

COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, 7th September, 2016

Present:- Councillor Lyndsay Pitchley (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Albiston, Allcock, Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Beck, Bird, Brookes, Buckley, Clark, Cooksey, Cowles, B. Cutts, D. Cutts, Elliot, M. Elliott, R. Elliott, Ellis, Fenwick-Green, Hague, Hoddinott, Ireland, Jarvis, Keenan, Khan, Lelliott, Mallinder, Marriott, Napper, Price, Read, Reeder, Roche, Russell, Sansome, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Steele, Taylor, John Turner, Walsh, Watson, Williams, Wilson, Whysall, Wyatt and Yasseen.

42. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that she had attended a high number of engagements since the previous Council meeting and made specific reference to the Yorkshire Day celebrations on 1 August and promoted the forthcoming Rotherham Show on 10 and 11 September 2016

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chief Executive submitted apologies for absence from Councillors Beaumont, Finnie, Jepson, Jones, Marles, McNeely, Roddison, Senior and Julie Turner.

44. PETITIONS

The Chief Executive reported that there were no petitions had been received since the previous Council meeting in July 2016.

45. COMMUNICATIONS

No communications were received.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor, Councillor Pitchley, declared a personal interest in the Motion at item 10 on the agenda in respect of the Government White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' on the basis of being a governor at a school which sought to become an Academy.

Councillor Buckley declared a personal interest in the Motion at item 10 on the agenda in respect of the Government White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' on the basis of being a governor at a school which sought to become an Academy.

Councillor Albiston declared a personal interest in the Motion at item 10 on the agenda in respect of the HS2 rail project route in the Borough on the basis of a family member potentially being effected by the re-routing proposal.

Councillor Wyatt declared a personal interest in item 8 on the agenda in respect of the minutes of the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting held on 11 July 2016 which considered the transfer of trusteeship of Swinton Recreation Ground. Councillor Wyatt indicated that he had attended other meetings in respect of the matter.

47. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13 July 2016, be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

48. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Before receiving questions from members of the public, the Mayor invited the Chief Executive to address the meeting in respect of a procedural matter concerning public questions at the previous meeting of the full Council. The Chief Executive advised that the Mayor had been provided with inaccurate information regarding the submission of public questions and apologised to the Mayor, Members of the Council and the member of the public who had been advised that their question could not be put. The procedural flaws that had led to the inaccurate advice being supplied had been reviewed and the Chief Executive reported that she was assured that such an error could not happen in future.

The following public questions were received:

Mrs. M. Watson – “Air Quality Monitors – is there a list and can it be supplied?”

In response, Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety stated that there were six air quality monitoring stations, located around the borough. These were located as follows:

Number	Location	Grid Reference
1	School Road, Wales	447377, 382895
2	Blackburn Primary School, Baring Road	438702, 392815
3	Wortley Road, Bradgate (near Effingham Arms)	440991, 393321
4	St Ann's School, Fitzwilliam Road, Town centre	443300, 393350
5	Highfield Springs, Orgreave (near Advance Manufacturing Park)	None available
6	Brinsworth Howarth School	442506, 389120

In response to a supplementary question from Mrs Watson, Councillor Hoddinott undertook to provide Mrs Watson with a written response detailing who was responsible for monitoring the air quality stations.

Mr. M. Eyre asked: "What does this Council think is on the mind of residents and road users when they think of Brampton Road, Sandy Lane and Doncaster Road?"

In response, the Leader of the Council indicated that he did not wish to speculate as to the opinion of those using those roads.

In making his supplementary question, Mr Eyre referred to pot holes being the issue of greatest concern to those road users and enquired whether the Council would commit to restoring the condition of those highways to a higher standard. In response, the Leader of the Council referenced the significant capital investment that the authority had committed to in improving estate roads around the borough.

Mr. W. Newton asked "When you have closed all the Children's Homes in Rotherham, where are you going to place our vulnerable young people that cannot be fostered?"

In response the Deputy Leader of the Council stated "The decision to close Cherry Tree House and Silverwood Residential Care Homes has not yet been made by Cabinet. However, a proposal recommending closure will be considered by Cabinet and Commissioner for Social Care on 12 September. You may be aware that council-run Liberty House is not subject to consultation in relation to planned closure and is judged, 'Good' by Ofsted.

