

Deputy Leader

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

Date: Monday, 13 January 2014

Time: 9.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for Absence.
4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 16th December, 2013 (herewith) (Pages 1 - 5)
5. Resources Performance Report - Current Position (report herewith) (Pages 6 - 16)
6. Cabinet Reports and Members' Issues (Directors to report).
7. 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 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006) (information relating to the financial or business affairs).
8. Procurement of Annual Software Support and Maintenance from Civica (report herewith) (Pages 17 - 18)
9. Date and Time of the Next Meeting - Monday, 17th February, 2014 at 9.30 a.m.

**DEPUTY LEADER
16th December, 2013**

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair).

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Gosling and Sims.

N30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 14TH OCTOBER, 2013

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th October, 2013.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th October, 2013 be approved as a correct record.

N31. VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Phil Howe, Director of Human Resources, which provided an update on what voluntary severance had created in terms of savings.

The key headlines included:-

- As intended, proportionately, the greatest reductions have been in management/back office functions.
- Age/pension scheme membership have a significant influence on the attraction of voluntary severance with the proportion of employees aged 55+ taking voluntary severance being greater than any other age range.
- The success of voluntary severance in reducing employee numbers had been such that only 72 compulsory redundancies have had to be made since April, 2010 despite the Council reducing by over 1200 posts.

Reference was made to a number of influencing factors, which were set out in detail as part of the report.

In light of the continued £20m budget reduction situation being faced for the next two years a new window for voluntary severance accepting applications until the 30th November, 2013 had been opened which included the inducement of a 12 week discretionary payment. Over 400 people asked for their figures with over 230 people expressing an interest to leave.

Support was, therefore, sought on the continuation of the current delegation for approval for early release to the Corporate Approval Panel comprising the Chief Executive, Director of Human Resources and Director of Legal and Democratic Services and for this to continue.

Resolved:- (1) That the outcomes received be noted.

(2) That new window for volunteers be noted.

(3) That the delegation to the Corporate Approvals Panel continue.

N32. ANNUAL REVIEW - INSURANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Andy Shaw, Insurance and Risk Manager, which built on previous reports on the numbers and cost of insurance claims made against the Council.

The Council continued to have a very good and improving record in most areas. Proactive Risk Management measures were helping to reduce the number of claims made against the Council and effective monitoring/inspection systems were enabling the Council to successfully defend many claims that were received.

The report highlighted areas where risk management action was helping to achieve the greatest savings in support of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, and emphasised in more detail:-

- Insurance claims and costs 2003/04 to 2012/13.
- High Performing Areas.
- Highways Trips and Slips.
- Recovery of Uninsured Motor Vehicle Accident Losses.
- Areas where performance is good and improving.
- Employer's Liability Claims.
- Motor Vehicle Claims.
- Trips and slips on Housing owned footpaths and walkways.
- The level of the Insurance Fund.
- High Value / New Areas of Claim.
- Municipal Mutual Insurance, Trigger Litigation.
- Renewal of Insurance / Broking Contracts.

Discussion ensued on the number of trips and slips on Housing owned footpaths and walkways and it was suggested that a sound system of inspection be implemented, similar to that in force by Streetpride, which would improve the repudiation rates and cut costs in the medium term. A response and a report was, therefore, requested for presentation at the next meeting.

Further analysis of the numbers and cost of insurance claims against the Council was also requested for future reports.

Resolved:- (1) That the generally very good performance in relation to the management of risk and minimisation of insurance claims costs be noted.

(2) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Deputy Leader on options for a system of inspection of Housing owned footpaths and walkways.

N33. COMMUNITY MAP - SELF SERVICE ACCESS TO PLANNING DATA, SPATIAL DATA AND INCIDENT REPORTING

Consideration was given to a report presented by Richard Copley, Corporate ICT Manager, which requested that the Council purchase Civica's Community Map product to replace a number of end-of-life web mapping systems and to enable citizen self-service across a range Council processes including Planning enquiries and reporting Streetpride issues.

