

**COUNCIL MEETING  
7th December, 2016**

Present:- Councillor Eve Rose Keenan (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Albiston, Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Bird, Brookes, Buckley, Clark, Cooksey, Cowles, Cusworth, Cutts, Cutts, Elliot, Elliott, Elliott, Ellis, Evans, Fenwick-Green, Hague, Hoddinott, Ireland, Jarvis, Jepson, Jones, Lelliott, Mallinder, Marriott, Napper, Price, Read, Reeder, Roche, Rushforth, Russell, Sansome, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Taylor, Julie Turner, Tweed, Walsh, Watson, Williams, Wilson, Whysall, Wyatt and Yasseen.

**75. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Deputy Mayor conveyed the Mayor's apologies for not being able to attend today's meeting.

The Mayor had attended over one hundred engagements since the last Council Meeting and wished to convey her very best wishes to Members and officers for the forthcoming Christmas holidays.

The Deputy Mayor also reported on her own activity and the pleasure she had had in leading the first Rotherham Carnival with Ray Matthews.

She spoke further on her involvement with Shiloh, the Friends of Herringthorpe Valley Park who were seeking volunteers and her own engagements over the last six months.

The Deputy Mayor was also pleased to report on the first "Outstanding" Ofsted report received by the Council in respect of Liberty House. A sign of the improvements being made in Children and Young People's Services.

Members were asked to join the Deputy Mayor in showing their appreciation in recognising the achievements and efforts of officers, Darren Higgins, Richard Fisher, Debbie Hollis, Lisa Ball, Caroline Foster, Vicky Battersby, David Goldsborough, Leighann Blackett, Rachelle North, Shane Reilly and Sophie Godson.

The Deputy Mayor also confirmed the resignation of two Councillors - Councillor Ian Finnie, Ward Member for Dinnington, and Councillor Andrew Roddison, Ward Member for Brinsworth and Catcliffe.

Members were also asked to have sensitivity and respect the confidentiality of the victim in respect of Item 15 on the agenda, the motion in respect of Councillor Conduct.

Members' attention was also drawn to the protest earlier today outside the Town Hall by CSE survivors and victims. The Deputy Mayor and a number of other Councillors met with the protesters and heard their

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concerns, which have been heard and were being taken seriously by the Council and other public bodies in Rotherham.

When asked if he had any announcements to make Councillor Read, Leader, confirmed he had nothing to report.

### **76. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor Pitchley) and Councillors Allcock, Khan, McNeely, Senior, Steele and John Turner.

### **77. PETITIONS**

The Deputy Mayor reported that four petitions had been submitted, but had not met the threshold for consideration by Council, and would be referred to the relevant directorate for a response to be prepared. The petitions concerned:-

- From residents highlighting parking issues on Duncan Street, Brinsworth.
- From residents about speeding on Magna Lane, Dalton.
- From residents regarding anti-social behaviour at Barratt Corner, Browning Road, Herringthorpe.
- From residents requesting a 'No Waiting' restriction on the junction of Bennett Croft and Ryton Road, North Anston.

### **78. COMMUNICATIONS**

No communications were received.

### **79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

### **80. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

**Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, be approved for signature by the Mayor, subject to an amendment to Page 11, last sentence (Minute No. 74) to now read "The Council had developed provision for these extenuating circumstances and if Councillor B. Cutts wished to contact the Deputy Leader or Ian Thomas a site visit would be arranged to our very short term emergency accommodation at your earliest convenience."**

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**81. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The following questions were received:-

(1) From Mr. P. Thirlwall – “Could both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Board tell him how many times they have voted against officers’ recommendations on planning applications at Planning Board and delegated powers meetings in their present position. If the number is fewer than twenty times each, please specify the relevant applications.”

In response, Councillor Atkin, Chairman of the Planning Board, confirmed every planning application was considered on its merits and judged on balance. The Planning Officers would make a recommendation based on their professional judgement and the Planning Board took strong cognisance of that opinion, but on occasions there were differing views.

It was pointed out that named votes at the Planning Board were not recorded, but on clarifying the position from when he and Councillor Tweed became Chair and Vice-Chair in June, 2014 the Planning full Board had voted against recommendations of officers five times.