The Residential Care Homes for Children and Young People in Rotherham have historically failed to consistently provide good quality care and support which is evidenced by numerous Ofsted inspections. This is in spite of intensive intervention from the services management to support the residential care homes to improve and provide the quality of care which reflects our ambition to be rated an outstanding local authority.

The strategic direction for children and young people's services as seen nationally, is focused on strengthened family based support and the delivery of improved outcomes through family centred intervention. To this end the Council has committed to the strengthening and growth of the in-house Fostering Service and the establishment of a robust Rotherham Fostering Framework. In addition there is a planned intention to develop an 'Edge of Care' Service which will divert children and young people away from the care system based on the principles of early intervention.

In response to the small minority of children and young people who cannot be accommodated in a family based setting there are a number of services available:

- 'White Rose Framework' - A regional, approved Residential Care provision which Rotherham is a part of and which is quality assured. The White Rose framework provides access to 1888 residential beds from 41 providers'.
- Liberty House – Short-Breaks which will continue to provide support for children with a disability."

Mr Newton enquired as supplementary question whether children and young people in foster care were within a twenty mile radius of Rotherham. In response, the Deputy Leader of the Council indicated that some were and some were not. In some cases it would not be appropriate for children and young people to be within twenty miles of Rotherham.

Mr C. Matthewman asked "What are the Council's views on the HS2 business plan in respect of the proposed route change and what benefits will the revised route bring to Rotherham?"

Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, indicated that the business plan has not been fully assessed as yet from the authority's perspective, principally as there were significant uncertainties in terms of whether there would be a "Sheffield loop" or parkway style station in the Rotherham area. Additionally, it was not known how many homes and businesses would be adversely affected by the HS2 consultation route. In view of that, the Council remained in favour of the original route rather than the revised route put forward for consultation in July 2016.

Mrs. L. Dye asked "Do the Council know the number of properties in the Borough of Rotherham that will be blighted directly or indirectly by the proposed HS2 route?"

In response, Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy stated "The Council is yet to be informed of the number of properties that will be affected by the revised route. This has been requested from HS2 Ltd on a number of occasions and the lack of information has also been noted to the Secretary of State for Transport."

As a supplementary question, Mrs Dye enquired when the Council had learned of the revised route. In response, Councillor Lelliott indicated that the council became aware a couple of days before the public announcement.

Mr. D. Dye asked “The Council supported HS2 which may more than £100 billion, whilst the Council is having austerity cuts and services are getting depleted. Please inform me what reasons you had for supporting HS2 and if you have changed your view what will you do to change the Governments view?”

In response, Councillor Lelliott referenced the potential benefits associated with the original proposal for the route with a station at Meadowhall which was anticipated to have generated jobs in and around the Rotherham area. With the revised proposal having removed the Meadowhall stop, it was not clear what benefit there would be for Rotherham. As such, the Council was not content with the revised HS2 route and associated infrastructure and this view had been formally communicated to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Mr. D. Elvidge asked “If Sheffield Councillors can say no to HS2 because of disruption to their city, why can't Rotherham Councillors do the same and save the unnecessary disruption and stress to their constituents? This, on a project that has no benefits for Rotherham or South Yorkshire under its new proposed re-routing.” Having heard the responses to the previous questions on the HS2 issue, Mr Elvidge advised that he had already received an answer to his question.

Ms. R. Haith submitted the following question: Is it true that RMBC have already discussed the prospect of having a HS2 station at Hellaby?

In response, Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy explained that the Council had made strong representations to the Secretary of State for Transport noting that an HS2 station would be required close to Rotherham and that a station at Meadowhall on the original HS2 route would be the preferred option. A potential station at Hellaby had not been discussed with any party.

Mrs. S. Haith, having asked the question on behalf of Ms. R. Haith, asked a supplementary question on whether Members would vote on behalf of their constituents or on their own conscience on the subject. In response, the Leader of the Council indicated that it was for members to determine how to vote according to the merits of the arguments.

Mr. P. Thirlwall submitted the following question to the Mayor: “Is the Mayor prepared to apologise to me for her imperious attitude towards me at the last council meeting?”

In response the Mayor stated:

“Thank you for your question.

You have already received an explanation from the Chief Executive in respect of your complaint from the previous meeting.

With regard to your direct question to me regarding my management of the previous meeting, I acted on the advice provided to me. That advice indicated that you had not submitted a question in accordance with the provisions governing public questions at Council meetings. You will see from the recording of the meeting that you proceeded to disrupt the meeting and you will appreciate the need for the Council to operate within its own constitution.

