us to choose the right sites at the right time in settlements across the borough.

The recently issued national planning policy guidance also emphasises the importance of reusing brownfield land. We feel that retaining a phasing policy will allow us to do this. We also consider that our approach is more in line with the Localism agenda by setting an appropriate local housing target rather than effectively having a target imposed by government via the planning inspectorate. Our local target will require some Green Belt release to meet housing need but we have tried to keep this release to the absolute minimum required to produce a sound plan. Recent government announcements on Green Belt would seem to support this approach.

With this in mind, the Council's proposed consultation response to the suggested Main Modifications:

- Challenges the way the housing backlog is calculated and accommodated and puts forward an alternative lower figure. Our own calculations to take account of the backlog would result in an overall target of 15,583. **This is 1,550 homes below the higher target proposed by the Inspector.**

- Proposes that **the backlog should be accommodated across the entire 15 years of the plan** rather than in the first 5 years as proposed by the Inspector. Delivery of the backlog within the first 5 years would require the release of many more sites for development, particularly within the Green Belt, with no realistic prospect of the backlog being addressed.

- Proposes that this revised housing target should be used within the plan and reflected in terms of housing distribution between settlements.

- Strongly supports retaining a policy wording which allows for the phasing of development sites (i.e. identifying which sites should come forward first) – **this would allow us to take account of the brownfield status of sites.**

- Proposes that the proposed provision of local facilities at Waverley should remain identified as a 'local centre' within the retail centre hierarchy.

Appendix 1 sets out the detailed response to each Main Modification which, subject to approval by Cabinet, will be submitted to the Inspector for his consideration. The table below summarises the proposed response to each Main Modification:

Ref.	Summary of Modification	Summary of Response
MM1	Introduction of a new policy setting out the action the Council will take to address issues around housing delivery. This includes a commitment to complete a Strategic Housing Market Assessment by December 2014 and an immediate review of the Core Strategy should this show the need to accommodate further housing within Rotherham. Also includes new monitoring indicators for policy.	Broadly support the Modification on the basis that any "early" review of the Core Strategy is predicated on the outcome of an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
MM1 appendix	An appendix to MM1 is also included, which is an alternative form of part of this new policy put forward by DLP consultants during the hearing sessions. The Inspector has asked that the two policies be consulted on together.	Object. The Policy is not compliant with national planning policy guidance. The Policy in MM1 is considered preferable to this alternative.
MM2	Rewords Policy CS1 to provide for the Bassingthorpe Farm strategic allocation and the distribution of the higher housing requirement around the borough. Makes Waverley a district centre in the hierarchy of retail centres.	Accept that sufficient work has been completed to support Bassingthorpe Farm as a strategic allocation and that work will continue to master plan future development on the site. Object to the proposed backlog figure. Object to Waverley as a District centre. Suggest lower housing figures and distribution based on alternative backlog calculation.
MM3	Rewording of Policy CS6 to increase housing requirement and remove phasing of development	Object to the backlog being dealt within the first 5 years of the Plan period, and how the figure has been derived. Support the option which distributes backlog over the entire Plan period. Suggest lower housing figures and distribution based on alternative backlog calculation.
MM4	Rewording of Policy CS3 to remove phasing of development	Object to the removal of phasing as this would not allow us to take into account the brownfield status of a site when considering its release.
MM5	Amendments to Policy CS30 regarding low carbon and renewable energy to reflect progressive strengthening of Building Regulations	Support Modification

Ref.	Summary of Modification	Summary of Response
MM6	New housing trajectory based on the higher housing target	Object to the backlog being dealt within the first 5 years of the Plan period, and how it has been derived. Support the option which distributes backlog over the entire Plan period
MM7	Rewording of Policy CS4 to indicate that land at Bassingthorpe Farm is taken out of the Green Belt	Support the wording of the Modification and note that further master planning work for the Bassingthorpe Farm site will allow continued community input into how the Strategic Allocation is developed.
MM8	New paragraphs within explanatory text regarding Bassingthorpe Farm	Support Modification
MM9	Rewording of Policy CS7 to indicate where commuted sums will be accepted in lieu of affordable housing provision on site, and greater clarity over viability considerations	Support Modification
MM10	Rewording of explanatory text to CS7, to reflect Main Modifications	Support Modification
MM11	Amendment to CS8 to clarify that options for new gypsy and traveller sites will be considered throughout the borough	Support Modification
MM12	Amendments to Map 5 to reflect new housing numbers etc	Object based on our response to MM3 and MM6. Suggest lower housing figures and distribution based on alternative backlog calculation
MM13	Amendment to retail hierarchy in CS12 to make Waverley a district centre	Object. Suggest that Waverley should remain as a local centre
MM14	Amendment to CS9 which indicates that relocation of inappropriately located employment uses will be supported	Support Modification
MM15	Amendment to CS23 encouraging the suitable reuse of historic buildings	Support Modification
MM16	Amendment to CS22 clarifying that gaps in green space provision will be secured through development where it is necessary to do so as a direct result of the new development	Support Modification
MM17	Amendments to Policy CS26 to ensure minerals policy reflects data from the most recent draft Local Aggregates Assessment	Support Modification
MM18	Amendment to CS14 to take account of national guidance on thresholds in relation to Transport Assessments	Support Modification

Ref.	Summary of Modification	Summary of Response
MM19	Amendments to Policy CS32 regarding monitoring and infrastructure, which makes specific reference to the role of the Infrastructure Delivery Group and Forum	Support Modification
MM20	Amendment to CS17 to safeguard provisional route of HS2 line	Support Modification

Next steps

The Council's response to the Main Modifications must be submitted to the Inspector by the consultation deadline of **5pm on 17 April 2014.** The Inspector will consider all duly made representations to the Main Modifications consultation and take them into account when writing his final report. The Inspector has also indicated that he intends to hold a further two days of hearing sessions on 15 & 16 May prior to finalising his report.

Following the hearing sessions the inspector will produce his final report. The expectation is that report would be able to recommend that the Core Strategy is sound subject to the inclusion of his final wording of Main Modifications.

The Council would then be in a position to proceed to adoption of the Core Strategy. Final adoption of the Core Strategy remains a decision to be taken by Members via Cabinet and full Council, having regard to the inspector's final report and officers' recommendations at that time.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

• The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) express a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development. Our UDP policies only continue to have any weight where they are in accordance with the NPPF. 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.

Inspectors' reports on other local plans are published regularly. If any reports of relevance to Rotherham's circumstances become available prior to the submission

deadline officers may make minor amendments to the consultation response, if it would help enhance our arguments. However, the main thrust of our response will not differ from this version.

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, encourage inward investment 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 town, district and local centres within the borough.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Proposed RMBC response to the Main Modifications consultation (Appendix 1)

Letter from the Inspector to the Council regarding his preliminary thoughts on the Core Strategy and its examination:

http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/corestrategyexamination/downloads/download/7/examination_documents

Main Modifications consultation documentation:

http://rotherham-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/cs/core_strategy_proposed_modifications/mm

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Appendix: Draft Consultation Response to the Inspector's Main Modifications

NB any references to appendices in the following text refer to published background documents that will accompany our consultation response. They are not reproduced here.

Main Modification Number: **MM1**
Support/Object: **Object**

With regard to part A of the proposed Policy, the Council supports the positive stance by the Inspector. We agree that any Core Strategy review should be triggered by the findings of a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). Should the SHMA indicate that further housing beyond that accommodated by the Core Strategy is required then the Council acknowledges that an early review of the Core Strategy will be necessary.

As indicated in ED/79, the Council believes that a commitment to produce an updated SHMA by December 2014 is realistic and achievable. Work is currently underway to finalise a brief and appoint consultants to undertake the study.

The Council supports part B of the proposed policy. An alternative form of policy wording was also produced during the hearing sessions and is included as MM1 Appendix. The Council will address this in more detail in its response to MM1 appendix, however as summarised in examination library document RMA/26, it is considered that the wording of this policy (MM1) provides the most appropriate, flexible and robust basis for monitoring housing delivery and triggering appropriate action as necessary.

For clarity, in drafting the Main Modifications the Council acknowledges that any SHMA should relate to the entire housing market area, which is referred to in part a(i). It is therefore considered that parts (i) and (ii) overlap and are repetitious. It is suggested that a slight amendment would remove the need for two criterion.

Change requested:
Amend the criteria in part B of the policy as follows:

(i) ~~produce an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Rotherham's housing market area, to be completed in December 2014; and~~
~~(ii)~~ use its best endeavours to co-operate with neighbouring local authorities, especially Sheffield City Council, to produce jointly ~~as a matter of urgency~~ a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the entire housing market area**, to be completed in December 2014;** and
~~(iii)~~ **(ii)** undertake an immediate review of the Core Strategy should the updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment demonstrate a need for additional housing provision to that provided for in Policy CS6

Main Modification Number: **MM1 Appendix**
Support/Object: **Object**

The Council objects to the proposed wording of the policy, which it does not consider is robust, flexible or in compliance with the Framework. The Council would direct the Inspector to the objections which have previously been set out in paragraphs 1 to 7 of examination library document RMA/26 and hence are not repeated here. In summary however, the Council is concerned that it:

- includes triggers and mitigations which do not take account of the current financial climate or provide a sufficient analytical basis for mitigating actions
- Duplicates policy already contained within the Core Strategy (such as CS33 presumption in favour of sustainable development, and CS7 housing mix and affordability)
- Is not compliant with paragraph 85 of the Framework regarding Safeguarded Land

The Council considers that the policy set out in MM1 provides a more appropriate, robust policy which is compliant with the Framework.

