

## IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

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

**Date: Wednesday, 2nd September,  
2015**

**Time: 1.30 p.m.**

### A G E N D A

1. To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.
2. To determine any item(s) the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for absence
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Questions from members of the public and the press
6. Communications
7. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1st July, 2015 (Pages 1 - 7)
8. Rotherham's Economic Growth Plan (Pages 8 - 19)
9. Winter Weather Response - update (Pages 20 - 25)
10. Task and Finish Groups - update  
Updates on the progress of the Cleaner-Greener agenda Task and Finish Groups :-
  - (a) Waste Management
  - (b) Leisure and Community Services
  - (c) Network Management / Rotherham town centre
  - (d) Car Parking
11. Date and time of next meeting - Wednesday 28th October 2015 at 1.30 pm

**Improving Places Select Commission: membership: -**

Councillors Atkin, Beck (Chairman), Buckley, Cutts, Godfrey, Gosling, Jepson, McNeely, Pickering, Smith, Reeder, Robinson, Rosling, C. Vines, Wallis, Whelbourn (Vice-Chairman), Whysall and Wyatt.

Co-opted members:- Mrs. L. Shears, Mr. P. Cahill and Mr. B. Walker.

**IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION**  
**1st July, 2015**

Present:- Councillor Beck (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Buckley, Cutts, Gosling, Jepson, McNeely, Pickering, Reeder, Rosling, C. Vines, Wallis, Whelbourn and Whysall.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Godfrey, Smith and Wyatt.

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this meeting.

**2. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

**3. COMMUNICATIONS**

(1) Pre-Meeting Briefings for the Select Commissions

It was agreed that this Select Commission shall have briefings immediately prior to each scheduled meeting, enabling Members to prepare questions for each agenda item.

(2) Select Commissions' Task and Finish Groups

The Select Commission agreed to the inclusion of Councillor Cowles in some of the Commission's Task and Finish Groups, especially the ones to be established in respect of the Cleaner, Greener agenda.

**4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25TH FEBRUARY, 2015**

Resolved:- (1) That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission, held on 25th February, 2015, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

(2) That, with regard to Minute No. 49(2)(c), of the previous meeting, it was noted that a report about the Council's response to the severe Winter weather conditions during late December 2014 and early January 2015 will be submitted to the Commissioners and to Elected Members during September, 2015.

**5. THE CLEANER - GREENER AGENDA**

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Streetpride, outlining details of a range of issues which will have an impact on the 'Cleaner, Greener' agenda. It was noted that this agenda is

a priority subject area for the Improving Places Select Commission, as identified by the Government-appointed Commissioners to this Council. The specific issues identified within the report were:-

- Waste Management (including household waste recycling centres and 'bring' sites; waste collection; recycling rates);
- Leisure and Community Services (including grounds maintenance; street cleansing; fly-tipping and enforcement);
- Network Management (parking services, especially parking in and around the Rotherham town centre);
- Rotherham town centre (the impact of the night-time economy).

Members discussed the following salient matters:-

: waste collection including charging arrangements for elements of the service being considered as part of the 2015/16 budget process;

: waste collection arrangements must be by way of separate collection, where separate collection is Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable – this is known as the TEEP assessment (per the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 and in subsequent years);

: collection of recycled material (eg: clothing; shoes) by charitable organisations and whether such organisations should be charged a fee for the siting of their collection bins;

: grass cutting, including green open spaces in Council-owned housing areas (eg: sheltered bungalow schemes) funded from the Housing Revenue Account; positive comments received about the use of wild flowers in some highway verges and central refuges; the practice of cutting only sections of highway verge, adjacent to the carriageway, rather than the whole verge;

: the increasing incidence of fly-tipping, both in the Rotherham Borough area and nationwide; enforcement practices, including the use of (covert) closed circuit television systems and recording; possible devolution of enforcement powers either to Parish and Town Councils or to community and voluntary groups;

: a question about the possible use of private sector contractors of fly-tipping enforcement duties; the 'zero-tolerance' approach of some private contractors (this matter will be discussed further by the Members' Task and Finish group);

: the clearance of weeds, which occurs twice per year and includes the grubbing-out of silt and detritus from the highway (in which the weeds grow);