From memory Councillor Atkin confirmed that both he and Councillor Tweed had voted against an application in Letwell and a house extension in Todwick.

In terms of delegated powers meetings the Chair and Vice-Chair did not have the authority to overturn officer decisions and only considered those decisions where less than five objections had been made or for example the application in question was from someone employed by the Council or if it was felt such a decision should be referred to be made by the Planning Board.

In a supplementary comment Mr. Thirlwall pointed out that at most since being Chairman Councillor Atkin had only voted against officer recommendations on five occasions, or possibly less, which was far less than the Planning Board itself.

He referred to his own attendance experience where Councillor Atkin had voted in favour of the officer recommendation and other Members of the Planning Board had voted against, which was proven incorrect when the application went to appeal.

Mr. Thirlwall regarded delegated powers meetings as pointless if the recommendations by officers were agreed to. Planning applications were not to be pre-determined and judged on their own merits, but he believed minds were probably made up coming to Planning Board. He suggested the Council give consideration to electing a more objective Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning.

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Councillor Atkin thanked Mr. Thirlwall for his vote of confidence and confirmed he probably did vote less against officer recommendations, but he was never pre-disposed to a decision. However, he believed Mr. Thirlwall's view of delegated powers meetings to be inaccurate and again reiterated his comments as he had above on delegated powers meetings with regards to officer decisions. He gave an example of the process of an application for a site in Todwick.

He agreed that Mr. Thirlwall was probably correct in his recollection of where he had voted against an application which went to appeal, but the decision letter of the Inspector did indicate he agreed with the Council's decision, but on taking into account the views of the Secretary of State regarding wind turbines, actually turned the application down, not because the decision of the Council was wrong.

Mr. Thirlwall wished to correct an inaccuracy referred to above in that the Inspector dealing with the application had stated in the first and last paragraph that he was going to refuse the application.

(2) From Mr. C. Vines – “Councillor Read made statements on BBC Look North about the convictions of CSE perpetrators and quoted:-

“Rotherham Council have made changes to the political leadership team and all those who should be held to account will be.”

What political leadership has changed and what progress in holding those to account.”

The Leader confirmed the change in political leadership was well observed and understood. In terms of holding people to account it had been seen this week, and later on this agenda, how when a Member of this Council committed a criminal act action would be taken within the Council's power to do something about it. It was also known that an investigation into a former Member of the Council had been referred to the Metropolitan Police and action taken against them.

Investigations into child sexual exploitation would take a period of time, but the Leader stood by what he had said that where those allegations came forward he would do all he could to hold those people to account. He would not get into speculating who did what, when and why and he hoped that Members of this Chamber had learnt from the experience of others.

In a supplementary question Mr. Vines confirmed he was looking around this Chamber and could see Members of this Council present who had attended the seminar in 2005 and knew all about CSE as recorded in the Jay report, kept quiet and did nothing for ten years. If this was not wrong doing then what was. He asked why had no action been taken against those Members and why were they still in the Chamber and being promoted.

The Leader did not accept the premise of the question that Members had attended an hour's seminar, did nothing for ten years and were fully aware of the full facts that then came out. Individual people have taken responsibility for their actions. Questions had been asked by the Labour Party and reflected in the selection of candidates and if people had further allegations against individuals of the Council then the standards regime was in place for this to be done. The longer the trawling over the actions of Members who were not leading Members at that time simply took up energy from dealing from the problems being faced today.

**82. MINUTES OF THE CABINET AND COMMISSIONERS' DECISION MAKING MEETING**

**Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet/Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 be received and Minute Nos. 88 (Capital Programme) and 89 (Forge Island) be approved and reports and minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2016, be received.**

Councillor Jepson referred to Minute No. 99 (Discretionary Signing Policies) and offered his full support to the review of this policy having experienced difficulties for signs in his own Ward and found the whole process onerous.

He also referred to Minute No. 119 (School Crossing Patrol Consultation Update) where he had found out from local media that a school in his own Ward was to lose its crossing patrol. As Ward Member he had not been consulted, but would have liked to have been. He found it strange that one school, which was on the same road as another, was to keep its school crossing patrol when the other was to lose theirs. He, therefore, welcomed the sight of and some clarification as to the criteria and the consultation carried out.

