

CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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

**Date: Wednesday, 11th December,
2013**

Time: 12.30 p.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 2nd December 2013 (Pages 1 - 5)
5. Rotherham Town Centre - Free Parking on Saturdays before Christmas 2013 (Pages 6 - 8)
6. Date and time of next meeting - Monday 13 January 2014 at 10.30 am

**CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
2nd December, 2013**

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Clark and Godfrey; together with Councillors Dodson and Pickering.

G68. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 1ST NOVEMBER, 2013

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Development, held on 1st November, 2013, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

G69. ROTHERHAM LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE SYSTEM - ANNUAL SERIES UPDATE 2013

Further to Minute No. G96 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Environment held on 24th January, 2011, consideration was given to a report presented by the Leisure and Green Spaces Manager concerning the 2103 update of the list of Local Wildlife Sites in Rotherham. The information forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and is used in the determination of relevant planning applications.

The report stated that Rotherham's Local Wildlife Site series identifies sites of substantive nature conservation value in accordance with DEFRA best practice. The adoption of the Rotherham Local Wildlife Site system and the initial series of site boundaries were approved by the Cabinet on 17th December 2008 (Minute No. B139 refers). Sites of wildlife interest change over time due to management practices and natural processes. The Rotherham Local Wildlife Site system accommodates changes by enabling new sites to be added and site boundaries to be altered or removed whenever new areas of interest are identified, or if sites no longer meet the standards set by the system.

During 2013, one site was proposed as a new candidate Local Wildlife Sites. Foers Wood, Aston, is a privately owned site of mature, wet woodland with running and standing water features, managed for wildlife. There is no public access to the site and the isolation and lack of disturbance, combined with the positive management by the landowners, has developed a diverse, complex woodland site. The assessment confirmed that the site has demonstrated substantive nature conservation value by meeting at least one of the selection criteria and it is therefore proposed that Foers Wood, Aston is added to Rotherham's existing Local Wildlife Site series.

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

(2) That the Rotherham Local Wildlife Site 2013 boundaries, as shown in the report now submitted, be endorsed.

(3) That the inclusion of Foers Wood, Aston in Rotherham's Local Wildlife Site series be approved.

G70. ROTHERHAM ECONOMIC REGENERATION FUND (RERF) - PUBLIC REALM - HIGH STREET, ROTHERHAM

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Economic Development Manager, concerning the proposed public realm works on High Street, Rotherham as part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative programme. The report detailed the cost of the proposal and the sources of funding. A contribution was required from the Rotherham Economic Regeneration Fund (RERF).

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

(2) That a revenue contribution of £22,000 be allocated from the Rotherham Economic Regeneration Fund towards the cost of the public realm works on High Street, Rotherham.

G71. FINANCIAL AND STATISTICAL REPORT FOR PARKING SERVICES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/2013

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Parking Services Manager giving details of statistics and income and expenditure for Parking Services for the financial year 2012/2013. The report highlighted:-

- the Traffic Management Act 2004, which requires parking authorities to report each year on financial and statistical information;
- parking enforcement and appeals against penalty notices;
- the review of parking within the Rotherham town centre (a number of initiatives were detailed in the report);
- parking issues affecting schools;
- the acquisition, during the 2012/13 financial year, of a vehicle-mounted closed circuit television system to facilitate the lawful enforcement of illegal parking activities; the vehicle and cctv system have been fully deployed since the beginning of October 2013;
- Disabled Parking (blue badges) and fraud investigation;
- income, expenditure and statistical information for Parking Services (the account surplus being derived from car parking charges, not from parking penalty charge notices);
- collection of debts.

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

(2) That the report be approved for publication.

(3) That a progress report be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Development concerning the use of the vehicle-mounted closed circuit television system in respect of parking enforcement.

G72. CYCLING IN THE ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE VEHICLE RESTRICTED AREA AND CHANGE TO HOURS OF ACCESS FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING

Further to Minute No. G1 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Town Centres, Economic Growth and Prosperity held on 28th May, 2012, consideration was given to a report presented by the Transportation and Highways Projects Manager and the Highways Engineer, detailing the outcome of the consultation into proposals to permit cyclists to use the Rotherham town centre Vehicle Restricted Area and to extend the hours of access for loading/unloading. Two of the proposals contained in the report were to:-

(i) permit cyclists to use the Rotherham town centre Vehicle Restricted Area to improve access by bicycle to facilities or services such as employment, retail and education within this area, or to those cyclists who may wish to travel across the town centre; and

(ii) extend the hours of access for loading/unloading in the zone from its current 5.00 pm to 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 pm to 10.00 a.m., to allow more flexible access to premises and to the street market.

The report stated that permitting cyclists to use the town centre Vehicle Restricted Area requires three changes to existing Traffic Regulation Orders:-

- the no vehicles restriction needs to be changed to a no motor vehicles restriction;
- cyclists need to be allowed to cycle the "wrong way" down the one-way streets in the town centre Vehicle Restricted Area; and
- cyclists need to be exempted from some of the prescribed and prohibited turns within the town centre Vehicle Restricted Area.

Details of these proposals were illustrated shown on plans numbered 126/14/TT563, 126/14/TT564 and 126/14/TT565, which were included with the submitted report.

Members noted the various representations received, especially the views of some town centre retail businesses, of the South Yorkshire Police and of the two organisations Action for Blind People and Help the Aged. Comments had also been received from the Rotherham Visually Impaired group and from the Rotherham Older People's Forum. Some of these comments expressed concerns about perceived dangers to pedestrians of cyclists riding through the town centre.