Change requested:

The Policy set out in MM1 Appendix should not be included in the Core Strategy. The Council supports the alternative policy and explanatory text in MM1 (as suggested for amendment in line with the Council's response to MM1).

Main Modification Number: **MM2**
Support/Object: **Object**

The Council broadly supports the wording of this modification, which clarifies how development will be distributed across the borough. In particular the Council accepts the identification of Bassingthorpe Farm as a strategic allocation.

However the Council has concerns regarding the overall housing requirement (in terms of backlog) as set out in our response to MM3. These are not repeated here; however in summary the Council considers that there is an inconsistency between accepting that the 2008 based projections are the most realistic basis for assessing need, and requiring backlog between 2004 and 2013 to be determined against the revoked Regional Strategy target. Given that 2008 is the base date for the projections supporting the housing target it is suggested that between 2004/5 and 2007/8 the backlog should be determined against the former Regional Strategy target but that between 2008/9 and 2012/13 the backlog is more appropriately determined against the new 850 per year housing target.

This gives a backlog total of 2,833 and would result in an overall housing target of 15,583. It is suggested that this revised target should be reflected in the Policy in terms of housing distribution between settlements. Revised figures are therefore provided:

	Housing	
	No.	%
Rotherham urban area (exc. Bassingthorpe Farm)	4,500	29
Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation	1,700	11
Rotherham urban area (including Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation)	6,200	40
Dinnington, Anston & Laughton Common (exc. Dinnington East)	600	4
Dinnington East	800	5
Wath-upon-Dearne, Brampton Bierlow & West Melton	1,400	9
Bramley, Wickersley & Ravenfield Common	900	6
Waverley	2,500	16
Maltby & Hellaby	780	5
Aston, Aughton & Swallownest	610	4
Swinton & Kilnhurst	610	4
Wales & Kiveton Park	450	3
Catcliffe, Treeton & Orgreave	150	1
Thorpe Hesley	150	1
Thurcroft	300	2
Smaller villages	150	1
	15,600	**101**

The Council does not support the identification of Waverley as a District Centre. More detailed response is provided to MM13, however in summary the Council does not consider that this is either justified or effective. The local centre uses which form part of the extant planning permission are split over several areas and therefore a single 'district centre' cannot be defined on the Policies Map. As such the ability to define primary and secondary shopping areas in line with NPPF is compromised. The location of these uses indicates that identifying two local centres is most appropriate.

Change requested:

The housing distribution (table in Policy CS1, part 1) should be amended as follows, to reflect an overall housing requirement based on calculating backlog set out in the response to MM3

	Housing	
	No.	%
Rotherham urban area (including Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation)	6,200	40
Dinnington, Anston & Laughton Common (exc. Dinnington East)	600	4
Dinnington East	800	5
Wath-upon-Dearne, Brampton Bierlow & West Melton	1,400	9
Bramley, Wickersley & Ravenfield Common	900	6
Waverley	2,500	16
Maltby & Hellaby	780	5
Aston, Aughton & Swallownest	610	4

Swinton & Kilnhurst	610	4
Wales & Kiveton Park	450	3
Catcliffe, Treeton & Orgreave	150	1
Thorpe Hesley	150	1
Thurcroft	300	2
Smaller villages	150	1
	15,600	**101**

The proposed housing figures above would result in Bassingthorpe Farm providing around 11% of the overall housing requirement. Therefore Part 2, first sentence of second paragraph of CS1 should reflect this.

The Council considers that the first sentence of part 4 of CS1, as set out in MM1, should be amended to read "Waverley is identified as a principal settlement ~~and District Centre~~."

Other consequential changes resulting from the change in housing target are set out in response to MM3 (overall housing requirement), MM5 (trajectory) and MM12 (Map 5 (Housing and Employment Land Distribution)

Main Modification Number: **MM3**
Support/Object: **Object**

The Council acknowledges the general principle of addressing the backlog of housing from the previous plan period, however it has three areas of objection: firstly, that the backlog should be calculated against the former Regional Strategy target from 2004 to 2008 and that from 2008 it should be calculated against the proposed new annual housing target; secondly, that any housing backlog should be accommodated over the Plan period; and thirdly, that phasing of sites is appropriate, is not contrary to the Framework, and can help ensure the planned delivery of development and infrastructure.

Calculation of housing backlog
In his preliminary findings the Inspector accepted the annual housing requirement of 850 homes per year noting that he had "come to the view… that the 2008-based household projections provide the most realistic basis for the housing target" (ED/75; paragraph 3). The Council considers that there is an inconsistency between accepting that the 2008 based projections are the most realistic basis for assessing need, and requiring backlog between 2004 and 2013 to be determined against the revoked Regional Strategy target.

Given the apparent acceptance that 2008 based projections are appropriate for determining objectively obsessed needs, it is considered to logically follow that any backlog from 2008 (the base date of projections) should also be against the locally determined target. The Council therefore contends that the overall requirement should be comprised of:
- The annual requirement over the plan period (12,750); plus
- Backlog in delivery against the RS target from 2004/5 to 2007/8 and against the new annual target of 850, from 2008/9 to 2012/13

	Backlog determined against RS target				Backlog determined against 2008 based target					
	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Totals
Target	750	750	750	750	850	850	850	850	850	**7250**
Net Additions	496	306	457	525	606	339	485	688	515	**4417**
Difference	-254	-444	-293	-225	-244	-511	-365	-162	-335	-2833

This results in an overall requirement of 15,583 (12,750 plus backlog of 2,833).

Accommodating housing backlog
MM3 incorporates the view expressed in the Inspector's preliminary findings that any backlog should aim to be accommodated within the first 5 years of the plan period. This approach is reflected in the trajectory and accompanying tables in MM6. The Council is concerned that that the implications of this approach are fully understood. Its view is that accommodating the backlog within the first five years is not an approach supported by the evidence base. As such the Council welcomes and supports the alternative wording included in MM3 which would allow the identified backlog to be distributed throughout the plan period.

The Council has previously provided evidence on this issue in RMA/16, paragraphs 7 to 13.

The total backlog proposed amounts to 4,383 homes and, when added to the proposed Core Strategy requirement of 12,750, gives a total requirement of 17,133. However, adding the backlog, plus a 20% buffer to the five year requirement, results in a figure of 10,360 or 2,072 per annum.

This presents two difficulties; firstly, this is a wholly unrealistic and undeliverable figure and secondly, the number of sites that would need to be allocated to bolster the five year supply, would be well in excess of the number of sites needed to meet the increase in the overall supply.

The five year supply figure of 10,360 represents 60% of the overall requirement figure, leaving 677 per annum as the annual requirement for the plan period. This is not realistic, particularly given the current state of the housing market.

For the five year supply to be bolstered sufficiently to show 10,360 of deliverable sites, even were the market able to deliver, a large number of sites would need to be

allocated. This is because, for each new site that is allocated, only a proportion of its potential capacity can be counted in the five year supply. This is due to the lead in times between allocation and delivery potentially starting, and the likely annual build out rates of each site. In practice this means that newly allocated sites will not be able to count as contributing until the third or fourth year of the plan period. e.g. a site of 400 dwellings capacity may contribute only around 70 dwellings to the five year supply.

While it is accepted that it is generally desirable to address any backlog in the first five years, in this case it is not possible nor desirable due to the size of that backlog compared to that of the overall requirement.

Looking at the sites in the SHLAA (LEB/13), to identify those which could deliver housing early enough to contribute to the five year supply, there are 42 Green Belt sites identified that fall into this category. These sites are those which have nothing constraining their development other than they are currently allocated as Green Belt. These sites have not yet been proposed as potential allocations and they have not, therefore, been factored in to the amended 5 year supply shown in table 17 of Rotherham Core Strategy: Housing and Economic Growth Background Paper (KSD/7). These sites therefore represent the capacity for new potential allocations which could provide delivery in the first five years of the plan period.

Together the 42 sites could potentially deliver 6,831 dwellings over the plan period, 1,731 of which could potentially be delivered within the first five years. The analysis is carried out in accordance with lead-in teams and delivery rates agreed in SHLAA.

If the backlog were addressed over the whole plan period the overall requirement would be increased by 2783 above that in the Publication Core Strategy, and the 5 year requirement for deliverable sites would be increased by **857**. The above suite of 42 sites would present several options to deliver the five year requirement and the overall requirement without requiring the allocation of additional sites.

However if the backlog were addressed over the first five years of the plan period the 5 year requirement for deliverable sites would be increased by **4362**; 2.5 times that which the SHLAA shows is available. This suggests an additional 100 sites are necessary (58 more sites than the 42 sites identified above). While it is accepted that exceeding the overall requirement is not necessarily harmful, we contend that, in this case, the amount would be unrealistic, unreasonable and undesirable in terms of its consequences for the Green Belt and infrastructure provision.