My role was to return the meeting to order. Had I been advised that you had submitted a public question by the deadline of Friday 8 July, then you would have been permitted to put your question under Standing Order 8, but given that I had not received such advice I could not allow your question to be put. To have done otherwise would have been a breach of our Constitution.

Your assertion of an imperious attitude mistakes my intention of effectively managing the meeting having regard to the provisions of the Constitution and the advice provided by officers.”

In proposing his supplementary question, Mr Thirlwall made a number of criticisms in respect of the Mayor and her approach to charring meetings and full Council and invited the Mayor to agree with his views. In response, the Mayor declined to agree with what had been said.

Mr. Thirlwall was invited to ask a second question: “Does the Leader believe, that following the local elections in May, that all the Councillors who supported the previous Leader, former Councillor Roger Stone, are no longer be members of the Council?”

In response the Leader of the Council stated that he did not have insight into the personal views of all Members and indicated that the council had moved forward from the time of the former Leader.

49. MINUTES OF THE CABINET AND COMMISSIONERS' DECISION MAKING MEETING

Resolved:-

1. That the minutes of the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting held on 11 July 2016 be received.
2. That an increase in the Capital Programme by £291,977 for the implementation date of the Liquidlogic Social Care Case Management System be approved.

50. WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW - PROPOSED COUNCIL SIZE SUBMISSION

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval of a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) which recommended that the future number of councillors in Rotherham be reduced from 63 to 59.

It was reported that the Constitution Working Group had met twice to consider the future size of the Council to inform the development of a submission to the LGBCE. Having reviewed a number of potential sizes and compared to similar authorities, the Working Group had recommended a future membership of 59 councillors. Subsequent to that, a draft submission had been prepared for the LGBCE's consideration and had been presented to the meeting of the Council for deliberation. The final submission to the LGBCE had to be forwarded by 13 September 2016.

In discussing the report and the issue therein, the Leader of the Council proposed and the Leader of the Opposition seconded the following motion, along with the officer recommendations:

"That the Council Size Submission be amended to provide a more robust case justifying the proposed reduction from 63 to 59 councillors and acknowledging the intent of the Council to continue its commitment to open and transparent decision making, involving all members, as follows:

- Increased use of digital technology has made it easier to be contacted and do work, but has also had the effect of increasing workload
- Increased number of committee meetings in 2016-17, notwithstanding other formal commitments which are not detailed fully within the submission
- Reflecting the need to ensure that there are sufficient councillors to lead the improvement of governance in the council
- Increased detail in respect of the discharge of licensing decision making functions
- Recognition of the various roles that councillors perform beyond attendance at formal committee meetings, such as partnership working or on external bodies
- Reference to the ratio of committee/panel/board roles per councillor in order to discharge effective governance, oversight and decision-making"

Upon being put to the vote, **it was resolved unanimously by the Council:**

1. That the Council Size Submission be amended to provide a more robust case justifying the proposed reduction from 63 to 59 councillors and acknowledging the intent of the Council to continue its commitment to open and transparent decision making, involving all members, as follows:
 - Increased use of digital technology has made it easier to be contacted and do work, but has also had the effect of increasing workload
 - Increased number of committee meetings in 2016-17, notwithstanding other formal commitments which are not detailed fully within the submission
 - Reflecting the need to ensure that there are sufficient councillors to lead the improvement of governance in the council
 - Increased detail in respect of the discharge of licensing decision making functions
 - Recognition of the various roles that councillors perform beyond attendance at formal committee meetings, such as partnership working or on external bodies
 - Reference to the ratio of committee/panel/board roles per councillor in order to discharge effective governance, oversight and decision-making
2. That the Chief Executive be authorised to make any final amendments to the submission, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, by way of response to comments or suggestions from the LGBCE and to send the final submission.
3. That the Constitution Working Group be authorised to continue to lead on the Review of Ward Boundaries for the duration of the review, subject to any further proposals being agreed by Council for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

51. NOTICE OF MOTION

GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER 'EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE EVERYWHERE'

Moved by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Cooksey:

That this Council notes:-

- That despite the significant opposition to the proposals in the White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere, published in March, the Government has reiterated that it wants all schools to become academies within multi-academy trusts (MATs) by 2022 and will force them to do so if they are in local authorities that it determines

to be no longer 'viable' or to be 'underperforming'.