Community Map was a key element of the Council's Customer Access Strategy and one of a range of measures being taken to encourage greater take-up of the Council's online channels to reduce dependency on the ageing CRM platform (Siebel).

Discussion ensued on the rationale for the replacement of the current web mapping system, the two options that were considered, consolidation of contracts and the business case to proceed and the need for integration with back off systems.

Resolved:- (1) That the purchase of Civica's Community Map product be approved.

(2) That the purchase of Community Map be exempt from the provisions of Standing Order 48.1 (requirement to invite three to six tenders for contracts with a value of over £50k) on the basis that Civica is the sole supplier capable of providing a Geographical Information System which integrates natively with the Council's various Civica line of business systems.

N34. CABINET REPORTS AND MEMBERS' ISSUES

Phil Howe, Director of Human Resources, reported on:-

- The proposed discussions with Trades Unions taking place on Thursday, 19th December, 2013 to look at cashable savings.
- Work taking place to investigate the recent increasing trend for agency staff costs.

Stuart Booth, Director of Finance, reported on:-

- Capital and revenue monitoring reports that were being presented to the Cabinet on Wednesday, 18th December, 2013.
- Budget discussions with Cabinet/SLT on Tuesday, 17th December, 2013, including the breakdowns, as requested.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

N35. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act (as amended March, 2006 (information relates to finance and business affairs).

N36. IMPACT OF DIGITAL REGION'S CLOSURE ON RMBC'S VOICE AND DATA NETWORK

Consideration was given to a report presented by Richard Copley, Corporate ICT Manager, which provided an update on the impact on the Council's data network of the recent decision to close Digital Region Ltd (DRL). The report set out the plans to migrate the Council's voice and data network links to new providers and included details of the resource requirements.

The Cabinet was now to consider the report on 18th December, 2013, which requested approval of the additional funding and approval of the signing of migration contracts.

The migration of such a large number of circuits, some of which were used by schools, was a complex and time consuming task and would need to be carefully planned and appropriately resourced. The Council had been advised that the date by which it must migrate to a new supplier was August, 2014.

Discussion ensued on the costs and savings of the new network, the installation and running costs of the new circuits and the current contract arrangements with each site.

Resolved:- (1) That the timescales for migration and the anticipated resource requirements (human and financial) be noted.

(2) That the impact of Digital Region Ltd.'s closure on the Council's ability to meet Central Government broadband targets be noted.

N37. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting take place on Monday, 13th January, 2014 at 9.30 a.m.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Deputy Leader's Meeting
2.	Date:	Monday 13 th January 2014
3.	Title:	Resources Performance Report – Current Position
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

5. Summary

This report provides the Deputy Leader with a current position statement on the performance of Services that fit within the remit of the portfolio (previously part of the Resources Directorate).

Performance reported is for the period ending 30th November and provides both achievements and any risks and issues.

6. Recommendations

That the Performance report is received and performance noted.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Procurement

Highlights / Achievements

- Procurement savings year to date (up to October) are £3.24M, this is above target against the 2013/14 forecast.
- To date, 40 Councils across the country have now signed confidentiality statements allowing them access to view the Bailiff and Debt collection services framework agreement let by the Procurement Service on behalf of the Authority. Preston & Lancaster, North East Lincolnshire, Wakefield, Cheshire & Chester and Redditch are examples of authorities already using the framework agreement.
- The Procurement Service has also put in place a framework agreement on behalf of 22 local authorities across the Yorkshire and Humber region. This agreement is for the delivery of Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) training. Alongside this the Procurement Service has also let 12 framework agreements for various services across the sub-region.
- A recent corporate agreement put in place with telecoms provider Virgin Media Business has resulted in large cost reductions in both rental charges and call tariffs. Over the term of this corporate agreement savings of ~£300K will be realised for Rotherham MBC. A separate contract with Vodafone UK for fixed lines and calls not part of the corporate VOIP solution will also generate a further ~£30K saving pa for Rotherham MBC.