The 42 sites identified above average 163 units, a mixture of large and small sites. If the additional 58 new sites required were of a similar average size e.g. 150 units, an additional 8700 units would need to be allocated, over and above the requirement plus backlog target, to give a chance of delivering the five year supply requirements if all of the backlog is dealt with in first 5 years.

The table below shows the implications of these approaches; to meet the requirement within the first five years would require sites to be allocated which would deliver over 25,800 homes.

	Annual requirement	Housing backlog	Additional homes required to meet 5 year supply	Estimate of total homes to allocate
Meeting backlog over the plan period	12,750	4,383	none	17,133
Meeting backlog within first 5 years	12,750	4,383	8,700	25,833

The above is an estimate; however it indicates that allocating the number of sites that would be required to sufficiently bolster the five year supply would result in an overall supply of land far in excess of the overall requirement.

If the smaller backlog of 2,833 were applied (based on our suggested calculation of backlog against the former Regional Strategy target and the 850 year local target), the problem still exists as the 5 year requirement would still be 9,634.

The implications of dealing with the housing backlog are highlighted in the Main Modifications Integrated Impact Assessment. This identifies the potential for numerous individual and cumulative negative impacts arising from delivery of the backlog over the first 5 years of the Plan period (table 4-1). It also clearly highlights concern around whether these can be mitigated, noting that there is uncertainty how mitigating policies could be implemented in a way which fully addresses the proposed change. Particular concern is raised around the impact in terms of delivery of infrastructure. Pages 25 and 26 of the IIA examine these in greater detail.

Conversely the IIA notes that accommodating the housing backlog over the Plan period would allow mitigation to provide a proportionate response to any negative effects arising from an increase in the housing requirement.

The IIA recommends either the retention of the phasing policy which would enable development to be delivered in a planned manner to reduce impacts, or that any backlog is distributed over the Plan period. It also recommends refreshing the infrastructure delivery study.

The Council therefore considers that a plan which seeks to meet the housing backlog within the first five years would not be sound as there would be no robust evidence supporting it. There is no evidence that releasing the quantum of land required (which would require substantial Green Belt release) would be effective.

In this respect the Council would refer to the Inspector's report on Ryedale's Local Plan (ED/45). At paragraph 47 he indicates:
"The specific recognition of the need to provide a 20% buffer …addresses previous underperformance against the former YHRSS targets. Neither the NPPF, nor the former YHRSS specifically requires overall provision within the plan period to be

increased to compensate for past under performance, and with the revocation of the YHRSS, it could be argued that the need to make specific provision for this shortfall is no longer necessary. Adding this backlog to the 20% NPPF buffer might increase the choice of housing sites, but it would increase the housing requirement in the short term to unrealistic and probably undeliverable levels, resulting in increased in-migration…"

Other inspector's have noted that there is no prescription as to how any backlog should be dealt with. The Inspector examining South Gloucestershire's Local Plan (appendix 1; paragraphs 95 to 98) supported averaging backlog over the plan period given that there was no certainty that the market could deliver the higher levels that meeting backlog in the first five years would require. This was also the approach adopted by the Inspector examining the West Lancashire Local Plan (appendix 2; paragraphs 60 to 63).

Phasing of sites
Whilst the Main Modifications IIA recommends retention of the phasing policy should housing backlog be required to be accommodated within the first 5 years of the Plan period (to ensure delivery in a planned way and reduce the impact on existing infrastructure), the Council also supports its retention however backlog is addressed. A more detailed response to the issue of phasing is provided in response to MM4, and so not re-iterated here, demonstrating that phasing policies are not contrary to the Framework.

Summary
The Council considers that delivering the housing backlog over the first 5 years of the Plan period would have significant negative impacts (as evidenced by the Integrated Impact Assessment). The scale of land release which would be required through the Sites and Policies document to achieve this would effectively nullify much of the Local Plan strategy and supporting policies and risk unnecessary Green Belt release.

The land release required would also have infrastructure implications, as the IIA highlights. The IIA rightly indicates the need for the Infrastructure Delivery Study to be refreshed to assess the implications of the higher dwelling requirement. However until this is undertaken it is considered that there is no evidence that the infrastructure requirements of the scale of land release required by meeting the backlog within the first five years of the Plan period can be met. The most appropriate approach would be to ensure that any backlog is averaged out over the plan period as a whole.

The Council therefore considers that the appropriate approach to adopt, as supported by the findings of the IIA, would be to accommodate the housing backlog over the Plan period.

Change requested:

The last sentence of the first paragraph of CS6 should be amended as follows:

The Council will ~~aim to accommodate the backlog within the first five years of the Plan period (or evenly distributed throughout the plan period)~~ **accommodate the backlog evenly distributed throughout the plan period.**

Reinstate criteria c(ii) as a new criteria c as follows:
c. Phasing for the release of sites not within the broad location for growth will be set out in the Sites and Policies document , having regard to the principles set out in Policy CS3 Location of New Development.

Consequently criteria c. as shown in MM3 should revert back to its original numbering (d.)

Main Modification Number: **MM4**
Support/Object: **Object**

The Council broadly supports the wording of this modification, which was suggested by the inspector during the hearing sessions. However the Council continues to consider the inclusion of phasing policies appropriate and in line with the Framework.

The Main Modifications IIA recommends retention of the phasing policy should housing backlog be required to be accommodated within the first 5 years of the Plan period (to ensure delivery in a planned way and reduce the impact on existing infrastructure). The Council also supports its retention however backlog is addressed.

The Inspector examining the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan (appendix 1) faced a similar situation with Policy which sought to phase the release of Greenfield sites. He noted that "…introducing the often easier-to-develop greenfield sites at an early stage risks undermining the "urban areas first" strategy which lies at the heart of the [plan]." (paragraph 71). Consequently the Inspector found that an approach which allows greenfield sites only when necessary to maintain a five year supply is sound.

The Inspector examining Chorley's Local Plan also found that with modifications its "Phasing of Housing Development" policy, in its Sites and Policies document, could be made sound (appendix 2; paragraphs 57 to 62).

Whilst the detail and circumstance of these Plans are likely to differ to Rotherham, they demonstrate that other Inspector's have found the principle of phasing development acceptable and not contrary to the Framework. Furthermore the Government's recently published Planning Practice Guidance notes that Local Plan policies should reflect the desirability of re-using brownfield land (Viability; paragraph 25).

Rotherham's Core Strategy policies provide for this concept, with the detail of any phasing policy to be developed through the Sites and Policies document (which would be examined by the Inspector appointed to examine that document).

The Council therefore remain of the view that the phasing of sites is an approach which complies with the Framework and modifications which removed the ability to

take this forward, if necessary, through the Sites and Policies document should be re-instated.

Change requested:
Amend the first line of CS3 as set out in MM4 as follows:
"In allocating a site for development **and for the purposes of phasing in the Sites and Policies document,** the Council will have regard to relevant sustainability criteria, including its:…."

Main Modification Number: **MM5**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification in relation to Low Carbon and Renewable Energy as drafted, and welcomes the clarity that it provides. Justification for the Modification was provided by the Council in its response to Matter 1 (Q1.19 and appendix 1), and during the hearing sessions for Matter 1 itself.

Main Modification Number: **MM6**
Support/Object: **Object**

MM6 sets out two trajectories and supporting text based on the two options set out in MM3 for accommodating the housing backlog. The Council's response in set out in response to MM3, and hence not repeated in detail here, the Council acknowledges the general principle of addressing the backlog of housing from the previous plan period, however it considers that the backlog should be calculated against the former Regional Strategy target from 2004 to 2008 and that from 2008 it should be calculated against the proposed new annual housing target. It also contends that any housing backlog should be accommodated over the Plan period.

As such the Council objects to the trajectory and supporting text based on meeting the housing backlog in the first 5 years. Of the two options presented, the Council supports the inclusion of the alternative trajectory and supporting text based on meeting the housing backlog over the Plan period.

However as our response to MM3 sets out, the Council has concerns regarding the calculation of the housing backlog. Given the apparent acceptance that 2008 based projections are appropriate for determining objectively obsessed needs, it is considered to logically follow that any backlog from 2008 (the base date of projections) should also be against the locally determined target. The Council therefore contends that the overall requirement should be comprised of:
- The annual requirement over the plan period (12,750); plus
- Backlog in delivery against the RS target from 2004/5 to 2007/8 and against the new annual target of 850, from 2008/9 to 2012/13
This results in an overall requirement of 15,583 (12,750 plus backlog of 2,833).

As such the Council suggests that the housing trajectory and accompanying explanatory text should reflect these figures. Amendments reflecting this are proposed below.