: the Council does not accept vehicle tyres for disposal (such facilities are available from the private sector); vehicle tyres are classed as notifiable waste and should have consignment notes as evidence of their correct disposal (with an auditable trail; it was noted that this matter is enforced by the Environment Agency rather than local authorities;

: street cleansing and litter enforcement in areas which already have closed circuit television systems (CCTV) in place (eg: Town Hall frontage, Moorgate Street); it was noted that the quality of CCTV recorded footage in these areas is not always good enough for enforcement purposes;

: the Government-appointed Commissioners to the Council have proposed changes to the organisational structure which will include the management of the Council's enforcement arrangements;

: the 'responsible retailer' scheme, encouraging the clearing up of litter from outside retail premises (eg: the Tidy Britain Group campaign and the 'tidy business' and 'tidy school' awards schemes).

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

(2) That the Improving Places Select Commission shall establish the following Task and Finish Groups, comprising the Councillors and co-opted members listed below, in order to undertake appropriate scrutiny of this Council's Service delivery in respect of Cleaner, Greener agenda:-

(a) Waste Management (Councillor Godfrey (Chair) with Councillors Reeder, Wallis and Wyatt and co-opted member Mr. P. Cahill);

(b) Leisure and Community Services (Councillor Atkin (Chair) with Councillors Buckley, Cutts, Jepson, Smith, C. Vines and Whysall and co-opted members Mrs. L. Shears and Mr. B. Walker – with Councillor Cowles also co-opted);

(c) Network Management, which shall include issues relating to the Rotherham town centre (Councillor Rosling (Chair), with Councillors McNeely, Pickering and Whelbourn and co-opted member Mr. B. Walker).

(3) That, with regard to the establishment of the Task and Finish Groups listed at (2) above, Councillors and co-opted members are invited to inform the Scrutiny Officer of their preference of Groups (one or more preferences are permitted).

**6. GROUND MAINTENANCE AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES - SCRUTINY REVIEW - UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 32 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 15th October, 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Streetpride, concerning progress with the implementation of the action plan arising from the scrutiny review of this Council's Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing services. A copy of the updated action plan was included with the submitted report.

Members were informed that, since the last update report, there have been two significant actions which have helped to improve the quality of service provision. The Grounds Maintenance Service received two years' funding (2014/15 and 2015/16) from Housing Services (Housing Revenue Account) to enable additional works to be undertaken on older people's complexes. This factor has led to a significant increase in the number of positive comments from residents and a reduced number of complaints and/or requests for service (eg: reduced by 65% in the period to May 2015). Discussions continue in respect of the continuation of this funding. Also, the Street Cleansing Service received an increase of £200,000 to its revenue budget for 2015/16. That Service is in the process of recruiting additional staff, vehicles and equipment and the associated additional work (weed killing, litter picking and litter bin emptying) will commence as soon as those resources are in place. Both services will continue to review operations in order to identify improvements and efficiencies and to contribute to the forthcoming savings targets which are necessary to enable the Council to operate within its budget during the next three years.

The Select Commission's discussion highlighted the following issues:-

: ensuring that the recommendations of the previous scrutiny review of grounds maintenance are being correctly implemented (eg: grass cutting in areas where highway safety is a significant concern);

: possible disposal/sale by the Council of certain open spaces which are considered to be of limited amenity value; Members requested details of such sites;

: recruitment of specific personnel to the Street Cleansing Service; funding for weed killing;

: the enforcement of vehicle parking on highway verges, a matter which is the responsibility of the South Yorkshire Police; it was noted that enforcement action usually occurs whenever there is a significant obstruction of the highway; the Council does not have statutory powers to prohibit parking on verges throughout the whole of the Rotherham Borough area.

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

(2) That the progress with the implementation of the action plan arising from the scrutiny review of this Council's Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing services, as now reported, be noted.

## **7. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY SCRUTINY REVIEW - UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 60 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 23rd April, 2014 and Minute No. 46 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 17th October, 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Housing Options Manager, concerning progress with the implementation of the action plan arising from the scrutiny review of the Council's Homelessness Strategy. A copy of the updated action plan was included with the submitted report.

Members noted that the recommendations of the scrutiny review have been incorporated within the Council's Homelessness Strategy. It was agreed that the Improving Places Select Commission should have the opportunity to comment upon the updated Homelessness Strategy and associated action plan prior to its eventual approval by the Government-appointed Commissioners and the Council.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the progress being made with the actions arising from the recommendations of the scrutiny review of the Council's Homelessness Strategy be noted.