- That the plans will be incredibly expensive with estimates on the cost to the taxpayer as high as £1.3 billion. Forced academisation will happen at a time when funding per pupil in real terms is set to fall by as much as 8 per cent or more, meaning that scarce funds that could otherwise be spent on children's education will instead be wasted on an unnecessary top-down reorganisation of schools.
- That the plans are not supported by any evidence that academy status in and of itself improves standards of education. Around 85% of local authority maintained schools are good or outstanding.
- That the plans will remove from parents the right to elect representatives to the governing body of their child's school. There will be no requirement for academy governing bodies to have local authority representatives or for MATs to have elected staff governors.
- That the plans entail the break-up of the national system of pay and conditions for teachers. Academy trusts or individual academies will have to make decisions at a school level. This will be a distraction from time that could be better spent on teaching and learning.
- That the plans are indicative of a Government with the wrong priorities for education. The proposals in the white paper will do nothing to address - and may in fact worsen - teacher shortages, a lack of school places in many parts of the country, chaos over curriculum and assessment changes and funding pressures in schools and colleges.
- That the plans have attracted widespread opposition from parents, school staff, governors, heads and MPs and Councillors from across the political spectrum.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Oppose the Government's proposals and undertakes to speak out against, and encourage campaigning against the plans.
- Note that given the scale of the opposition these changes are by no means inevitable. School governing bodies should not therefore rush or feel pressurised into converting to academy status.
- Reject the idea of forming protective or local MATs in advance of any proposals being enacted.
- Call a meeting of school governors, trade unions and parents to highlight the Council's position on the white paper.
- Work with other councils, trade unions, parents and governor groups to oppose the provisions in the White Paper.

An amendment to the motion was proposed by the Deputy Leader of the Council and seconded by Councillor Hoddinott to delete the words "Reject the idea of forming protective or local MATs in advance of any proposals being enacted."

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion, which read as follows:

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Oppose the Government's proposals and undertakes to speak out against, and encourage campaigning against the plans.
- Note that given the scale of the opposition these changes are by no means inevitable. School governing bodies should not therefore rush or feel pressurised into converting to academy status.
- Call a meeting of school governors, trade unions and parents to highlight the Council's position on the white paper.
- Work with other councils, trade unions, parents and governor groups to oppose the provisions in the White Paper.

Upon on being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

PROPOSED HS2 ROUTE IN THE BOROUGH

Moved by Councillor John Turner and seconded by Councillor Mick Elliott:

That this Council notes:

- the apparent intent of the government to create the new HS2 railway system
- the present altered suggestion for the route to go through Aston and Bramley.

That this Council therefore resolves to

- a) Oppose the intent to re-route HS2
- b) Persuade the government to abolish the project entirely.

An amendment to the motion was proposed by Councillor Sue Ellis and seconded by Councillor Jenny Andrews to delete the words "persuade the government to abolish the project entirely" and replace with the words "work with our MPs and other likeminded councils to identify the most beneficial transport infrastructure for Rotherham and South Yorkshire."

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion, which read as follows:

That this Council resolves to

- a) Oppose the intent to re-route HS2
- b) Work with our MPs and other likeminded councils to identify the most beneficial transport infrastructure for Rotherham and South Yorkshire.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

52. AUDIT COMMITTEE

Resolved:-

That the reports and minutes of the meetings of the Audit Committee be adopted.

53. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Resolved:-

That the reports and minutes of the meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board be adopted.

54. PLANNING BOARD

Resolved:-

That the reports and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board be adopted.

55. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS

It was reported that no questions had been submitted.

56. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN

Councillor Napper asked "Can the Leader explain why ratepayers cannot ring Streetpride to report a complaint? Does the Council think every ratepayer has a computer?"

In response, Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, stated "The Council's telephone Contact Centre will handle any Streetpride enquiry, including complaints, on telephone number 01709 336003. They operate a full service from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock in the evening and an emergency telephone service 24 hours a day. Council Customers can also report a complaint in person via any of our Customer Service Centres or on-line using a computer or their mobile phone."

Councillor Napper asked “Can the Leader tell me how many Rotherham Council houses have been given to non-Rotherham residents over the last two years?”