Change requested:

The Core Strategy should include the alternative trajectory and supporting text based on meeting the backlog over the Plan period set out below:
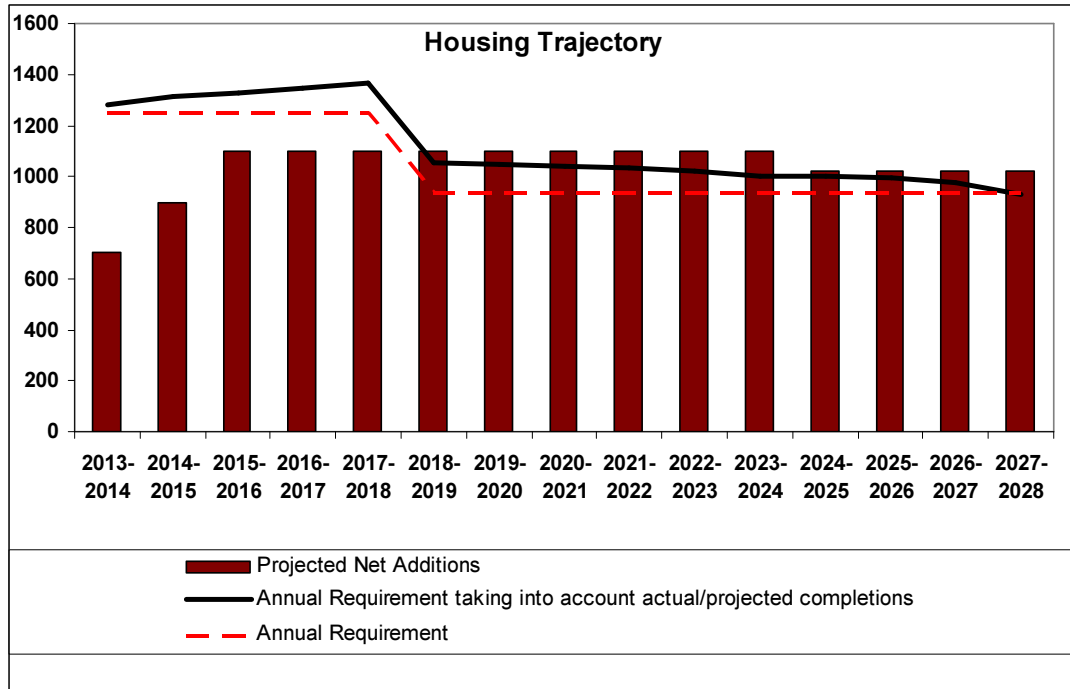
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
Projected Net Additions	700	900	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1022	1022	1022	1022
Annual Requirement	1247	1247	1247	1247	1247	935	935	935	935	935	935	935	935	935	935
Annual Requirement taking into account actual/projected completions	1283	1311	1327	1346	1368	1052	1047	1040	1031	1020	1004	1000	992	977	932

Table xx: Summary of Housing Requirement

Backlog against RSS 2004/5 to 2013/14	4383
Core Strategy Requirement 2014/15 to 2028/29	12750
Total Requirement	17133

5y Req + Backlog +20%	6855
Annual Requirement in first 5y	1371
Requirement Final 10 years	10280
Annual Requirement in final 10y	1028

Table xx: Housing Completions 2004 to 2013

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Totals
Target	750	750	750	750	850	850	850	850	850	**7250**
Net Additions	496	306	457	525	606	339	485	688	515	**4417**
Difference	-254	-444	-293	-225	-244	-511	-365	-162	-335	-2833

Note:
2004/5 to 2007/8 – shortfall determined against former Regional Strategy housing target
2009/9 to 2012/13 – shortfall determined against Core Strategy annual requirement

5.3.xx The housing trajectory below illustrates expected housing delivery over the Plan period taking account of past rates of housing completions and conversions. It shows:

• ~~Past dwelling completion rates from 2008;~~

• Projected completion rates ~~until~~ **from** 2013 to 2028, based on contributions of the various components of housing supply. This includes existing allocated sites, existing commitments as well the assumption that future allocations in the Local Plan will be managed to meet future requirements;

• The annual housing requirement, **taking into account the backlog distributed evenly throughout the Plan period (see Table XX: Summary of Housing Requirement)** and

• The average annual target at any given year, taking into account previous completion rates **(known or assumed, as appropriate)** . This figure is calculated by taking the total number of dwellings in the remaining requirement, divided by the number of years remaining.

Past completion rates and the resultant backlog are shown in Table XX 'Housing Completions 2004 to 2013'. The trajectory reflects analysis of the various components that will make up future housing supply and the delivery timescales, using evidence provided by the Joint Sheffield / Rotherham Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

Main Modification Number: **MM7**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council's Strategic Green Belt Review (LEB/16) assessed the relative contribution to Green Belt purposes of land within the Core Strategy's 'broad locations for growth' (including the area now proposed as a strategic allocation). On this basis the Council supports the wording of this modification, which clarifies that the evidence provided justifies Bassingthorpe Farm as a strategic allocation.

Preparation of the Bassingthorpe Farm Concept Framework Report (KSD/6) has also been informed by a more detailed Green Belt Assessment undertaken on behalf of the land owners which demonstrates that the site can be taken out of the Green Belt, and that other amendments to the Green Belt will be made through the Sites and Policies document.

It is noted that further work will be required on the masterplan for the Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation. This will present further opportunity for community consultation and input into how the area will be developed.

Main Modification Number: **MM8**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

It is noted that further work will be required on the masterplan for the Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation. This will present further opportunity for community consultation and input into how the area will be developed.

Main Modification Number: **MM9**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM10**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM11**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM12**
Support/Object: **Object**

The Council broadly supports this Modification which illustrates the housing and employment distribution as set out in MM1; however in line with its response to MM2 and MM33 the Council has concerns regarding the overall housing requirement (in terms of backlog). These are not repeated here; however in summary the Council considers that there is an inconsistency between accepting that the 2008 based projections are the most realistic basis for assessing need, and requiring backlog between 2004 and 2013 to be determined against the revoked Regional Strategy target. Given that 2008 is the base date for the projections supporting the housing target it is suggested that between 2004/5 and 2007/8 the backlog should be determined against the former Regional Strategy target but that between 2008/9 and 2012/13 the backlog is more appropriately determined against the new 850 per year housing target.

This gives a backlog total of 2,833 and would result in an overall housing target of 15,583. It is suggested that this revised target should be reflected in the Policy in terms of housing distribution between settlements. Revised figures are therefore provided.

Change requested:

Map 5 should be amended to reflect the housing requirement and distribution set out below:

	Housing	
	No.	%
Rotherham urban area excluding Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation)	4,500	29
Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation	1,700	11
Rotherham urban area (including Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation)	6,200	40
Dinnington, Anston & Laughton Common (exc. Dinnington East)	600	4
Dinnington East	800	5
Wath-upon-Dearne, Brampton Bierlow & West Melton	1,400	9
Bramley, Wickersley & Ravenfield Common	900	6
Waverley	2,500	16
Maltby & Hellaby	780	5
Aston, Aughton & Swallownest	610	4
Swinton & Kilnhurst	610	4
Wales & Kiveton Park	450	3
Catcliffe, Treeton & Orgreave	150	1
Thorpe Hesley	150	1
Thurcroft	300	2
Smaller villages	150	1
Total	**15,600**	**101**

Main Modification Number: **MM13**
Support/Object: **Object**

The Council does not support the identification of Waverley as a District Centre. This is neither justified or effective. The local centre uses which form part of the extant planning permission are split over several areas and therefore a single 'district centre' cannot be defined on the Policies Map. As such the ability to define primary and secondary shopping areas in line with paragraph 23 of the Framework is compromised.

The retail hierarchy set out in Policy CS12 is supported by a robust evidence, primarily comprising the 2011 borough wide retail and leisure study (LEB/18). This identified a hierarchy of town and district centres. With regard to the planned development at Waverley the study states:

> "9.98 In relation to the proposed new Waverley community at Catcliffe, which we understand may comprise up to 4,000 residential units, we recommend that it is serviced by a new local centre that should contain an appropriate range of smaller retail stores and services (see Appendix 5L). It will be important that the overall size of the new centre in retail terms is broadly commensurate with the new population of the area and that retail provision is added in line with the completion of the new housing."

Planning permission has been granted at Waverley, in outline, for up to 5,400 sqm of floorspace within use classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 (appendix 1: condition number 7 in the decision notice).

A further 500 square metres of retail floorspace has outline planning permission as part of the adjacent site (Helical Governetz) which is intended to accommodate Government department relocations. As such the first occupation of office space is limited to users wholly engaged in the provision of regional authority and government services and/or national government services (including outsourced support services provided by private sector business support organisations and/or consultants (appendix 2: see condition 3 of the decision notice). Condition 12 (appendix 2) also restricts the opening of the retail and leisure development to trade until the first 12,000 square metres of B1(a) office floorspace is occupied.

This proposal envisaged accommodating Government department relocations, however development has not come forward and other uses have been granted on part of the site, including a new training centre. Whilst it is a 10 year outline permission there is no evidence that the Government departmental relocation is expected to take place. In any case the area which may be subject to retail development is separate from the other sites intended for local centre uses at Waverley. As such it is not considered that it could form part of a district centre at Waverley.