## **8. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY - SCRUTINY REVIEW - UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 23 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 16th September, 2014 and Minute No. 34 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 19th September, 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Economic Development Manager, concerning progress with the implementation of the action plan arising from the scrutiny review of Support for the Local Economy. A copy of the updated action plan was included with the submitted report.

The Select Commission's discussion of this item included the following salient matters:-

: the Economic Growth Plan and the Local Plan will both be reported to the Council meeting scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 16h September, 2015;

: the possible establishment of Task and Finish groups to consider the details of the delivery of the interventions and priorities from the Economic Growth Plan;

: acknowledgement that the Rotherham Borough area has been very successful at accessing money through the Regional Growth Fund;

: review recommendation 2, targets and outcomes for the Economic Growth Plan – ensuring that local people are accessing employment and training (Members requested statistical details of access to apprenticeships);

: review recommendation 8 (maximising access to the Regional Growth Fund) – the need also to access funding from European sources (in the context of more recent changes to the EU funding programme);

: effectiveness of the Growth Hub (eg: the case involving the local KP Nuts factory);

: the role and effectiveness of the Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO);

: review recommendation 9 – the proposed establishment of a multi-disciplinary task force in order to generate investment and economic growth in the Rotherham Borough area;

: review recommendation 11 – the Council's capital investment strategy is currently in the process of development;

: Growth Plan – the desirability of business education being part of the curriculum for both primary and secondary schools;

: the Education and Skills agenda of the Growth Plan (eg: the specific regional role of the Leader of the Council) and continuing discussions about the possible development of a Higher Education campus in Rotherham; Members noted the availability of appropriate buildings within the Dearne and Manvers area;

: the need for continuing scrutiny of this Council's involvement in the Sheffield City Region.

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

(2) That the progress made to date and proposed for the forthcoming year, in respect of the implementation of the action plan arising from the scrutiny review of Support for the Local Economy, as now reported, be noted.

## **9. REPRESENTATION ON PANELS, SUB-GROUPS ETC 2015 - 2016**

Resolved:- That the following appointments of representatives from the Improving Places Select Commission to the groups and outside bodies listed below, be approved for the 2015/2016 Municipal Year:-



Health, Welfare and Safety Panel - Councillor McNeely (substitute Councillor Buckley);

Rotherham Local Plan Members' Steering Group - Councillor Beck (substitute Councillor Whelbourn);

Environmental Protection (Yorkshire and Humberside Division) – Councillors Atkin, Beck and Wallis;

RUSH House Management Committee - Councillor McNeely.

# ROTHERHAM'S GROWTH PLAN

Improving Places Select Commission  
2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015

Simeon Leach & Rachel Blake  
Economic Development Team

# Statistics

Indicator	Rotherham	Sheffield City Region	UK
Overall employment rate (December 2014)	67.4%	69.6%	71.3%
VAT registered businesses per 10,000 adult (16+) population	273	313	435
<b>Average (median) weekly gross salary (full-time, workplace based 2014)</b>	<b>£476.60</b>	<b>£479.90</b>	<b>£518.00</b>
<b>% achieving 5+ GCSEs at grades A*-C (2014)</b>	<b>67.1%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>63.2%</b>
<b>% of workforce with no qualifications (December 2014)</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
<b>% of workforce with Level 4 qualifications (December 2014)</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>35.8%</b>
<b>Self-employment (December 2013)</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>
Employment in SOC1-3 occupations	35.0%	37.7%	43.8%
Average house prices ( <i>Land Registry Feb 2015</i> )	£99,385	£105,782	£180,252

## What it will deliver

- ▣ **More businesses** – with growth potential (*750 net by 2020*)
- ▣ **More jobs** – accessible to residents (*10,000 net by 2025*)
- ▣ **Increased GVA** (gross value added)  
Positive impacts for all communities in the borough