Issues / Risks

- The Government continues to target public sector spending for reductions year on year, which in itself is a huge challenge for the authority. Procurement is playing a vital role in maximising every pound spent of public money, which is delivering real benefits to the citizens of Rotherham.

7.2 Commissioning

Highlights / Achievements

- The Adult Commissioning Team has been supporting the Council's 2014/15 budget setting exercise by conducting a range of service reviews, and presenting options appraisals and proposals.
- Domiciliary Care Framework Contract – there has been a decrease in contracting concerns and safeguarding issues compared with 2012/13 and this reflects a position where the sector has stabilised, has recruited successfully, and has raised its profile and reputation with customers and assessment teams. There is one year remaining on the existing contract and this allows options for moving forward with joint health and social care contracts, and driving forward person-centred services.
- Partnership work continues with Supporting People Programme Providers to achieve financial efficiencies and streamline provision for vulnerable Rotherham people. In the last quarter the number of placements offered to homeless young people was increased permanently by 4 tenancies, which includes a new resource for crisis accommodation. Q2 Targets for achieving independence (NI 141) and maintaining independence (NI 142) have been exceeded by 11.5% and 8.3% respectively
- The Risk Matrix and Contracting Concerns database covering all registered services have been reviewed by Commissioning, Adult Safeguarding, and the Information

Systems Team and a new model will be launched early in 2014, The Matrix is seen a model of good practice by CQC and is used to inform regular CQC business meetings. Framework established on 8th July for Residential Out of Authority placements for Looked After Children with the White Rose Consortium (8 local authorities) delivering high quality and substantial efficiencies

- Healthwatch Rotherham operational, staff and Directors now appointed. Outcomes framework and work plan agreed at HWBB on 16th October, 2013. Monthly contract review meetings taking place and performance activity reports developed but these require additional development around reporting outcomes.
- Review of contract for Leaving Care services with Action for Children resulting in decommissioning with current provider and re-commissioning with in-house service with the impact of improving continuity of relationships with Social Workers and improving outcomes for young people.
- Launch of Contracting Concerns database for CYPS to monitor quality and enable raising of concerns about placements Contracting concerns system launched and demonstrated at DLT, Cabinet Member, Senior Management Team Meetings, M3/M2 managers' meetings. Forms/guidance and link to the system now on the intranet to enable reporting of concerns. Plans in place to remind Team Managers about the system and monitor usage/reporting of concerns.
- Report card Approved at Children and Young People's Partnership Board on the 20th November. Slight changes to be made then to be published on website by 13th December.
- Completion of advice and information review with preferred option endorsed by SLT with a report going to leaders briefing on 17th December
- Adult Community Learning re-commissioning process completed for the first time on the SCMS YorTender system meeting standing orders, financial regulations and EU Procurement rules
- Apprentice appointed for Strategic Commissioning
- Significant cost avoidance achieved in LAC placements of £361,000 on out of authority plus £92,000 on SEN placements
- Aiming High Short Breaks, short breaks statement was published within the deadline of October 2013 and included full stakeholder involvement, including Parents/Carers and Young People).
- Post 16 Education Contracts in place with FE providers and governance arrangements being finalised

Issues / Risks

- The Adult Commissioning Team is currently undertaking a value for money review of residential care for people with learning disabilities, which also aligns with the local work that follows the Winterbourne View judgement. The team is working with the Joint Learning Disability Service and with providers to understand costs, business risks, and customer needs to launch a new standard fee arrangement with the sector in 2014/15. This exercise has received little support from high cost providers and it is likely that the consultation period in Q4 will see a sector challenge, which will be managed jointly with NAS operational managers.
- The above review links to the ongoing challenge for the team to achieve transformation and change with both the VCS and the private sector and a move from traditional models to services which can attract customers using Direct Payments.