In response, Councillor Beck, Cabinet Member for Housing, stated “An analysis of lettings data over 2014/15 and 2015/16 shows a reduction in the percentage of properties let to people from outside Rotherham. In 2014/15 only 7% (113) of the total lettings (1565) were to made to people who previously lived outside Rotherham. In 2015/16 only 5% (101) of the total lettings (2047) were to people who previously lived outside Rotherham. Reductions are due to the changes to the Allocations Policy which applied a local connection criteria. This came into effect in October 2014. The Local Connection Policy for Rotherham is that a person has a local connection where:

- They have lived for the last 3 years in Rotherham through their own choice.
- They are currently employed in Rotherham and have been for the last 3 years
- They have direct family who live in Rotherham and they have done so for the last three years. Direct family members include spouses, civil partners, parents, sons, daughters, brother and sisters.

Councillor Napper asked “What are the aims of the Council with regards to community cohesion? What results have we had? Will the budget still be the same?”

In response, the Leader of the Council stated “The aims of the Council with regards to community cohesion have been incorporated into our new Council Vision, part of which states:

“Rotherham is our home, where we come together as a community, where we seek to draw on our proud history to build a future we can all share. We value decency and dignity and seek to build a town where opportunity is extended to everyone, where people can grow, flourish and prosper, and where no one is left behind. ”

The council has no specific budget for community cohesion but working towards more cohesive local communities is everyone’s business at the council and responsibility does not rest with one team or service. Indeed, most of what the council does contributes to this vision of cohesion, with expenditure on it part of mainstream spending.

Together with our statutory and voluntary sector partners we support a range of initiatives that promote community cohesion. Forthcoming high profile events include Rotherham Show and Rotherham Community Carnival.

In addition on a weekly basis communities across the borough hold fun days, galas, sports events, community clean ups, and volunteering projects all aimed at bringing communities together with positive results such as:

- increasing understanding between different groups
- managing tensions through mediating between different groups and resolving emerging conflicts
- celebrating the different ways in which communities make a positive contribution to the economic, social and environmental development of the borough”

Councillor Napper asked “What is the Council’s position with regards to backing and encouraging sport in Rotherham?”

In response, Councillor Yasseen, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services, stated “The Council works through a partnership ‘Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity in Rotherham (2010-2020)’.. This strategy is used to guide the work we do with our many partners (140+), in order to encourage and engage as many people as possible in sport and physical activity.

Leisure & Green Space Services provide support and advice to many voluntary groups and clubs in order to help them to run and develop their own activities and we also directly provide a wide range of services and opportunities ourselves. These include:

Leisure Centres: 4 state of the art leisure centres located at Aston-cum-Aughton, Maltby, Rotherham Town Centre and Wath upon Dearne. All of them currently hold ‘Excellent’ service awards as part of Sport England’s QUEST programme and 2015, Maltby Leisure Centre was voted leisure centre of the year at a national leisure industry award event.

Active Rotherham Sports Development Team: The Team aims to increase participation in sport and physical activity with additional focus on those most inactive, young people, older people, and people with a disability. It has developed strong partnerships and network infrastructures with schools, clubs, community groups and other organisations to provide and enable high quality sport and physical activity opportunities. Specific Programmes include: disability provision: areas of deprivation (Dalton, Thrybergh, East Herringthorpe and Canklow); children and young people; and diversionary sport (activities contributing to the reduction of youth nuisance crime). The Active Rotherham Team is also responsible for the development and operation of Herringthorpe Athletics Stadium.

Green Spaces Team: This team manages a range of green spaces (11 town parks, 14 recreation grounds, 31 multi use games areas, 10 skate parks, 3 BMX tracks, 6 outdoor gyms, sports pitches, countryside sites and parks) that support formal and informal opportunities for people to take part in sport and physical activity.”

Councillor B. Cutts asked “The Pakistani Muslim Women’s Association TASSIBEE (what is the true title) has been gifted over £316,000. With Rotherham Council financing this association over the past eleven years by an average of £50,000 per year, is it intended to continue or terminate this financial support?”

In response, Councillor Roche, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, stated “Tassibee describe themselves as an organisation that provides Education Training and Social Activities for BME Women.