With regard to the new community at Waverley, the decision notice (appendix 1) provides a reason for planning condition 7 (discussed above), which indicates that the Council considers this sufficient to achieve the objectives of policy RET6 'Local Shopping Provision' of the adopted Rotherham UDP (LEB/28). Furthermore condition number 9 stipulates that a minimum of 1,300 sqm and a maximum of 1,900 sqm of gross retail floorspace (Class A1) shall be provided within the development. The reason provided for this condition is
"In order to ensure the retail floorspace is of the type and scale for which a need has been identified and which is appropriate to the scale of the <u>neighbourhood centre</u>, in accordance with Policy RET6 'Local Planning Provision' of the Adopted Rotherham UDP and with Paragraph 26 of the NPPF." (Our underlining).

It is clear from the above that planning permission has been granted to ensure floorspace provision of a local centre scale to serve the needs of the new community. Permission for a district centre was neither sought nor granted.

Barton Wilmore have previously argued that the totality of retail provision at Waverley warrants its inclusion as a district centre. However this argument ignores the fact that uses are not concentrated in one location; the proposed development at Waverley does not form one single centre. The attached extract from the latest approved masterplan (appendix 3) shows the mixed use areas (shown pink) in which the local centre uses will be located. It is clearly evident from this that the proposed local centre uses are set out in two primary locations. Furthermore should any retail floorspace come forward as part of the Helical Governetz scheme, then this again would be separate from the provision at the new community.

As such the retail provision should more appropriately be considered as two local centres. This is reflective of the fact that within other settlements retail and other community services and facilities are spread over a number of centres and locations. Taken in totality the uses at Waverley may be of a similar scale to higher order centres; however adopting this approach the totality of retail floorspace at local and other centres within other settlements could be of a scale to classify as a higher centre. The reality is that such uses are provided in separate locations and therefore it is illogical to conclude that a higher order centre is created.

The classification of Waverley as a district centre is neither supported by the extant planning permission, nor the 2011 Retail and Leisure Study. A district centre is neither deliverable nor effective, and the Council considers that a district centre identification is not supported by robust evidence base.

Change requested:
Main Modification 13 should be deleted. The hierarchy of centres should remain as set out in Policy CS12 of the Publication Core Strategy.

Main Modification Number: **MM14**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM15**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM16**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM17**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity that it provides. Justification for the Modification was provided by the Council in its response to Matter 7 (Q7.4), during the hearing sessions for Matter 7 itself, and in examination library document ED/63.

Main Modification Number: **MM18**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM19**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides.

Main Modification Number: **MM20**
Support/Object: **Support**

The Council supports the Modification as drafted, and welcomes the clarity it provides. It also notes the Integrated Impact Assessment findings that many risks and benefits cannot be identified until the HS2 route has been finalised, however that mitigation can provide a proportionate response to increased risks from any negative effects.

Agenda Item 11

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS		

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	9 April 2014
3.	Title:	Proposed Revisions to the Local Plan Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

Consideration of proposed revisions to the Local Plan Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference.

6. Recommendation

1. **That Cabinet recommends to full Council adoption of the revised Local Plan Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference.**

7.   Proposals and Details

Background

The remit of the Steering Group was last revised in March 2010 (LDF Steering Group 23/4/10, Cabinet 28/4/10 and Council 21/5/10). Public consultation on the Local Plan and the involvement of members in the process was the subject of a spotlight review by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in early 2012. The results of the review were reported to Cabinet 17/7/12.

The Local Plan Steering Group considered the proposed revisions to the group's Constitution and Terms of Reference at their meeting of 14/2/14 and, after consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, endorsed the changes at their meeting of 14/3/14.

It is generally accepted that the existence of a steering group, together with effective corporate support and adequate resources, is an essential pre-requisite of successful Local Plan delivery. Many other local planning authorities have similar informal officer/member steering groups to guide Local Plan preparation.

The Steering Group's role

The Steering Group, comprising senior politicians supported by corporate advisors, is intended to:

- Enable early political and corporate understanding and buy in to the preparation and review of the Local Plan

- Encourage informal discussion to guide ongoing technical work and formulate options, often on potentially controversial subjects (ie housing development sites)

- Facilitate improved efficiency in corporate and key stakeholder contributions to Local Plan preparation and consultations (ie the Rotherham Partnership)

- Help mitigate identified risks associated with delivering the Local Plan to quality, budget and timescale requirements

- Advise on reporting arrangements for key issues to be addressed within the Council's publicly accountable formal decision making process

Why revise the remit of the Steering Group?

It is important that the Constitution and Terms of Reference remain fit for purpose. This is especially timely with another round of public consultation on the Sites & Policies document programmed for summer 2014. It is vital that all ward members have the opportunity to engage in the process prior to public consultation and are fully briefed on potential development sites in their area.

Updating of the wording of the Constitution and Terms of Reference is also required due to recent planning reform and revised regulations governing the preparation, consultation, examination and adoption of Local Plan documents.

Balancing efficiency with democratic accountability

The principal function of the Steering Group is to promote the timely and efficient preparation of the Local Plan. Informal discussion and debate within the Steering Group is intended to prepare the ground for key decisions to be made within the normal publically accountable reporting structures of the Council. <u>The operation of the Steering Group is not intended to replace this process.</u>

Public engagement in Local Plan preparation will continue to be via the methods and media set down in the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and bespoke consultation plans approved under this framework. A revised SCI is being drafted in light of revised government regulations for consideration by members in due course. Draft development plan documents will continue to be subject to public consultation and scrutiny before progressing to examination by a Government-appointed, independent planning inspector.

The Constitution and Terms of Reference have been revised to:

• give greater scope for ward members and parish council chairs to attend special meetings on issues of local importance, ie briefing on potential development sites in local areas

• update and future proof the document by referring in general terms to relevant officers and services input rather than listing named services, to reflect changes to Council structures

• refer to correct job titles for officers in the Council's scheme of delegation

• allow greater scope for all member briefing sessions and scrutiny overview of the Local Plan process

• reflect the revocation of regional strategies and other legislative changes

• reconfirm that Cabinet and full Council must approve a development plan document before it is published and submitted to government

The revised Local Plan Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference are set out in Appendix 1.

8.   Finance

There are no direct financial implications from this report although continuing to ensure the timely and efficient preparation of the Local Plan will accrue efficiency savings and improved receipts under Government grant incentives.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Complex reporting arrangements could cause further delays in Local Plan preparation. The proposed revisions will permit efficient internal reporting whilst still guaranteeing decision making at the appropriate Council level.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Updating of the remit of the Steering Group will assist performance in meeting milestones in the Local Development Scheme and targets in the Corporate and Service Plan.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The content and recommendations of this report have been discussed with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

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APPENDIX 1: Revised Local Plan Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference

<u>CONSTITUTION</u>

The purpose of the Steering Group is to provide a forum for corporate discussion and political guidance on all aspects of the Local Plan and to oversee the statutory process of preparing Local Plan documents.

This requires:

☐ The Steering Group to have some decision making over routine Local Plan matters (excluding matters of policy) as set out in the Terms of Reference below.

☐ The Chair of the Local Plan Steering Group, in consultation with the Director of Planning, Regeneration & Culture, to prompt the attendance of appropriate Cabinet Members as required by agenda content. Appropriate ward members and parish council chairs to be invited to attend matters of specific local interest.

☐ Appropriate items to be referred to Strategic Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Rotherham Partnership. Steering Group minutes to be included on Cabinet agenda.

☐ Major issues to be dealt with in an open seminar or briefing sessions for all Council Members or reported to the appropriate scrutiny committee as required.

☐ The Rotherham Partnership Manager to receive Steering Group agendas and minutes with attendance prompted as appropriate. Other stakeholders to be invited to attend appropriate meetings as required.

☐ Relevant Council officers and departments to receive agendas and minutes and to attend meetings as appropriate. The Chair of the Local Plan Steering Group, in consultation with the Director of Planning, Regeneration & Culture, to determine circulation lists and periodically review attendance.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Matters referred to Council

- Adoption of all Development Plan Documents (including Policies Map)

- Adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement

- Resolution for the Local Development Scheme to come into effect

- Approval of all Development Plan Documents (including Policies Map) prior to publication and submission to the Secretary of State

- Withdrawal of Development Plan Documents

Matters referred to Cabinet

- Approval of draft Development Plan Documents (including Policies Map) prior to public consultation

- Approval of major revisions to the Local Development Scheme (that have significant corporate priority and resource implications)

- Endorsement of the Council's consultation response on regional or sub-regional spatial planning policy

Routine matters for consideration by the Local Plan Steering Group

- Draft Development Plan Documents (including Policies Map)

- Sustainability Appraisal of Draft Development Plan Documents

- Draft Supplementary Planning Documents

- Annual Monitoring Reports

- Consultation Plans

- Employment and housing land forecasts and requirements

- Evidence base studies and findings

- Settlement capacity findings and potential site allocations

- Draft Masterplans

- Regional and sub-regional planning issues and interaction with the Local Plan

- Minor amendments to, and updating of, the Local Development Scheme

- Planning Inspectorate Service Level Agreement and Examination arrangements

Appropriate reporting and approval arrangements for these matters (and any others not anticipated above) will be agreed by the Chair of the Local Plan Steering Group in consultation with the Director of Planning, Regeneration & Culture and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	9th April 2014
3.	Title:	Outcomes from Youth Cabinet review on improving access for young people seeking help and support around self-harm
4.	Directorate:	Resources All wards

5. **Summary**

This report outlines the process, findings and recommendations on the work undertaken by the Youth Cabinet to improve access for young people seeking help and support around self-harm (attached as Appendix 1). The recommendations from the review were endorsed by OSMB at its Children's Commissioner Day meeting of February 27, 2014 and agreed to forward these to Cabinet for its consideration. Cabinet is asked to receive the report and recommendations.