- In February 2014 the draft plan for working with RCGG to manage the Integration Transformation Fund will be submitted and there is a n light of plans for transfer of NHS funds into social care - need to consider role of joint commissioning and pooled budgets to maximise quality and efficiency within the whole health and social care community.
- Capacity to deliver against commissioning priorities in lead up to April 2014 and in 14/15 due to reduced capacity in the operational commissioning team
- Delivery of substantial financial efficiencies against the challenging timelines set in the service transformation programme for change.
- Management of unrealistic expectations of organisations for delivery by Healthwatch Rotherham.
- Delivery of substantial savings against existing SEN independent placements within timescales
- Transformation of services commissioned from VCS and in-house CYPS services to meet the requirements of the SEND Green Paper.
- Risk of not achieving appropriate level of Continuing Healthcare Funding

7.3 Performance and Quality

Highlights / Achievements

- Following the publication of the Adult Social Care Outcome Framework (2012/13 ASCOF measures) via the Health & Social Care Information Centre's NASCIS national report, Rotherham was classed in top 3 of 15 regional councils, in 9 specific ASCOF measures.
- This year's (2012/13) Sector Led Improvement – Independent Peer Performance Assessment Report has been completed for Rotherham over the 2013 autumn period and was undertaken by The Yorkshire and Humber regional ADASS Performance and Standards group. The overall assessment was very positive and the need for a peer review was not identified as necessary. The review has been undertaken by way of analysis of our ASCOF national measures, a mystery shopping exercise on customer access and our draft production of our local account.
- Performance & Quality contributed to the successful outcome of the fostering service inspection in July 2013. The report when published had a rating of good and it was clear that the work the team had done since the July 2013 inspection had made a difference particularly around the customer voice.
- P&Q support is in place to help both the silver and gold CSE group's performance manage their action plans in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation
- The Lifestyle survey carried out in 2013 saw an overall increase of 142% of pupils taking part since 2012 from 2040 to 3474 and covered all 16 secondary schools, the results seeing some really positive findings will be published in the middle of January

Issues / Risks

- Following the CQC inspection of the Councils Enabling service on June 25th 2013 and a resulting non-compliance rating in one of the five areas inspected (Outcome 16 relating to assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision). The new registered manager has put in place all identified necessary actions and the service is awaiting the

CQC visit to re-inspect. The CQC also conducted an unprecedented three (unannounced) service inspections all in on the same day at Lord Hardy, Davies Court and Netherfield Court on 15th August 2013 and all three services were positively reported as fully compliant.

- Rent collection remains under pressure with the introduction of Housing Benefit under-occupancy regulations. Ongoing analysis shows that around 70% of those affected by 'bedroom tax' have not kept their payments up-to-date following the reduction to their housing benefit and recent benchmarking shows that the default rate is similar for other organisations, for example; Bernslai Homes – 73%, Shoreline Housing – 69%, St Leger Homes – 65%. This is having a detrimental impact on rent collection rates as this income would have been received directly from Housing Benefits in previous years. It is expected that arrears levels will peak next month before beginning to reduce as we head towards year end.
 - Over £1.8m of additional income has been collected in the year to date when compared to the same period in 2012/13
- OFSTED have now launched (Tuesday 19th November) the new inspection framework for children's services. Including Children in Need of help and protection, children looked after and leaving care. Planning is underway with staff and partners to be prepared for this major inspection.
- The team are involved with SLT colleagues to help set the budget for 2014/15 & 2015/16 and to deliver the savings. The impact of this will be project managing and facilitating major reviews of council services which will have an increased impact on the capacity of the team to deliver these and other statutory functions of the team.