There a small number of people accessing the Tassibee service using their personal budget as a Direct Payment but our contractual relationship with Tassibee ended in 2014 as a result of savings targets. Up to that date the service was commissioned from April 2010 to March 2012 and extended on two occasions until 2014 at a cost of £17,265 per annum. The service commissioned was to support BME women to access Adult Social Care services. In the period of one year 71 BME women accessed the Social Service Assessment process but only 30 were referred through the help of Tassibee. In addition they were awarded a small amount of short term funding to increase the numbers of BME Carers engagement which was effective. The Learning & Development Team commissioned training from Tassibee to take place during 2013-14 financial year delivery of 5 ‘bite size’ training sessions for unpaid carers 2 for BME older women 2 for BME younger women and 1 for BME men. The Council have no contract in place currently with Tassibee and are not planning to in the near future.”

Councillor B. Cutts asked “With Rotherham giving its full respect to our National Armed Forces with a march through town and the Council flying the Army, Navy and Air Force flags at Riverside offices, why and who replaced the Country’s “Union Flag” with the Lesbian and Gay “Rainbow” flag?”

In response, Councillor Alam, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Finance, stated “Rotherham Council Celebrated Armed Forces Day in June by flying:-

- At the Town Hall: Armed Forces Flag and Union Flag
- At Riverside House: White Ensign (Royal Navy), Army Flag and the Flag of the RAF

Members will also be aware of the range of events in the Town Centre to celebrate Armed Forces Day which received very positive feedback. Riverside House also flew the Rainbow Flag in support of Pride Week, following contact from the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Government department which regularly advises local authorities on which flags to fly during the year.”

Councillor B. Cutts asked “What skills or experiences are not available within Rotherham Council that requires us to employ the Leader of Sandwell MBC (Birmingham), 100 miles away, as a “Policy and Performance Officer” with an anticipated salary of £38,000?”

In response, the Leader of the Council stated “In terms of the general point implied here, about the Council’s recruitment policies, I can assure Cllr Cutts that the Council always recruits on merit, with the best candidates chosen to fill any role.

When any vacancy arises at the Council and is advertised, internally or externally, sometimes it is possible to recruit people that live in Rotherham, but sometimes the best candidates will live outside Rotherham.

However, in terms of the specific individual referred to by Cllr Cutts in his question, please can I also refer him to a response provided to an similar question raised by Cllr Cowells at the last Council meeting, on 13th July 2016, as well as the advice provided at that meeting by the Monitoring Officer with regard to the appropriateness of raising questions such as this about individual council staff at Council meetings.”

Councillor B. Cutts asked the following question “In the contemplation that a further two children’s homes are to be closed with OFSTED “GOOD” reports, is this Chamber to debate the subject, thus making the prospect public? (With children sleeping in Riverside Offices, children and carers put up in Holiday Inns, four new applications since July etc. etc.)

In response, the Deputy Leader of the Council stated “We are not proposing to close homes with recent ‘good’ Ofsted reports. The Strategic Review of Residential Care which concluded earlier this year evidenced grave concerns about the quality of Cherry Tree House and Silverwood and their ability to safeguard vulnerable children and young people. The review further compounded the historical failings of Children’s Services in Rotherham and recommended that new and better services were required to ensure children and young people were safeguarded and supported to achieve excellent outcomes in the future.

The recommendations reflect the strategic direction for Children and Young People’s services, which is focused on family based support and the delivery of improved outcomes through innovative and family centred provision.

In response to the extensive review previously mentioned, which included children and young people, a report to Cabinet in June 2016 recommended the council moved to a planned closure of both homes in light of such systemic failings, subject to consultation and decision by Cabinet and Commissioner for social care.

In its most recent inspection Silverwood was judged as 'Declined Effectiveness' even when at the time only two young people, which represents just 40% of occupancy, were resident at the home. When Ofsted visited this home they found the two children unsafe and inspectors found that the children were visiting places of concern without risks of CSE being properly managed.

Cherry Tree meanwhile was judged as, 'Improved Effectiveness' but again, only two young people were resident, 40% occupancy, and the home's overall rating is 'Requires Improvement'.

All this is in spite of intensive management intervention and cost to support the services to improvement to a standard you would expect for your own sons and daughters. Due to poor quality both homes operated at a very low occupancy previously mentioned; and this increased the cost per child to £5,800 per week at Silverwood and £7,300 per week at Cherry Tree.

The unprecedented demand for placements on a national, regional and local level has meant that we have had to respond effectively in placing children into some good provision, with the exception of a very small number of children with extremely challenging behaviour, whose specific needs could not be met appropriately in an emergency, out-of-hours situation. In spite of this being a relatively small scale issue, it is obviously a priority for the council to resolve this as quickly as possible and in the most appropriate way.