The Leader referred back to the budget setting process last year where it was recommended to make cuts to school crossing patrols and following safety assessments where crossing patrols did not meet indicator standards to withdraw funding. Schools expressed concern at the short notice, which resulted in one year funding to allow for consultation with schools to take place. The majority of schools where school cross patrols were in place chose or indicated to continue to fund themselves, which could explain the discrepancy about the two in Councillor Jepson's Ward.

The Leader confirmed he was happy to pick up this matter and talk through the criteria with Councillor Jepson on which schools had been chosen. Members did not favour making cuts to services such as this, but due to the austerity measures in place and the sensitivity of decisions taken to keep school crossing patrols in place he was more than happy to pick up individual instances if necessary.

Councillor Jepson had not realised consultation had taken place given that he had three schools in his Ward who were potentially to lose school crossing patrols. However, it would appear that Anston Park had been reprieved and Anston Brook was to lose their school crossing patrol. He was pleased if schools were picking up the funding, but still found it strange that of the two schools on the same road the school crossing patrol was to continue at one, which it was deemed the safer of the two. He was more than happy to pick this up with the Leader after meeting.

Councillor B. Cutts referred Members to the Council agenda, which was more than 250 pages, and commented that the time to consider the contents was insufficient. With this in mind he asked if consideration could be given to the Council meeting more frequently if the number of pages could not be reduced.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**83. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET - SEPTEMBER FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

**Resolved:- (1)** That the following projects be supported for inclusion in the Approved Capital Programme 2016/17:-

- **Area Assembly – Neighbourhood Investment - £140,000** (already approved 'in principle' by Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016).
- **Swinton Civic Hall Refurbishment - £44,868**
- **Replacement of Damaged Waste Bins - £150,775**
- **Capitalisation of Cleansing Equipment - £40,000**
- **Capitalisation of GIS Transport Software - £25,000**

**(2)** That the changes to budgets identified in Appendix 6 for projects which are already included in the Approved Capital Programme be approved.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**84. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

**Resolved:- (1)** That the proposed budget adjustment for 2016/17 summarised in section 2.6 of this report be approved.

**(2)** That the updating of the Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in this report, be approved.

Councillor Watson drew attention to the Sustainability Strategy for Children and Young People's Services and the pressures on funding, not just in Rotherham, but across the country, caused by the increased demand in Children and Young People's Services.

Adoption of this recommendation would enable the Council to assist and help families maintain children in their care, rather than picking up the pieces afterwards.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**85. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

**Resolved:- (1)** That the Rotherham CIL Charging Schedule be approved with a provisional implementation date of 6th April, 2017.

**(2)** That the Rotherham CIL Instalments Policy be approved.

**(3)** That the procurement of appropriate software to implement and monitor the CIL charge be approved, subject to the Council's normal procurement policies.

Councillor Jepson offered his full support to the Levy, but had been disappointed with the time taken to bring the Levy into effect. He, therefore, urged the Council to bring forward the Levy by the proposed implementation date.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed adoption of such proposals did take time, but confirmed she would do everything in her power to have this Levy in place by April, 2017.

Mover:- Councillor Lelliott

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**86. PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS - RECORDING AND PUBLICATION OF OFFICER DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to a report where it detailed the Constitution Working Group had considered the arrangements for the recording and publication of decisions made by officers. The report set out the recommendations of the Working Group and formalised the value of decision making and would ensure this was publically recorded by officers.

The Constitution Working Group agreed decisions were required in a proper structured forward plan so that all forthcoming officer decisions could be seen and where appropriate, or of public interest or political concern, these would be referred to the Cabinet for accountable decision making.

This recording system would be taken on board to enable officer decision to be recorded and reviewed properly by scrutiny, thus strengthening the role of Members.

**Resolved:-** (1) That the amendments to the Constitution in respect of the recording and publication of officer decisions as set out in Appendices 1 to 4 of this report be approved.