# Projected job growth by sector

Sector	2013 jobs	2024 jobs	Increase	% increase
Financial & Professional Services	3,600	4,300	700	+19.4%
<b>Business Services</b>	<b>8,500</b>	<b>11,000</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>+29.4%</b>
Health	12,000	12,700	700	+5.8%
Education	9,700	9,875	175	+1.8%
<b>Retail</b>	<b>9,300</b>	<b>10,300</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>+10.8%</b>
Construction	5,600	6,250	650	+11.6%
Sports, Leisure & Culture	6,600	7,400	800	+12.1%
CDI	3,100	3,800	700	+22.6%
<b>Logistics</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>5,250</b>	<b>1,650</b>	<b>+45.8%</b>
<b>Advanced Manufacturing</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>5,900</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>+63.9%</b>
Med-Low Tech Manufacturing	9,000	7,500	-1,500	-16.7%
Public Admin	5,800	4,500	-1,300	-22.4%
Low Carbon	2,100	2,500	400	+19.0%
Other Sectors	10,500	10,850	350	+3.3%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>92,300</b>	<b>101,425</b>	<b>9,125</b>	<b>+9.9%</b>

# Plan themes

- ▣ Grow existing and develop new businesses;
- ▣ Skills for employment and progression;
- ▣ Inclusion, well-being and employment;
- ▣ Employment land and business premises;
- ▣ Housing;
- ▣ Town Centre;
- ▣ Transport

# Transformational projects

- HE Campus
- Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMID)
- HS2 station @ Meadowhall.
- Town Centre – Markets/Forge Island/Cinema
- Major leisure development (Pithouse West)

## HE Campus

- ▣ Need for step change in higher level qualifications to drive business investment and growth
- ▣ Rotherham below Y&H and GB for attainment at NVQ4 and above
- ▣ Rotherham College seeking to provide increased HE provision within the town centre
- ▣ Doncaster Gate identified as preferred site and negotiations for sale progressing



# AMID

- ▣ A vision for a world leading, research led, advanced manufacturing cluster, where we design and make the next generation of whole industries
- ▣ Based around R&D capacity of the Advanced Manufacturing Park
- ▣ Seeks to link employment, research, housing, leisure and retail
- ▣ Will link to and regenerate a corridor covering Rotherham town centre – AMP – Sheffield city centre

# Funding

- ▣ European Programme 2014-20
- ▣ Growth/Devolution Deal with government
- ▣ SCRIF/IIP
- ▣ A Rotherham “Growth Fund “
- ▣ RERF

# Issues from consultation

- ▣ Need for a strong vision unique to Rotherham  
– will come out of Roadshows
- ▣ Some local concerns over proposed sites for major developments
- ▣ Further work on targets/ outputs – sub-groups of “Business Growth Board” being set up for this purpose

## Next steps

- ▣ Final consideration by full Council – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015
- ▣ Delivery overseen by “Business Growth Board” of the LSP
- ▣ 3 Task & Finish groups set up to progress and develop delivery plans & identify funding:-
  - *Business development*
  - *Employment & skills*
  - *Town centre*

Questions?

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Improving Places Select Commission</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Winter Maintenance – Review of service response to the severe weather over Christmas 2014</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

The report provides a commentary on the severe weather event over the Christmas holiday period in 2014, and sets out the actions that have been taken to improve the Council's response in future.

### **6. Recommendations**

It is recommended that:

- 6.1 The report be noted, and
  - 6.2 Members identify any further actions that they may wish officers to consider to improve service response to severe weather events.
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## **7. Proposals and Details**

### **7.1 Background**

Christmas Day 2014 fell on a Thursday, so the Council's front line service were effectively 'stood down' until the following Monday; only emergency standby arrangements were in place, and these included Winter Maintenance (gritting) crews. The Council subscribes to a weather forecasting service provided by the Met Office; during Christmas week the 5-day forecast was reviewed and there was no forecast of snow through to the weekend. On Boxing Day the forecast was again checked by the winter Coordinator and at lunchtime no snow was predicted; the forecast changed with about 1½ hours' notice; too late to make any additional arrangements to call in staff. Prior to the snow starting, there was rainfall which prevented the gritters being deployed; when the snow arrived up to 4" fell within an hour in some places.

Because of the amounts of snow the winter maintenance went immediately to 24-hour working, Strategic routes were treated overnight, and principal routes were treated the following day, but as the snow became quickly compacted, the salt was not as effective as it could be. In spite of this only a couple of reports from the emergency services/SYPTE, evidencing that these routes were clear or at least passable with care.

All available gritters were salting continually around the clock from 19:30 hrs on the 26th December (Boxing Day) to 29th December. The Teams rotated from principal routes to secondary routes to side roads and where possible we were able to respond to ad hoc requests after the primary routes were manageable.