6. **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

a. receives the report and recommendations (attached as Appendix 1);

b. reports back its decision on the recommendations to OSMB within two months of this meeting;

c. agrees to meet with OSMB and members of Youth Cabinet six months after this point to discuss progress.

7.   **Proposals and details**

7.1   The Council has an impressive track record of involving children and young people through its 'Voice and Influence' work and is committed to extending this across all service areas. In line with this, OSMB (and the former PSOC) has supported "Children's Commissioner's Day" since its inception in November 2007. The idea behind the day is to give "children and young people the chance to be involved in decision-making... while adults and organisations gain a fresh perspective on what they do" (Children's Commissioner for England, 2013).

7.2   For this year's Children's Commissioner's Day, the Youth Cabinet identified that they wanted to explore the issue of self-harm. This theme is one of its current Manifesto Aims: "To help develop information for young people around self harm and a strategy to disseminate this. Also to work with services to improve access for young people seeking help and support around self harm" (Youth Cabinet, 2013).

The process undertaken by the Youth Cabinet replicated a scrutiny review. The Youth Cabinet collected case studies from young people to identify issues around accessing information and support services relating to self-harm. The work was supported by relevant professionals from Public Health and mental health services. These case studies formed the basis of questioning for providers and commissioners.

The process was supported by three Scrutiny Members, with young people leading on discussions and questioning. There were two evidence gathering sessions, with the Youth Cabinet undertaking its own planning and preparation outside of the meetings. Assistance with report writing and forming recommendations was provided by Scrutiny Services.

Their findings were presented to Elected Members at a special OSMB meeting to celebrate Children's Commissioner's Day on February 27, 2014. The review established that whilst there are several pockets of good practice in Rotherham, there is not a consistent approach to referrals, advice or information sharing across all agencies.

Since the presentation to OSMB, the Youth Cabinet have been invited to present the outcomes and recommendations from this review to a borough wide conference on suicide prevention on April 3, 2014.

The recommendations from the review are as follows:

1) That a consistent, concise and simple message is developed and disseminated for use by ALL organisations (including schools, health and social care, youth services, vol-comm sector);

2) That agencies work together to develop clear, consistent referral routes that are shared with ALL relevant organisations;

3) In line with recommendations 1) and 2), ensure that resources/training/support are available for schools, colleges, parents, young people etc.;

4) That young people are involved in developing user-friendly information/media messages (including new technology/social media);

5) That young people are involved in service design e.g. commissioning of school nurses;

6) That advice to young people on self-harm is available through drop-ins, one-to-one sessions as well as web-based materials;

7) That consideration is given to ways in which the service can 'fit' around the young person and that appropriate 'out-of-hours' advice/support is available;

8) That the provision of information on self-harm to all schools and colleges is improved and standardised;

9) That schools and colleges are encouraged to establish a forum to share best practice around support and advice (for example work around peer support and strategies to address stress and exam pressure);

10) Examine ways in which student access to school nurses can be improved.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, recommendations arising from this meeting may have financial implications if adopted. This would require further exploration by the Strategic Leadership Team and partners on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Council has many positive examples of extending the voice and influence of young people in its structures. In order to continue this success, it is important that consideration is given to the recommendations and the response is fedback to the young people in a timely manner.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Children and Young People's Plan gives a commitment to extending the voice and influence of children and young people, to ensure that it is used positively to change the design and delivery of services that affect their lives.

The outcomes from this meeting link to the following Corporate Plan priorities:
Priority 2: Protecting our most vulnerable people and families, enabling them to maximise their independence
Priority 4: Helping people to improve their health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities within the borough

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Rotherham Youth Cabinet - Scrutiny review: improving access for young people seeking help and support around self-harm (2014)

12. Contact

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tel: 01709 822765

Scrutiny review:
improving access for young people seeking help and support around self-harm

Rotherham Youth Cabinet (Spring 2014)

For further details, please contact

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CONTENTS

1 ORIGINAL CONCERNS – WHY THE YOUTH CABINET WANTED TO LOOK AT THIS ISSUE

The charity YoungMinds report that an estimated one in twelve young people may self-harm at some point in their lives (YoungMinds, 2014). The incidence of self-harm has continued to rise in the UK over the past 20 years and, for young people, is said to be among the highest in Europe (Royal College of Physicians, 2010). ChildLine has seen a 167% increase in counselling sessions about self-harm in the last two years alone (NSPCC, 2014).

Aware that this is a problem facing young people in Rotherham, the Youth Cabinet agreed as part of its Youth Cabinet Manifesto (2013-14):

"to help develop information for young people around self-harm and [contribute to] *a strategy to disseminate this. Also to work with services to improve access for young people seeking help and support around self-harm"* (Rotherham Youth Cabinet, 2013).

This piece of work was undertaken as part of RMBC's commitment to the Children's Commissioner's Day. The idea behind the day is to give:

"…children and young people the chance to be involved in decision-making. Children and young people benefit from the opportunity to…make their voices heard, while adults and organisations gain a fresh perspective on what they do" (Children's Commissioner for England, 2013).

The Youth Cabinet was supported in its work by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), namely Cllrs Currie, Falvey and Steele.

The Voice and Influence Team (Integrated Youth Support Service) facilitated this project, with support from an officer in Scrutiny Services.

2 FOCUS OF THE REVIEW

Because of the strength of feeling about this issue and knowing that it is a growing problem within Rotherham, the Youth Cabinet formed a sub-group to:

- find out what is out there to help young people; and
- try and reduce barriers for young people getting help and support.

Its work focused on:

- information/awareness raising;
- response of agencies, including access to early help;
- the role of schools and colleges.

The Youth Cabinet first attended an awareness session delivered by mental health specialists to ensure that they had a good understanding of the issues involved. They then talked to their peers and gathered a series of anonymous case studies which were used to inform two further evidence sessions; the first being with representatives from service providers and schools and colleges and second focusing on decision makers and commissioners. The planning and preparation for these meetings took place in the evening or during school or college holidays.

In addition, to ensure that the elected members who agreed to be part of this review had a thorough understanding of the issues, an in-depth briefing was given to OSMB by mental health professionals on December 13, 2013.

The awareness session and preparation of the case studies took place towards the latter end of 2013, with the discussions with service providers and decision makers taking place in in January and early February 2013.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) defines 'good scrutiny' as including the following:

- provides 'critical friend' challenge to policy-makers and decision-makers;
- enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities;
- drives improvement in public services.

(CfPS, 2010, p. 6)

The process carried out by the Youth Cabinet fulfils each of these criteria. The Youth Cabinet provided constructive challenge to providers and decision makers; highlighted gaps from the perspective of service users, and came up with imaginative yet practical recommendations to improve services for young people, professionals and carers seeking advice and information about self-harm.

The findings of their work was presented by the Youth Cabinet to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) and their invited guests at its 'Children's Commissioner's Day' meeting on February 27, 2014. The meeting coincided with the Self-Harm Awareness Day, held annually on March 1st, which is supported by major children's and mental health charities. The Youth Cabinet distributed orange ribbons to each of the attendees to commemorate the event.

The Youth Cabinet and Elected Members would like to thank all those who contributed to this review for their time and co-operation, and especially to the young people who were willing to share their stories.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 What is self-harm

As part of its evidence gathering the Youth Cabinet undertook awareness training delivered by Sara Graham of Rotherham and Barnsley Mind and Ruth Fletcher-Brown, the Council's lead Public Health specialist in mental

health. This covered definitions of self-harm, its prevalence and an exploration of common myths and misconceptions.

Self-harm is a relatively common problem that is frequently misunderstood and kept hidden. Therefore it is not surprising that myths and stereotypes have grown around the subject. Most commonly there is a belief that self-harm is an 'attention seeking behaviour'. However, this is contradicted by the fact that most self-harm is carried out in private and over a long period before help is sought. Another belief is that self-harm is something that groups of young people do together. Whilst it is important to be aware that within friendship groups, some individuals may self-harm, it is rare that young people self-harm in front of others.

There are several definitions of self-harm or injury:

'....an expression of personal distress, usually made in private, by an individual who hurts him or herself. The nature and meaning of self-harm, however, vary greatly from person to person. In addition, the reason a person harms him or herself may be different on each occasion, and should not be presumed to be the same.' (NICE, 2004)

"Hurting yourself to deal with difficult feelings. It can be through physical or emotional means, which may not be obvious to those around you." (Youth Cabinet presentation to OSMB, 2014)

The awareness raising established that sometimes young people cannot explain why they self-harm, especially when the self-harm itself is a means of communicating what cannot easily be put into words or even into thoughts. Self-harm is a way of expressing very deep distress.