(2) That the proposed amendments to the Constitution take effect from 2nd January, 2017.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Yasseen

**87. PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS - THE DEFINITION OF A "KEY DECISION" AND DELEGATION TO OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to a report which detailed how the Constitution Working Group has considered the Scheme of Delegation and in particular the appropriate financial limit for spending decisions by officers and the implications for the definition of a Key Decision and this report set out the Constitution Working Group's recommendations to Council.

It was suggested that the limit of spending taken by officers should reduce from £500,000 to £400,000 and because of the way decisions were being taken in Cabinet it was suggested that £400,000 form the mark of key decision.

The tightening of decisions outside of the political domain of £400,000 was lower than Barnsley and Sheffield, but higher than Doncaster.

It was hoped Members would embrace this new system with a proper forward plan of officer decisions, which could be pulled into the political domain, thus making this a more accountable responsibility. This would be alongside the system of pre-scrutiny, where non-executive Members could make recommendations before Cabinet made decisions and that decisions recommended by Cabinet to full Council could be scrutinised and the informed decision made with the inclusion of the full report for consideration.

This new suite of measures maximised accountability and allowed for decision making in an effective way. However, these processes would be subject to review in twelve months' time, but were certainly an important step in the right direction.

**Resolved:-** (1) That the amendments to the Constitution in respect of the definition of a "Key Decision" and the financial limits for officer decision making as set out in Appendices 1 to 3 of this report be approved.

(2) That the proposed amendments to the Constitution take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2017.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Yasseen



**88. NOTICE OF MOTION - BUS SERVICES BILL**

Moved by Councillor Cooksey and seconded by Councillor Price

This Council notes:-

1. That the Bus Services Bill currently passing through Parliament includes Clause 21 that will effectively “prohibit a local authority from forming a company for the purposes of providing a local bus service”.
2. That the Localism Act (2011) provides general powers of competence to local authorities.
3. That municipal bus companies like Reading and Nottingham provide some of the best bus services in the country and have a successful track record of increasing bus passenger numbers and providing high quality bus services.
4. That polling by We Own It found that a majority of the public (57%) oppose Clause 21, whilst just 22% support it. The opposition to Clause 21 is consistent across voters from all political parties.

This Council believes:-

1. Clause 21 contradicts the general powers of competence and the spirit of the Localism Act 2011.
2. If there is a need and a demand from their public, then Councils should be able to provide their own bus services
3. Should they wish, Councils should be legally able to follow the model developed by Reading and Nottingham.
4. Consequently Clause 21 should be omitted from the Bus Services Bill.

This Council resolves:-

1. To write to Lord Ahmad and to call on the Department for Transport to omit Clause 21 from the final legislation
2. To write to Sarah Champion MP, John Healey MP and Sir Kevin Barron MP to ask them to oppose Clause 21 when the Bus Services Bill reaches the House of Commons and to ask them to write to Lord Ahmad and the Department of Transport to raise concerns about Clause 21. In addition, we call on them to support Amendment 97, made by the House of Lords, which designates certain bus routes as assets of community value because this provision is important to isolated rural areas as it recognises that there are some areas where the local bus route is a lifeline for the local community particularly the elderly and the low paid.
3. To work with any organisations such as We Own It to publicise our opposition to Clause 21 in the local media.

Buses are really important. Many people rely on them to get to work, go shopping or meet family and friends. Private bus companies took over in the 1980s. Since then, bus fares have gone up, services have got worse

and fewer people are using the buses except in London. Privatisation and deregulation (lack of control) have made things worse.

Research shows that public ownership of buses would save us £506 million a year (TFQL Community Interest Company) which could be invested in better services. In some cities and countries buses are already run for people not profit so we know it can be done.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously by the Council.

**89. NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR CONDUCT**

Moved by Councillor Cowles and seconded by Councillor Julie Turner

This Council notes that:-

Councillor Roddison, by his conduct in:

- continuing to take public money without making any attempt to participate in his Council duties; and
- by his grubby action in sneaking in the side entrance to the last Council meeting in order to comply with Council rules on attendance to enable him to continue to take public money

has brought this Council into disrepute in the eyes of the public.