The specific cases which resulted in children staying overnight at Riverside House occurred in spite of available beds at Silverwood, which was not suitable for children concerned due to the potential impact on existing residents and with staff unable to cater for children with very challenging behaviour and who, according to the latest Ofsted inspection, could not provide assurance in relation to CSE risk assessment and requisite responsive action.

The specific cases which resulted in children staying in Holiday Inns account for two young people. These young people were supported with qualified staff and were moved to suitable accommodation within a short space of time. This is not unusual action for an authority to take in an emergency situation, involving a child with very challenging behaviour.

In response to the Rotherham context which, in recent months, has seen an unprecedented spike in demand for placement requests and high demand for extremely vulnerable children and young people with complex needs, the following action has been taken:

- A Partnership Forum with Independent Fostering Agencies is now well established based on the 'Rotherham Fostering Framework'. The providers are working with us to identify potential carers who will provide emergency 48 hour support pending the location of a longer term placement;
- Plans are in place to increase the number of Rotherham Foster Carers who can better cater for the needs of adolescents with challenging behaviour;
- The provision of safe accommodation in Rotherham has been identified for those young people who require an emergency response 'out of hours' and is now operational;
- Work with Housing Strategy colleagues and void properties has been completed and a potential property identified which, if feasible, will be up and running by the end of September; and this new support service for emergencies will be appropriately staffed."

Councillor B. Cutts asked "Since the closure of Meals on Wheels and the Laundry services, what other services have been transferred to private enterprises or transferred to other Municipal Authorities – and why?"

In response, Councillor Roche, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, stated "The decision to decommission the Meals on Wheels service took place in 2008 following extensive consultation. Adults requiring support with taking on nutrition are supported to do so as part of their care package should this be required. The preparation of meals is undertaken by a provider as a commercial enterprise with the service user choosing that provider and the price they wish to pay.

Around the year 2008 a number of Rotherham MBC older peoples care homes were closed as they failed to comply with regulatory and quality standards and were not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act. The care homes were under occupied and residents were transferred to alternative independent sector care homes that could meet regulatory standards.

The Laundry service was decommissioned in 2009 it ran on fixed days and was not personalised. The service was not financially viable with high replacement and maintenance costs associated with the building which housed the laundry and the machinery/boilers. The service users utilising the laundry service as a result of continence issues were supported by the NHS Community Nursing Service to be prescribed continence wear/protection aimed at supporting adults in the most dignified way possible.

Since that time the services that have been commissioned and contracted with the independent sector and voluntary and community sector have not replaced any 'in-house' service. All Adult Social Care contracted care and support services are detailed on the contracts register which is available to the public at:

http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200110/council_budgets_and_spending/712/see_details_of_council_contracts

Councillor Reeder asked “Why, in the article in the Advertiser “Eastwood New Deal” did Councillor Hoddinott suggest that I had stated residents of Eastwood should be sent home, when she knew I had quoted David Cameron?”

In response, Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, stated the Advertiser had reported the comments because Councillor Reeder had made the comments.

Councillor Cowles asked “I am informed that we are to pay consultants £130k to produce a redesigned town centre. Is this correct, and if so, could we have a copy of the terms of reference issued to the consultants?”

In response, Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, stated: “A commission for delivery of a Town Centre Masterplan has recently been out to tender, with a number of bids received. These are currently being appraised for shortlisting, followed by interviews and an appointment made by the end of September and as such no formal tender price has been agreed. The terms of the brief that was issued to potential bidders was approved at Cabinet on 11 July 2016 and was attached as an appendix. The document is in the public domain and can be located on the Council’s intranet site.”

Councillor Cowles asked “The Advertiser, a few weeks ago, contained an article covering the 'New Deal' a plan for Eastwood. Could you tell us what the cost and time scale for your plan is?”

In response, Councillor ..., stated “No additional Council staff have been recruited or additional costs incurred to support the Eastwood Deal. The Council is managing this work through the prioritisation, reallocation and tasking of existing Council resources, tackling issues in areas of most need (not exclusively Eastwood). As a result, there are no separate budgets which break down the costs of centrally managed services e.g. street cleansing and environmental enforcement, into ward areas.