Self-harm can be a way to help someone to cope with painful emotions that threaten to overwhelm them such as: anger, sadness, self-hatred, emptiness, grief, loneliness, guilt and shame.

The reasons why young people self-harm are complex – the Youth Cabinet identified some situations which may cause young people to self-harm. These include: bullying, stress and worry about exams and school work, difficulties in peer /family relationships, experience of abuse, bereavement, domestic abuse and confusion about sexuality.

The Youth Cabinet gave a powerful presentation which outlined what self-harm may entail:

- Cutting
- Burning
- Self-hitting or head banging
- Interference with wounds
- Hair pulling
- Bone breaking
- Multiple methods from above

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The local picture shows that self-harm tends to be higher amongst girls. Cutting and paracetamol overdose, are the main methods of self-harm in Rotherham (presentation to OSMB: December 13, 2013).

4 EVIDENCE GATHERING

4.1 Case Studies

It was important for the Youth Cabinet to reflect the views of Rotherham young people who had self-harmed and their uncertainties, fears and experiences about services. They talked to over twelve young people who had self-harmed and their comments are summarised below:

- Many said that they were unsure of where to get help and support around self-harm and or the available services. Whilst there are posters in schools and Youth Centres around drugs, alcohol, sexual health etc. there is little about self-harm.

- One girl said that she should be able to contact her doctor directly for an appointment rather than going through her parents. She felt that this had prevented her seeking help.

- Most of the case studies didn't know who their school nurse was or where and when they can be contacted. There was a view that the school nurse only comes in to see certain students and isn't accessible for everyone.

- School stress is a big factor with some young people who self-harm. A young person said that in one school assembly before Christmas, they were told not to worry about school, exams etc. over Christmas and to have a relaxing time. They felt they had been given 'permission' to de-stress over Christmas.

- A young person said that a teacher was told about her self-harming and they told her parents, which made the situation worse. This would stop some young people approaching schools for support.

- Some young people said that they got in a very bad way before they get any help or support. Some said they want help earlier to stop them feeling like they do which leads to them self-harming.

- One young person said that adults are the problem as they 'freak out' when the issue is raised – this makes the problem worse.

- Young people suggested having young people/young adults as peer support is helpful as they may be more approachable and fully understand. Young people have said that peer support groups (i.e. Safe Havens) work well for anti-bullying, drug and alcohol support etc.

- Several young people highlighted inconsistent responses from their GPs. A young person went to the doctor's when she was self-harming. She has said that they were not helpful as their reaction made self-harming seem 'normal' rather than a significant issue.

- One young person said that she had tried to get support from different services but nothing helped. Then she emailed the Samaritans and that was helpful. Sometimes young people don't want to talk face to face

with people as their preferred method of communication is texting and social networking.

- Some young people say that services available are too clinical which make it hard to approach them for help.

- Young people have said that they don't know what to do when they notice a friend is self-harming or a friend confides in them about self-harming. They don't know what to do with the information.

- Parents/Carers need advice and support around how to react and how to support young people who self-harm.

- Young people have said that lack of self-esteem and feeling worthless led them to self-harming

4.2   Discussions with service providers, schools/colleges and other support services

On the basis of the case studies, the Youth Cabinet identified some core questions. They invited representatives of provider agencies, schools/colleges and Council services to a 'round table discussion' to discuss current provision and identify ways in which services to young people can be improved.

Sue Gittins	The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, Vulnerable Children's Service
Dr Simon McCormick	The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, Accident and Emergency Department
Kate Boulton	Know the Score, RDaSH
Richard Bryan	RDaSH – Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services
Paul Boyden	Youth Start, RMBC
Kay Denton-Tarn	Healthy Schools Co-ordinator, RMBC
Ann Berridge	Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator, IYSS, RMBC
Simon Priest	Education Psychology Service, RMBC
Ruth Fletcher Brown	Public Health, RMBC
Emma Norton	Wath Comprehensive School
Kerry Smith	Thomas Rotherham College
Sandie Holloway	Dearne Valley College
Kevin Stevens	Rotherham Local Children's Safeguarding Board
Dorothy Smith	Director of Schools and Lifelong Learning, RMBC
Joyce Thacker	Strategic Director, Children and Young People's Services, RMBC

In addition, submissions were received from Lesley Sowerby, Winterhill School and Sara Graham, Rotherham and Barnsley Mind (who were unable to attend the stakeholder event). The submissions outlined the benefits of adopting a 'whole-school' approach to promoting positive mental health. This included student access to support, consistent messages delivered through assemblies and publicity and training to staff to enable them to respond appropriately and sensitively to the issues raised.

The first meeting took place on January 16, 2014. A summary of the discussion points are outlined below:

INFORMATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

- How is the range of different services currently advertised?

- How do you ensure that your service is known to young people?

- How do you ensure your publicity Information is clear, stands out, is not boring and young people understand it?

- Are there any improvements that can be made to the way that services are promoted?

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

- How do you ensure that young people are aware of their school nurse, how to contact them and when they are available?

- What information/support is given to schools/colleges to ensure that teachers and staff are aware of the issues around self-harm, treat young people seriously and provide appropriate support and information?

- Can you give examples of what preventative measures are put in place by schools/colleges to minimise stress or anxiety (for example around exams or assignments)?

- How can schools (and other services) ensure there is a balance between confidentiality and safeguarding – how can they offer support without breaking confidences of the young person by telling parents?

- What role do you think peer support groups (for example Safe Havens) can have for young people who are self-harming to meet and discuss their issues and offer mutual support?

RESPONSE OF AGENCIES, INCLUDING ACCESS TO EARLY HELP

- How can you make sure support is there for young people before things get too bad so that they can deal with issues before they start self-harming?

- Young people often feel that adults 'freak out' when the issue around self-harm is raised. How do you raise awareness with adults to avoid this?

- What are the advantages or disadvantages of having young people/young adults who have experienced self-harming as peer mentors and counsellors?

- How can support staff and health professionals be trained to ensure they have the approach and reactions which feel fully supportive and not patronising to young people?

- Are there any support services for young people in Rotherham to seek support via text, Apps or social networking and if so, how is this publicised to young people? What are the advantages/ disadvantages

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> to this approach?
>
> - How do you make sure that help and advice is available 'out-of-hours' (for example, a young person may need help in the middle of the night)
>
> - How can you ensure that your service relates to the young person, making it modern and more young people friendly – not clinical?
>
> - How do friends get support to both deal with the fact their friends are self-harming and also how to help their friends?
>
> - How can parents and carers be made aware of the best ways to support their children?

The discussions were very productive and enabled a free exchange of views. There were three tables, with a selection of young people and professionals, each led by a Youth Cabinet member (supported by a Councillor). Each table focused on a different issue ensuring that everyone had an opportunity to comment and discuss on the points identified above.

The discussions raised a number of issues about the way that services were designed and delivered. Comprehensive notes were taken from each of these discussion sessions. From these, common themes were identified and subsequently compared, refined, and grouped into a 'long list' of action points.

4.3   Discussions with commissioners and decision makers

The Youth Cabinet prioritised the areas that they wished to raise with commissioners of services and other decision makers. From the original 'long list' of almost fifty action points, they reached a consensus about which areas were most important.

These are summarised below:

> **SERVICES**
>
> - Consistent, up-to-date, concise, simple messages across all agencies - be clear where young people can get help and support and eliminate myths;
>
> - Accessible information– a Rotherham 'offer' that 'fits' around the service user or young person seeking help and advice;
>
> - Clear and consistent referral pathways across all agencies - schools, GPs, Know the Score, CAMHS, Youth Start etc.;
>
> - Explore the benefits of using peer support (e.g. Safe Havens) – either within school/college or other settings (with appropriate support for peers);
>
> **SCHOOL/COLLEGES**
>
> - Share good practice from schools and colleges (peer support/ small group work/ good access to school nurses/ proactive 'whole school'

approaches to mental health and well-being);

- Preventative approach and tailor services/support according to identified need (not one-size-fits all);

- Consistency in PHSE curriculum and its delivery;

- Stress busting (exam time);

- Ensure school nurses are accessible to pupils (on consistent basis);

- Important to raise awareness of headteachers/senior leaders to get 'buy in';

- Teachers and support staff should be aware of self-harm and not see it as being a 'taboo' subject (applies across all services);

ACCESS TO EARLY HELP

- Ensure that face-to-face and on-line help in a secure/confidential way is available (including 'out-of-office' hours);

- More one-to-one drop-in sessions at youth clubs - not everyone has home computer / internet access;

- Information and support for parents/carers in place;

- Ensure that services seek out and incorporate feedback from young people into service design and delivery;

- Training and awareness of staff who come into contact with children and young people regularly updated (consistent approach – multi-agency delivery).

The Youth Cabinet met with a number of representatives of commissioning bodies or people with decision making responsibilities on February 12, 2014.