This Council, therefore, resolves that Councillor Roddison be censured for his conduct.

An amendment to the original motion was proposed by Councillor Read and seconded by Councillor Watson to be amended as follows:-

**To insert, after** "...conduct in:" to read;

- Breaking the law by committing a sexual assault

**To insert after** "...in the eyes of the public." to read;

Council further notes the current legal limitations with regards to enforcement of Councils' standards regimes, meaning that Councillors cannot be expelled from office unless they have been convicted of a criminal offence and been sentenced to a term of imprisonment [whether suspended or not] of three months or longer without the option of a fine.

**To insert after** "...conduct" to read;

"...and requests that the Chief Executive raise the concerns of this Council about the limitations of the current national Standards regime with the government, as illustrated by this case."

So the amended motion would read in full:-

This Council notes that:-

Councillor Roddison, by his conduct in:-

- Breaking the law by committing a sexual assault
- continuing to take public money without making any attempt to participate in his Council duties; and
- by his grubby action in sneaking in the side entrance to the last council meeting in order to comply with council rules on attendance to enable him to continue to take public money

has brought this council into disrepute in the eyes of the public.

Council further notes the current legal limitations with regards to enforcement of Councils' standards regimes, meaning that Councillors cannot be expelled from office unless they have been convicted of a criminal offence and been sentenced to a term of imprisonment [whether suspended or not] of three months or longer without the option of a fine.

This Council therefore resolves that Councillor Roddison be censured for his conduct and requests that the Chief Executive raise the concerns of this Council about the limitations of the current national Standards regime with the Government, as illustrated by this case.

The amendment to the motion was put and carried and became part of the substantive motion.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously by the Council.

(The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Keenan), Councillors Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Bird, Brookes, Buckley, Clark, Cooksey, Cowles, Cusworth, B. Cutts, D. Cutts, Elliot, M. Elliott, R. Elliott, Ellis, Evans, Fenwick-Green, Hague, Hoddinott, Ireland, Jarvis, Jepson, Jones, Lelliott, Mallinder, Marriott, Napper, Price, Read, Reeder, Roche, Rushforth, Russell, Sansome, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Taylor, Julie Turner, Tweed, Walsh, Watson, Williams, Wilson, Whysall, Wyatt and Yasseen voted in favour of the motion)

## 90. **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee be adopted.**

Mover:- Councillor Wyatt

Seconder:- Councillor Walsh

**91. PLANNING BOARD**

**Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board be adopted.**

Mover:- Councillor Atkin

Seconder:- Councillor Tweed

**92. STAFFING COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:- That the reports, recommendation and minutes of the meetings of the Staffing Committee be adopted.**

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**93. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS**

Councillor Brookes asked the Spokesperson for South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue at this time of year when people were more likely to use candles and additional electrical appliances, were we ensuring that people were taking advantage of all the help offered, such as free alarm installation? Was the message going out to all our residents on staying safe and preventing risks?

Councillor Atkin responded by confirming a great deal of work had been undertaken by the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Section 41 briefing paper had been circulated to Members yesterday, which highlighted the number of partnership awards won by the Service.

The Service had fitted 1,064 smoke alarms in vulnerable people's properties in Rotherham alone this year. Earlier this year a campaign had been delivered to reduce the number of electrical related house fires in people's homes and this had seen vans advertising the safer message to all areas of South Yorkshire at risk of house fires along with radio adverts about the most common cause of electrical blazes. Officers also encouraged visitors to check the safety of their home through the completion of a short online checklist. All of this activity resulted in a 27% fall in the number of electrical fires during the campaign period.

Currently the Service was focusing on kitchen fires promoting cooking safely messages online and through community events. The campaign was launched in October and would be measured by the objective of reducing the cooking related fires by 5% during October to December, 2016.

This information had been provided by the Service's Communications three man team who had recently won a national award for the small team of the year.

**94. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN**

**(1) Councillor Brookes** asked could an update be provided on progress since this Council resolved to oppose the re-route of HS2? Residents in her Ward were further concerned about the re-route since the Government updated the Sustainability Statements in November, highlighting detrimental noise and visual impacts on the villages of Thurcroft and Brampton-en-le-Morthen.