While normal standby arrangements were in place, the level of back-up (for hand-salting etc.) was minimal as skeleton staffing levels operated as normal over the holiday period. We will reconsider the how far we stand down services at Christmas, and what are the levels of staffing required to meet such an exceptional event.

Public (and Member) perception was that they have been abandoned - "we didn't see a gritter" – this is at odds with the facts and we can evidence where we have been (through the Exactrak system) but how effective were we at getting the message across?

### **7.2 Waste**

The winter of 2014 was the first year when the Green Waste service was suspended during the winter months. Temporary and Agency staff had been brought in to deliver the weekly (black bin) collections over Christmas but there were no 'spare' resources to provide additional back-up in the event of unexpected problems.

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> December was a scheduled catch-up day, but hardly any collections could be completed; by Monday, ground conditions were such that the service fell progressively behind and by Wednesday collections were up to 4 days behind. A decision was then taken to resume the schedules albeit one day behind; in hindsight, too much detail of the recovery plan was published, and some of the detail was confusing both internally to staff handling customer contacts, and to Members and members of the public.

In order to get schedules back in place as soon as possible we had to accept that some premises were going to have an extended period between collections; in the worst case it was 19 days for blue box and bags. Further slippage occurred because of the volumes of waste that were being presented, many households took the opportunity to put out side waste which couldn't be left on the streets; this slowed down collections meaning that rounds weren't being completed to schedule. This resulted in even more calls to the contact centre and contacts via social media.

Over the period we collected about 200 tonnes more waste than the same period last year.

### **7.3 COMMUNICATIONS**

Waste collection is seen by many as probably the most important service they receive from the Council, so we shouldn't underestimate the impact that disruption has onto the volume of customer contacts and complaints. Most of these were channelled through the Council's Contact Centre.

#### **7.3.1 Contact Centre**

The Contact Centre handled up to 10 times the normal call volumes. Many of these were repeat calls because we'd fallen behind the revised schedules that were published. Some calls could have been anticipated (and avoided) through having FAQs on the website.

A number of callers asked why we weren't maintaining the normal schedules once the snow had gone. In fact we were effectively doing so (just a day late), but this wasn't clearly communicated.

Handling Winter Maintenance calls – while a lot of calls did go to the Winter Coordinator's mobile, many people resorted to calling the Contact Centre when they couldn't get through. The lack of an up-to-date script on the real time situation exacerbated the problem.

The new (Waste) Bartec system was set up to be able to report against scheduled refuse collections only; this meant that staff in Waste Management resorted to using a paper-based system to control/monitor completed collections. There was no real-time information available for Contact Centre staff which provided details of the backlog of missed collections.

#### **7.3.2 Website**

The Emergency banner (Large purple banner on every page) was deployed from 10am Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> Dec following snow during the previous night; this provided links to the latest information about bins and gritting. The highest number of searches that week was related to refuse collections rather than snow clearance or gritting. Many people had turned to the search engine (30%+ of all searches that week) rather than following the links. In previous years the Emergency Banner had proved very effective at directing people to key information; but the conclusion was that customers have become so accustomed to seeing the CSE message which had been continuously posted for some time that they didn't even register it was now a snow disruption message.



Later on, the CSE message was reinstated, and this also deflected customers from seeing the message about disruption to services. There was a single 'website' complaint saying the info was difficult to find – when contacted, the customer apologised for not actually reading the banner. She went on to explain that she wanted/expected the info for bin collection disruption to be on the main homepage.

There were many complaints about lack, clarity and speed of updates. Because service information was complex it was difficult to re-write quickly for customers (e.g. use of week one / week two) which contributed to misunderstandings. Information seemed disjointed in several places, with reliance on the news section rather than use of central page.

Timing about the change of message on the front page from 'adverse weather' to 'disruption of refuse collection' was not as effective as it could have been; this meant that customers had to search for information elsewhere.

We had only one compliment about the updates – in the past, we have had multiple compliments about the speed and clarity of updates.

### **7.3.3 Social Media**

High levels of customer enquiries and complaints were being handled initially by the Communications Team, but there were not enough resources to deal with the volume. As a result we possibly missed the opportunity to understand where more critical service pressures may have been.

Many contacts through social media were abusive in tone, so did they not receive a response.