7.4 Communications and Marketing

Highlights / Achievements

- The vacancy of Communications and Media Manager – highlighted in Q2 - has now been filled. Mandy Atkinson, former Communications Manager at North East Derbyshire District Council, joined the Authority in October.
- RMBC's communications and media team is participating in a newly-formed South Yorkshire-wide communications group, aimed at improving joint working, consistency and co-ordination of communications around significant and common issues, including raising awareness of child sexual exploitation (CSE), for which a joint communications strategy has been agreed. In terms of specific Rotherham activity, the team supported the publication of the Barnardo's Rotherham practice review and will continue to support the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children's Board as further work is completed.
- The Online Services/Comms and Media Teams worked with colleagues in Community Engagement to support the launch and management of the Council's budget consultation, which this year included an online forum for local residents to express their views on where savings can be made and what the Council's priorities should be. Strong and positive feedback has been received. It will now be important to feedback to participants on the outcomes of the consultation.
- As previously reported, the strengthening of the Online Services Team is almost complete – only the recruitment of the marketing analyst (enabling RMBC to monitor and respond to trends in website use) remains outstanding. A number of significant projects are being delivered, including the development of the new website; the introduction of the

Gandlake system to promote online channel shift and continued close working with service teams to help them deliver a customer-focused approach to their web pages.

Issues / Risks

- The Senior Marketing Officer recently left the Authority for alternative employment and is not being replaced, which will place significant pressure on the remaining team and further emphasises the need to be clear about the Council's marketing priorities.

7.5 Policy and Partnerships

Highlights / Achievements

- We have distributed 1,750 revised booklets to staff and the public about ongoing and planned benefit changes and presenting to 500 front line partner staff, (GP's, nurses, teachers, community workers, care providers etc) about the impact of welfare reform.
- The service is working with Fareshare Yorkshire, Wilmott Dixon and the VCS to address the issue of people in crisis for food. The partnership model of working provides a holistic approach to support local organisations serving our most vulnerable people in crisis. A central distribution centre managed by FareShare, will be open in December which will provide the opportunity to stockpile items, run campaigns and later in 2014 provide volunteering and training opportunities.
- The Needs Assessment (JSNA) website, co-ordinating and writing summary sections to cover all aspects of local needs.
- The service also worked with the Community Engagement and Performance and Quality Teams to coordinate a Deprived Neighbourhoods practitioner event at New York Stadium where 140 people from agencies across central Rotherham came together to consider how they can best tackle the challenges of poverty and deprivation.

Issues / Risks

- Welfare reform continues to present a number of significant corporate risks:
 - Ongoing threat to Council income from non-payment of Council Tax and rents, and the rising costs of collection and enforcement in both cases.
 - The estimated loss of income to the local economy estimated at £91 million per year (by 2015/16). Poverty is increasing, especially in the most deprived areas, and becoming more severe with more people getting into debt and turning to food banks.
 - Local services and agencies are struggling to meet rising demand for advice and support, but face a continued squeeze on resources to respond adequately.
 - The Autumn Statement 2013 brought forward the introduction of a new cap on total welfare spending (other than pensions and JSA) to 2014/15 which may lead to further cuts next year.

The new Corporate Plan goes some way to addressing these risks, but the scale and pace of welfare changes are such that economic growth will struggle to meet the challenge.

- Government policy development and change, along with consultations and new legislation continue impact on the Council's policy framework and functions. The Local Government Reform Implementation Plan together with the Intranet Resource Library provide for the identification; analysis; and information resource to mitigate any risks arising. Policy briefings to senior leaders, members and partners on current and emerging government policy and legislation are also provided giving a national and local context.

7.6 Financial Services

Highlights / Achievements

- Despite massively increased demand on service due to the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction scheme and changes to Council Tax empty property discounts, as at the end of November the service had collected an additional £3.2million Council Tax income compared with the time last year.
- As at the end of November the service had collected an additional £600k Non Domestic Rates income compared with the time last year, which is vital for the Councils finances now the risk of non-collection is shared 50/50 with government.
- Again despite massively increased demand on the service, as at the end of November an additional £135k income on Housing Benefit Overpayment income had been collected compared with the time last year.
- Although not yet complete the Single Person Discount review has so far raised an additional £159k Council Tax income for the authority.