The Leader confirmed that the residents' concerns of Councillor Brookes' Ward echoed those in other Wards and further to the motion passed by full Council the Leader wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport setting out the support of this Chamber for that position.

On 15th November, 2016 the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed the majority of the route of phase 2, which was the line the Government believed the new high speed railway should take. However, this did not include the railway through South Yorkshire. In making the announcement the Secretary of State for Transport said that he was minded to accept the proposals for the route through South Yorkshire, as set out in July this year and which included a station at Sheffield Midland, as the Government's preferred option, subject to seeking views in the Route Refinement Consultation. This was also launched on the 15th November and would run for sixteen weeks, the results of which would be used to inform a decision on HS2 in South Yorkshire in 2017.

As part of this consultation HS2 Ltd. have already written to residents living in areas that HS2 passed through and a series of information events were also planned, details of which were to be announced in the near future. To date HS2 Ltd. have not sought the views of the Council as part of the Route Refinement Consultation. When they did the Council would respond in accordance with the Council's position which was to oppose the new eastern route and support the original route through Meadowhall.

Separately, if the route was to follow the M18 corridor Sheffield City Region Combined Authority would commission a study which looked at how to maximise the benefits and minimise the disruption for local communities as part of the process. The intention was to have the work completed and considered by the Combined Authority so that it could feed into the Route Refinement Consultation. This Council continued to support the original route through Meadowhall and would endeavour to press this to the Government.

Councillor Ellis made a point of information and confirmed that a public meeting on HS2 was to take place in Bramley on 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

**(2) Councillor Simpson** asked could the Council congratulate the Rotherham NHS early move towards more care in the home, but also stand against the failed privatisation of NHS services by Labour, Conservatives and Lib-Dems by the front door and back doors especially mergers and A & E cut backs of STP.

Councillor Roche, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, agreed with the point about congratulating the NHS in providing care in the home thus promoting independence, something which had been argued for a long time.

A copy of the South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw STP had been circulated to Members and whilst there was concern nationally about the potential impact of STP's, as far as we were aware there were no STP plans that would impact on A & E at Rotherham.

Indeed the Council shared the determination of the colleagues in Health to want to maintain services at Rotherham and District General Hospital. As Members were aware there was an information session on the STP last week and if Members were unable to attend and would like more information then a 1:1 briefing with the Cabinet Member was invited.

The Rotherham Place Plan was co-produced by the Rotherham CCG, RDaSH, Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, VAR and the Council in response to the South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw STP requirement for local plans. It was important that the two were seen as different as the Place Plan was felt to be very beneficial for Rotherham and built on our best practise in areas like social prescribing.

The Place Plan focused on integrated health and social care and places an emphasis on prevention and promoting independence. The five key areas included:-

- providing the environment to enable self-management and social prescribing
- locality working across health and care based in GP practices
- co-ordinated care in hospital via a single point of contact including mental health provision
- triage at A&E to ensure patients are referred to the correct pathway
- development of a specialist reablement centre

Moving on Councillor Simpson appeared to be making a political point about privatisation and may be alarmed at the election of Paul Nuttall as UKIP Leader. Councillor Roche made three quotes from the new UKIP Leader.

Strangely enough the quotes referred to had been deleted from the UKIP Leader's webpages and a view that UKIP would not wish to privatise the NHS while Paul Nuttall was Leader. However, Councillor Roche again referred to Sunday's Andrew Marr Show where Paul Nuttall was asked

specifically about this. After listening to the responses Andrew Marr stated, based on Paul Nuttall's answers, that it was quite clear he was privatising the NHS.

Councillor Roche accepted Andrew Marr's comments after hearing it fully and was personally opposed to the privatisation of the NHS. However, he was not sure if Councillor Simpson was opposed to the UKIP Leader's posts or Andrew Marr's judgement.

In a supplementary question Councillor Simpson pointed out that Councillor Roche was referring to matters that happened a long time ago and that it was UKIP's policy that things were free at the point of sale.