Dr Russell Brynes	Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group
Kate Tufnell	Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group
Kerry Byrne	IYSS, RMBC
Ruth Fletcher-Brown	Public Health, RMBC
Paul Theaker	Commissioning, RMBC
Phil Morris	Rotherham Local Children's Safeguarding Board
Lisa Jewitt	Vice-Chair of Governors, Wingfield Academy

Again, session was a productive exchange of views, with each group focusing on the priority areas (outlined above) and to seek views on how/if these can be incorporated into service design/delivery. Unfortunately, no one was available from the Secondary Heads' Forum to participate in this session.

Each of the areas were discussed in turn, focussing on potential barriers and how these could be addressed. From these an agreed set of recommendations were formed.

5   CONCLUSIONS

This brief report gives an overview of several weeks work by members of the Youth Cabinet. It demonstrates how seriously the young people involved in this review approached this issue. It is also a positive reflection of the commitment of the different agencies – health, education, social care and voluntary sector. Each sent representatives who gave freely of their time outside of the normal working day.

At each stage of the work, the Youth Cabinet had access to expert advice from the Public Health Specialist (Mental Health). This ensured that the discussions were made on an informed basis, with information being provided on current initiatives and services.

From the case studies and their own independent research, the Youth Cabinet asked a series of questions to providers and commissioners of services. Involving young people in this kind of scrutiny provides a unique perspective on how well services are being delivered and where improvements can be made.

Through this piece of work, the Youth Cabinet were able to challenge local authorities and public service providers, supported in part by Elected Members, taking a rational and reasoned approach to the discussions and recommendations. As a result of these discussions, adults gained a better understanding about the kind of services young people value, with young people also appreciating some of the pressures faced by services.

In a further demonstration of their commitment, Youth Cabinet members are presenting the case studies and their findings to a borough-wide conference on Suicide Prevention to be held on April 3, 2014. The conference will involve key stakeholders including secondary headteachers, health and social care professionals and commissioners of services.

In arriving at the following recommendations, the Youth Cabinet hope that the important issues raised in this review will influence decisions about the future funding, design and delivery of self-harm support services.

6   RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were presented in outline to the Overview and Scrutiny Management who endorsed them at its Children's Commissioner's Day meeting of February 27, 2014.

1) That a consistent, concise and simple message is developed and disseminated for use by ALL organisations (including schools, health and social care, youth services, vol-comm sector);

2) That agencies work together to develop clear, consistent referral routes that are shared with ALL relevant organisations;

3) In line with recommendations 1) and 2), ensure that resources/training/support are available for schools, colleges, parents, young people etc.;

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4) That young people are involved in developing user-friendly information/media messages (including new technology/social media);

5) That young people are involved in service design e.g. commissioning of school nurses;

6) That advice to young people on self-harm is available through drop-ins, one-to-one sessions as well as web-based materials;

7) That consideration is given to ways in which the service can 'fit' around the young person and that appropriate 'out-of-hours' advice/support is available;

8) That the provision of information on self-harm to all schools and colleges is improved and standardised;

9) That schools and colleges are encouraged to establish a forum to share best practice around support and advice (for example work around peer support and strategies to address stress and exam pressure);

10) Examine ways in which student access to school nurses can be improved.

7   THANKS

- To the young people who shared their stories
- Participants in the stakeholder events
- Sarah Bellamy, Voice and Influence Team, IYSS
- Ruth Fletcher-Brown, Public Health Specialist, RMBC
- Sara Graham, Rotherham and Barnsley Mind
- Richard Bellamy and Hannah Etheridge, Democratic Services
- Chris Majer and Janet Spurling, Scrutiny Services

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Agenda Item 13

	ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS	

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	**9 April 2014**
3.	Title:	**Future of the Yorkshire and Humber Grid for Learning (YHGfL) Consortium**
4.	Directorate:	**EDS**

5. Summary

The Council is a member of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Grid for Learning Consortium. The Grid was established, as the local part of a national initiative, by the regional Local Education Authorities in 2001 to provide broadband connectivity to schools throughout the region. This task was completed by the mid- 2000s. The issue for consideration is whether the current structure of the Consortium is the best one for the changed circumstances in which it is operating.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet approve:

- the principle of the Consortium Advisory Board's recommendation of the 18th September 2013 with regard to the future of the Consortium and authorise Director of Internal Audit and Assest Management to serve notice on the Secretary to the Joint Committee of the Councils decision to withdraw from the Consortium such notice to take effect not before 1st April 2015 and to be conditional on all the other Consortium members serving a notice in the same terms.
- that the Joint Committee Agreement be terminated, and the Consortium should continue to meet under its own auspices but on an informal basis.

7. Proposals and Details

The Council is a member of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Grid for Learning Consortium. The Grid was established, as the local part of a national initiative, by the regional Local Education Authorities in 2001 to provide Broadband connectivity to schools throughout the region. This task was completed by the mid- 2000s.

At its meeting on the 15th February 2013 the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Joint Committee commissioned a review of the Consortium. At that time the review was directed at examining the option of trying to engage with Academies to develop service provision regionally. However this ultimately proved to be unproductive. In light of this the review was tasked by the Consortium Advisory Board with the further consideration of the future of the Consortium accepting the principle of the need for change.

At its meeting on 18th September 2013 the Consortium Advisory Board accepted the recommendation that the Consortium be brought to an end in favour of an informal collaborative arrangement between the current members of the Consortium. For the reasons set out in this report the Board adopted a resolution recommending to member Authorities that the Joint Committee Agreement of 28th March 2007 be terminated.

The matter was then referred to the Joint Committee for endorsement prior to submission to individual member Authorities for their decisions. The decision whether to bring the Joint Committee Agreement to an end and hence also the Consortium being a matter for constituent member Authorities. At its meeting on the 31st January the Joint Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Consortium Advisory Board, and the future of the Consortium now stands referred to individual member authorities for their own decision.

The issue for consideration is whether the current structure of the Consortium is the best one for the changed circumstances in which it is operating.

At the time nationally there were ten regional broadband Consortia operating under a number of different legal structures. In Yorkshire and Humber 12 of the original 15 local education authorities signed the Joint Committee Agreement, which led to the delivery of regional broadband to their schools.

In practice this process was completed some years ago leaving the Consortium managing the regional strategy and connection to the National Education Network. In Yorkshire and Humber this was effectively operated through the YHGfL Foundation Ltd (company limited by guarantee owned and operated for the 12 LEAs).

With the abolition of direct funding for the project and the National Education Network the responsibility and funding for regional broadband was effectively passed to schools. In recent years pressure has increased to make savings and the Consortium has increasingly moved away from a joint purchasing model to one of individual authorities making direct arrangements with the Foundation. This calls into question the original purpose of the Joint Committee Agreement.

In addition the Membership costs of running the Consortium have been called into question. This covers the cost of running the Consortium, together with an element of commonly commissioned services from the Foundation. This currently consists of fixed membership fee of c£61,000 per Authority per year. This will be reduced to c£35,000 next year (2014/5). However the cost is no longer seen as proportionate to the underlying purpose of the Consortium, and it has been concluded that further reductions are required. The consequence of this is that maintaining the Consortium in the current form is no longer a viable option.

It was noted that whatever decision was eventually made its implementation could in practice not be before 1st April 2015.

Issues for Consideration

If the Consortium is to be wound up member Authorities will each need to decide to serve notice to withdraw from the Consortium. If sufficient member Authorities withdraw the Joint Committee Agreement will automatically terminate.

The termination of the Joint Committee Agreement will formally bring to an end the Consortium. For the Joint Committee Agreement to be terminated each Authority will have to agree to the proposed termination from a given specific date. In this case it is suggested that the termination should be effective from 1st April 2015.

Other Relevant factors

The Consortium does not employ any staff, nor are there staff within the Lead Authority employed principally in providing services to the Consortium, so there are no employment considerations in winding up the Consortium.

The Consortium does not own any property and any legal rights that it had in contracts were either transferred to the Foundation or expired when the contracts did some years ago- there being no current contracts.

 With regard to the informal arrangements consideration will need to be given to exactly what form these should take and it is proposed that these should be further

discussed by the Consortium Advisory Board. It would then be open to each member Authority to decided whether to participate in the new structure.

Each member Authority would retain their relationship with the YHGfL Foundation as a service provider irrespective of any decision it may make with regard to the informal arrangements put in place to replace the Consortium.

8. Finance
Consortium membership currently consists of a fixed memebership fee of c£61,000 per Authority per year. This will be reduced to c£35,000 next year (2014/5). Currently this cost is fully recharged to schools which take Rotherham Grid for Learning Services(RGfL).

If the Council determines to do nothing the present arrangements will continue if there remain sufficient members (two or more) by 1st April 2015. The Council would then be liable to pay the membership fee for that year. This in turn would be passed onto RGfL member schools.

9. Risks and Uncertainties
The risks and uncertainties linked to leaving the consortimum are limited to the fact that there would be the loss of the regional approach to service development.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications
There are no policy and performance implications associated to the recommended course of action.

11.Background Papers and Consultation

Reports of the Secretary to the Joint Committee to the YHGfL Regional Broadband Joint Committee for the meeting of the Consortium Advisory Board of 12th June 2013, and 18th September 2013.

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