Issues / Risks

The impact of welfare reform, together with the changes to Council Tax empty property discounts and the current economic climate are causing significant increases in workload across the Revenues and Benefits service which is putting severe strain on the service.

Three areas where this has particularly impacted the service have been:

- Customer telephone calls, which as at the end of November have increased overall by 29% from the same time last year while calls regarding debt repayment have increased 51%.
- A substantial increase in recovery notices for non-payment of Council Tax in the first quarter with reminders up 89%, summonses up 92% and Liability Orders up 69%.
- A massive increase in the number of requests for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), particularly as a result of the "Bedroom Tax" and Benefits Cap. Up to the end of November a total of 1,456 applications have been processed compared with only 367 in the same period last year.

The increased customer demand does not at present show any sign of declining, and on-going this will continue to put a severe strain on the service and could result in declining performance in areas such as collection rates and time taken to assess benefit claims or issue new Council Tax bills.

7.7 Human Resources

Highlights / Achievements

- Processed significant number of orders for bikes, phones and laptops/tablets and closed window for first tranche of the salary sacrifice scheme.
- Cabinet approved report on Living Wage and issue to be kept under review as part of dialogue with unions on the budget

- The HR Shared Service Centre have supported Doncaster Council in the implementation of their new chart of accounts and financial system which went live on the 30th September 2013

Issues / Risks

- Financial pressures have the possibility of effecting service provision, both for Rotherham and the contract with Doncaster Council.

7.8 Internal Audit and Asset Management (ICT)

Highlights / Achievements

- RMBC achieved connection to the Public Services Network [PSN] towards the end of 2013 - we were just the fourth Authority in the Country to make the transition from the old Government Connect connection. PSN provides us with:
 - A faster and more secure network.
 - Access to a range of critical services such as Blue Badge, Revenues and Benefits, Registrars and Elections
 - Secure data-sharing between all UK public sector organisations.
 - Access to the 'G-Cloud'- this is a secure market place and hosting environment provided by Central Government. It enables any part of the UK public sector to procure hundreds of different cloud based services

RMBC has been approached by the Cabinet Office to act as an exemplar and reference site to assist other Authorities in achieving PSN compliance.

- By the end of 2013 we will have signed contracts for the new voice and data network (190 network links in total) and work will begin to complete the migration before the DRL network is decommissioned (August 2014). The new network will attract lower annual charges and has been reviewed by the Cabinet office to ensure compliance against relevant data security standards.
- Corporate ICT will be remotely installing Virtual Private Network (VPN) software on all machines during December, at no additional cost to RMBC. This will allow all employees to be mobile and enable them to work from any location which for many services is a key way of introducing efficiencies and saving money. This will also bring significant benefits to the Council in terms of increasing our resilience to disruptive events such as severe weather.

Issues / Risks

- The replacement network project discussed above will place a very large burden on the RMBC's Corporate ICT Team. We know from recent experience that the migration of 190 circuits to a new provider will require a large amount of effort from employees across Corporate ICT including Schools ICT, Project Management, Test and Security, Networking, Service Desk and Customer Assistance. Corporate ICT has made significant headcount reduction since its return from RBT, and has further savings proposals for both 2014/15 and 2015/16 that will mean the cost of ICT will be less than half of the cost of the service when it sat within RBT. This DRL migration programme will mean that it will be difficult to make additional savings in ICT within significantly risking disruption to systems. Furthermore, we know that the recent migration to DRL took 2 years to complete and involved significant amounts of downtime - both planned and unplanned – there is a risk of similar levels of downtime as we migrate to our new suppliers. We will work closely with our customers to ensure that the disruption caused by downtime is kept to a

minimum and we will be encouraging all areas to review the business continuity plans in order to mitigate this risk.