Reference was made to research by the Transport Research Laboratory, undertaken for the Department for Transport, which had found no real factors to justify excluding cyclists from pedestrianised areas and that accidents between pedestrians and cyclists were very rarely generated in pedestrianised areas. The proposed Traffic Regulation Order would not permit cyclists to use any part of All Saints Square, and of Howard Street between Effingham Street and Frederick Street.

The proposal was not being considered in isolation and further improvements to make the Rotherham town centre more attractive for cycling and walking were also being progressed or were currently being developed. Members agreed that the proposal to permit cycling in the town centre Vehicle Restricted Area should be implemented initially on an experimental basis only, for a period of twelve months, in order to gauge whether there are any problems being caused. Detailed monitoring arrangements will also be in place, with progress reports being submitted to Elected Members at quarterly intervals after implementation.

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

(2) That objections to the proposed scheme to permit cyclists to use the Rotherham town centre Vehicle Restricted Area and to extend the hours of access for loading/unloading, as contained in the report now submitted, be not acceded to at this time.

(3) That, further to resolution (2) above, proposed Traffic Regulation Order, as detailed in the report now submitted, be made on an experimental basis for a period of twelve months.

(4) That, during the period of the experimental Traffic Regulation Order, monitoring be undertaken and liaison take place with interested groups on the operation of the Traffic Regulation Order.

(5) That, after implementation of the Traffic Regulation Order, further reports be submitted to meetings of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Development, at quarterly intervals, detailing the progress of the monitoring of the scheme in the Rotherham town centre.

G73. ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES - REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Finance Manager concerning the budget monitoring of the Environment and Development Services Directorate Revenue Accounts for the period to 31st October, 2013, including the forecast out-turn of overspending of £504,000 to the end of the 2013/14 financial year. The submitted report included information on the variances reported by each Division of Service.

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

(2) That the latest financial projection against budget for the 2013/14 financial year, for the Environment and Development Services Directorate, based on actual income and expenditure to 31st October, 2013, be noted.

(3) That the report be referred to the Self Regulation Select Commission for information.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Development
2.	Date:	Wednesday 11th December 2013
3.	Title:	RERF - Free Saturday parking, Christmas 2013
4.	Programme Area:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

This report seeks approval of an allocation of £9,000 Rotherham Economic Regeneration Fund (RERF) revenue towards funding of free parking in Rotherham town centre on the 6 Saturdays leading up to Christmas

6. Recommendations

Approve £9,000 of RERF revenue funding towards the cost of free Saturday parking in Rotherham town centre in run up to Christmas 2013.

7. Proposals and Details

This year's Christmas parking initiative will include six Saturdays in the period from 16th November to 21st December 2013 inclusive

The Christmas trading period is key in the retail sector in ensuring year-round profitability of the business; a poor Christmas trade can have a significant impact on the viability of the business. It is therefore recognised that initiatives to attract shoppers are particularly beneficial to retailers at this time.

In previous years, free parking incentives have been introduced in the Rotherham town centre as a means of driving footfall during the festive period and supporting town centre retailers. This has included offering free parking on Saturdays from the period between the Christmas lights switch-on event and Christmas Day.

One of the key recommendations in the Mary Portas High Street Review was that high streets and town centres should have the flexibility to introduce local parking initiatives to boost trade. This is particularly pertinent to Rotherham, given the proximity to Parkgate and Meadowhall both of which have a free parking offer and based on the impact that Portas Pilot funded initiatives have made in the town centre.

Rotherham has welcomed a recent upturn in footfall figures and a reduction in shop vacancy rates. This can to some extent be attributed to a number of projects and initiatives aimed at regenerating the town centre, including the Business Vitality Grants Scheme, Shop Local, Public Realm Improvements, the Events and Entertainment Programme, Gallery Town and of course the return of Rotherham United to a stadium in the town. Free parking in the run-up to Christmas would complement these projects and initiatives and would provide a further incentive for shoppers to choose Rotherham.

This year a Christmas parking initiative would include six Saturdays in the period from 16th November to 21st December 2013 inclusive. The loss of revenue for each Saturday is estimated at £4,000.

A marketing campaign would be implemented (cost covered within the existing festive marketing budget) and would include:

- Radio and Press Advertisements
- E-marketing (Facebook/ Twitter/ Rotherham town centre website)
- Weekly e-mails to database of 16,000 Shop Local cardholders/ RMBC employees
- Stickers and signage on parking meters and car-park entrances

At its meeting on 7th October 2013 Cabinet approved the allocation of £24,000 from within Economic & Development Services Budgets to offer free parking in RMBC owned car-parks in Rotherham town centre on six Saturdays from 16th November to 21st December, 2013, inclusive.

£15,000 is to be drawn directly from the British Land contribution to town centre initiatives. The remaining £9,000 is being sought from the RERF budget.

8. Finance

Funding	Status of funding. Approved/ Awaiting Approval	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
RERF					
Capital					-
Revenue				9,000	9,000
TOTAL RERF			-	9,000	9,000
Other Funding Sources					
British Land contribution				15,000	15,000
					-
					-
					-
TOTAL OTHER FUNDING		-	-	15,000	15,000
Grand Total		-	-	24,000	24,000

There is currently £28,000 of revenue money available under the RERF programme. This is sufficient to fund this project and leave £19,000 for the remainder of 2013/14

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Previous years of the free parking initiative has shown it to be successful in helping drive town centre footfall in the run up to Christmas

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Free Saturday parking will contribute to the following strategic priorities from the Community Strategy:-

- Revitalise the town centre

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Feedback is continually received from town centre businesses who repeatedly note parking charges as a factor impacting negatively upon their business (in terms of discouraging shoppers who have the option to park free at the nearest competing centres).

A copy of the full RERF application form for this project is available on request. RMBC Finance have been consulted on the report.

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