There is no specific overall timescale for the completion of the Eastwood Deal. This is because the aim is to create an ongoing and sustainable plan for improvements including some of the longer term aims to bring about a cohesive community which is able to deliver, manage and monitor sustainable improvements to quality of life issues for residents.”

Councillor Cowles asked “The Eastwood Plan suggests the use of both CCTV and enforcement as two of the tools to combat fly-tipping. Jamie Kirk continues to report regular incidence of fly-tipping, so could you tell us how many fines have been issued thus far from CCTV footage?”

In response, Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, stated "Three fly tipping incidents have been caught by the new CCTV cameras and two of these have been traced back to addresses in Eastwood and the potential perpetrators. Although no fixed penalty notices have been issued as yet for these cases, investigations are ongoing and if a fixed penalty fine is an appropriate way of dealing with the offence rather than prosecution, this will be offered. If a person fails to pay a fixed penalty fine they will automatically be prosecuted for the original offence of fly tipping.

The five CCTV cameras which have been installed in Eastwood to combat Anti-Social Behaviour and fly-tipping started being installed on 15 July 2016. Three of the five cameras were specifically installed to monitor known fly-tipping hotspots (the Fitzwilliam Road end of the access road behind Milton Road and Grosvenor Road, the entrance to the playing fields off Hardwicke Road and the St Anns Road end of the access road behind Bramwell Street and Lindley Street).

Initial results suggest that the cameras may have contributed to a reduction in fly-tipping in the area by approximately 30% in its first full month of operation (32 incidents in August 2015 and 24 incidents in August 2016), however, this is a snapshot of one month and little should be assumed from this data at this stage. Anecdotal information however from both enforcement staff and residents that those enforcement staff have spoken to in the area, suggests this reduction has been most evident in the areas covered by the cameras and therefore their value as a deterrent is already becoming clear. This does not mean the problems will not migrate to other streets.

Officers routinely patrol the area and investigate all incidences of fly tipping they find and which are reported by the public. This can entail sifting through bags of household waste to identify a name or address of the source of the fly-tipping. In the majority of cases there will not be any evidence of the source of the waste or witnesses to the offence. As it can be extremely difficult to gain evidence as to who is responsible in these types of cases, education will play as important a role as enforcement in combatting the particular challenge that Eastwood faces.

Although fixed penalty notices have not been offered in relation to these or other Eastwood cases as yet, seven fixed penalty notices have been issued for fly tipping offences across Rotherham since April 2016. Five cases of fly tipping in Eastwood prior to the two caught on CCTV are being prepared for prosecution. None of these cases have been considered appropriate for the lesser £200 fine of the fixed penalty notice."

Councillor Short asked "What revenue is raised from Parking Meters in RMBC? How much and what cost is involved in the emptying/collection of cash and also the cost of the parking attendants involved?"

In response, Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy stated: "The current year's projected income from 'pay and display' machines is approximately £750,000. The parking machines are emptied by the Parking Services Handy Man who is accompanied by a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO). The total annual salary cost for the cash collection duties is approximately £14,000. The cost of counting and banking the collected cash is 1.1% which means that the annual cost of counting / banking will be in the region of £8,250."

Councillor M. Elliott asked "The flagship Tram/Train Pilot Project from Sheffield to Parkgate was due to run in early 2017, but apparently that is no longer achievable due to Network Rail problems. What assurances are the council seeking that the project can be got back on track before it hits the buffers?"

In response, Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, stated "RMBC is continually lobbying South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) for information on the progress of this project with recent correspondence taking place in late August 2016. Delays to the project are associated with the non performance of Network Rail. The PTE asked for a revised and realistic programme in the Spring of 2016. This is yet to be delivered. At various meetings with the PTE, RMBC officers have noted the discontent with the construction programme and the PTE has passed RMBC's views and similar opinions of others to Network Rail. The PTE is also very much frustrated with progress and shares the views of RMBC."

Councillor Turner asked "During the Brexit campaign UKIP went to Barnsley and we were astonished to find that in the town centre there seemed to be a relatively non-existent immigration population. How can that be?"

In response, the Leader of the Council indicated that he was not responsible for Barnsley and therefore Councillor Turner's question should be directed to the Leader of Barnsley MBC.

57. URGENT ITEMS

It was reported that there were no urgent items requiring the consideration of the Council.

58. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

As there were no remaining items on the agenda, there were no matters that would require the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.