Many contacts were re-directed to operational staff, which diverted them from managing the situation, especially in Waste Management.

Rather than trying to answer individual messages in detail, a simpler reply such as "we are doing our best to recover the situation, and leave bins out we will get to it by the end of the week" would have been easier to manage.

### **7.3.4 Member Communications**

The Cabinet Member asked that all Member requests went through him as a single point of contact. For Winter Maintenance this worked well.

We placed a great deal of reliance on e-mails to update members, but messages didn't get through to everyone as some Members' inboxes were full, as a result there were more telephone contacts than there needed to be. For the coming winter we will provide the key points of contact for members, and what the protocols are for recovering service disruption. A **Members workshop** would be helpful to establish and clarify these protocols, as it isn't always practical to respond to them individually.

Once protocols are in place these will help provide inform and manage Members' expectations.

### 7.3.4 Other issues

**Salt bin policy** - members feel this should be relaxed to increase the number of bins, but consideration needs to be given to practicality of refilling. This could be supported through the snow warden scheme and work with Parish Councils.

**Bus routes** - SYPTE do not contact us if they are terminating routes early and or taking services off; there were some instances when services were cancelled which may have kept running if they had contacted us to clear specific locations such as 'turning heads'.

## 7.4 CHANGES

The review of the events over last Christmas holiday period has identified a number of areas for change and improvement.

- **Standby arrangements** – staffing levels over the Christmas period have been reviewed to provide greater resilience if we have another severe weather event.
- **Daily communications meeting** - Operations/Contact Centre/Communications team will now meet to consider and agree media messages; this will include working together to simplify the format, and to focus on critical service issues.
- **Frequency of updates** – the frequency of updates during periods of service disruption will be at 8am / 1pm / 4pm to ensure latest information is available; these will be provided in scripts to the Contact Centre, on the website and in Member updates.
- **Establish a single officer lead** –one Communications Officer will take an overview of all channels, agreeing key messages with service and co-ordinating with colleagues to update website / social media
- **A bespoke web page for winter maintenance** – Consider creating a web page that can be activated quickly (or sit in the background permanently). This would include links to all key information as in the example from Derbyshire: [http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport\\_roads/roads\\_traffic/road\\_maintenance/snow\\_info/default.asp](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport_roads/roads_traffic/road_maintenance/snow_info/default.asp)
- The web page will need to have a **clearer message about what the priorities are** as not everything can be the No.1 priority. Precautionary Routes ('A' Roads) need to be shown visually rather than through lists of roads, and a commentary on how we prioritise service request e.g. for emergency services requests or waste collection etc. needs to be included.
- Reinstatement of Google Maps onto the website will allow us to show gritting routes and location of salt/grit bins via the website.
- **FAQs** need to be developed, and links provided via website
- **Development of 'branding' for weather and service updates** - so that, during a period of disruption, updates are highly visible across all channels including website, social media and internal communications.
- **A process and protocols for briefing Members** is in development by service managers and Communications Team, and once formulated needs to be agreed by Members
- **Use of GovDelivery email alerts** – how can we get more people to sign up for alerts?
- **Internal communications** – how do we make better use of the intranet and other channels to get information out?

- **Reaching those not on the internet, e-mail or social media** – need to consider how we reach others e.g. local radio.
- **Other stakeholders** – a wider update list of key contacts such as Parish Clerks, Emergency Services and the Bus Companies has been developed, but others need to be identified.
- A **workshop with the SYPTE and Bus Operators** has been held and a winter protocol has been agreed.
- **Snow Wardens** - we need to work with Parish Councils and Community Groups to publicise the scheme and to sign up more volunteers
- Information from **the Bartec System** is being reviewed to provide better real time information about the status of waste collections in the event of service disruption by the weather. This in turn will enable the Contact Centre to handle calls better.

## 8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

The weather is the most uncertain element in planning and delivering many front line services; it can be unpredictable in its pattern and intensity, so service (continuity) plans are constantly reviewed in the context of the experience from severe weather events.

## 10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Winter Maintenance service makes a direct contribution to the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2013-16, specifically **CP 3 - ensuring all areas of Rotherham are safe, clean and well maintained.**

## 11. Background Papers and Consultation

- RMBC Winter Service Manual
- Rotherham Bus Partnership - Winter Liaison Protocol
- Service Business Continuity Plans

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