- As part of our PSN compliance commitments RMBC will need to cease the use of Outlook Web Access (OWA, also known as 'MyMail'). Central Government has deemed to OWA to be insecure for public sector use and all PSN connected organisations must cease using the service. OWA is popular with our users but we will mitigate the impact by providing alternative access methods such as VPN or Good for Enterprise.
- Uncertainties surrounding the future of BlackBerry technologies mean that RMBC needs to review its strategy with regards to mobile email. We will be phasing out BlackBerry use by July 2014 and will instead provide employees (subject to business case and line manager approval) with a smartphone running good for Enterprise. This change will result in savings for RMBC as BlackBerrys are more expensive than smartphones.

7.9 Community Engagement

Highlights / Achievements

- An application has been submitted to The Council of Europe for the "Dosta Congress Prize for Municipalities for Roma Inclusion" to highlight our local partnership work on Roma migration issues.
- The Multi-Agency Asylum Seekers Partnership Group has been reconvened to coordinate the local response to the settlement of asylum seekers in Rotherham.
- The work of the joint Council and SYP Vulnerable Persons Unit in tackling Hate Crime was highlighted in a positive article in the Advertiser. This was part of a wider media campaign encouraging victims of hate crime to report incidents to SYP and RMBC.
- Revised the Council Community Engagement Framework and introduced a new streamlined automated e consultation forms.
- Supported the Policy and Partnerships Team with the Welfare Reform work especially around the 'Universal Credit', Rotherham Less Lonely Campaign around community safety and Armed Forces Covenant work including the successful Armed Forces Stakeholders Event.
- Supported the Rotherham Older People's Forum including the successful Older People's Day on 1st October at My Place where around 70 older people attended.
- Overseen and managed the Money Matters/Council priorities consultation (2014-16) including the online forum/suggestion scheme, a successful consultation event at the NY Stadium with nearly 100 in attendance. Budget consultation also included attendance at Fayres Fair and Carers Rights Day and attended Area Assembly/Parish Network meetings to raise awareness about the consultation.

Issues / Risks

- Discussions are on-going with the Jamie Oliver Foundation about the long term future of Rotherham Ministry of Food Ltd including a reopening date for the premises.

7.10 Legal & Democratic Services

Highlights / Achievements

- The council is leading on a multi-million pound judicial review on behalf of the South Yorkshire and the Merseyside City Regions, regarding the government's allocation of European funding.
- The annual maintenance visit (Lexcel Inspection) to ensure the Legal Service continues to be accredited under the Law Society's Practice Management Standard is due in January. Staff are working hard to ensure all procedures and files are of a high quality. Rotherham is the only local authority in South Yorkshire to have achieved the standard.
- Rotherham's electoral register achieved the highest match rate in Yorkshire & Humber and was amongst the highest in the country when all UK electoral registers were matched against DWP records in a secure trial carried out as part of the preparations for transition to individual electoral registration.
- The Self-Regulation Commission completed some scrutiny work on the forthcoming budget; an achievement because it was at a much earlier stage than in previous years and proved to be very successful. The first of the Scrutiny reviews are nearing completion and the Scrutiny review on support for Carers has gone exceptionally well with interesting draft findings emerging.

Issues / Risks

- The continued increase in School Admissions Appeals will be closely monitored to identify potential resource implications.
- The Service's requirement to meet efficiency savings targets whilst managing the resultant risks to the Council.
- Electoral Services face intense pressure and conflicting timescales due to a delayed annual canvass, combined local and European elections and the transition to individual electoral registration.
- Staffing levels in Scrutiny continue to be monitored in terms of ability to deliver against the current demanding work programme.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

We proactively manage risks to prevent negative impacts on performance against delivery of services and any associated key performance indicators.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The services above are responsible for key areas of service delivery and therefore have a significant role in the delivery of key national and local performance indicators. These services also support all Council Directorates enabling them to deliver against Corporate Plan outcomes.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

None to consider

Contact Name:

Sue Wilson

Performance and Quality Manager

Ext: 22511

Email: sue-cyps.wilson@rotherham.gov.uk

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