However, going back to his original question Councillor Simpson indicated that we were undergoing a privatisation of the NHS through the front and back doors. Doctors' surgeries were becoming profit making centres where they were taking NHS services and running these as a business and amalgamating. The new consultation did not mention anything about stroke units which doctors and nurses were warning against. In Rotherham if a patient had a stroke it would take two hours to get to a stroke unit. Patients had to be there before two hours.

This back door privatisation was not going to work and amalgamation was worrying people who were ill. Examples of other ways of privatising poor NHS service was through Podiatrists urgent visit which could take five months. If privatised the visit could be that day or tomorrow. That's through the back door.

In a supplementary question Councillor Simpson believed that this Council should fight against privatisation and again gave an example of people making money from the NHS through Virgin Care who had profits of £700m and upwards with no payment of tax and 3,000 strong petition had been collected against this so called service.

Councillor Roche again referred to two things – the first was the stance that services should be maintained at Rotherham and District General Hospital. General Practitioners had been running separate business for years and this was nothing new, but this was not part of the STP. Changes at Rotherham Hospital would be looked at in turn, but wholesale NHS privatisation was opposed.

**(3) Councillor Cooksey** asked could the Cabinet Member provide Elected Members with an update on how the Selective Licensing Scheme was performing and, in particular, could he tell Members what difference it was making in the areas in which it had been implemented?

Councillor Beck, Cabinet Member for Housing, confirmed the scheme was eighteen months in since it was introduced and it became live in May, 2015 and was still a key priority for the Council in the improvement of standards in private rented sector.

Improvements had been made to make enforcement regimes more integrated than they were and which now saw selective licensing sitting with Enforcement and Environmental Health and Anti-Social Behaviour colleagues.

The Council was very pleased with progress and had seen the majority of landlords complying which they were thanked for. In last couple of months a Selective Licensing Working Group had been established with representatives from the Opposition and Improving Places Select Commission to review and talk to some tenants who lived in properties now licensed by the scheme and obtain their views how the scheme was running. The review would also involve talking to landlords who were complying and also those landlords who were less prepared to work with the scheme.

Where landlords were not complying to improve the standards of housing and health and safety in private rented accommodation the Council would and had prosecuted landlords and had successfully prosecuted its third landlord.

This Council had a policy and a scheme and were serious about making this a success and where people failed to work and comply in this important area of improvement the Council would pursue and prosecute.

**(4) Councillor B. Cutts** referred to the last Council meeting in question 5 to the prospect of the "Bus Station" being moved. Now with the repair costs being estimated at £10 million, does it increase the prospect?

Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, confirmed that the PTE was committed to the refurbishment of the bus station.

**(5) Councillor Simpson** referred to the need for more Bobbies on the Beat for Brinsworth. In the villages of Rotherham teenagers were behaving like teenagers, but did not know where the line was. This week people have been arrested in the act of child exploitation and so, therefore, asked if we could have special funding for more local police visibility and neighbourhood CCTV?

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, agreed with the sentiments that more bobbies were required in Brinsworth and elsewhere in the Borough. The Tory Government had taken £50m out of South Yorkshire Police since 2010 and there had been a loss of hundreds of jobs. As local Councillors the damaging effects had been witnessed with the loss of neighbourhood policing.

However, the new Chief Constable was looking at this and the potential for neighbourhood policing with a named officer where residents could raise issues with them. The Leader had raised this personally with the



Chief Constable and it was hoped there would be some movement on this in the New Year.

In terms of the CCTV, the Council had secured special funding very recently. The Safer Rotherham Partnership controlled a number of re-deployable CCTV systems that could be rapidly deployed to meet specific demand, which could be requested by Members where there were specific concerns. The Council now had thirty-five cameras following the recent increase of fourteen from the special funding.

In a supplementary question Councillor Simpson explained that Rotherham needed special funding and needed more money not less. He asked why our two Members of Parliament were not fighting for every penny to get Rotherham more money to safeguard the children of Rotherham.

Councillor Hoddinott did not think a day went by where local Labour Councillors and Members of Parliament did not raise the issue about this Tory Government and public services. They were taking money out of services and already today we had heard about Adult Services and bus services. Members were opposed to what they were doing and the impact on our communities and expressed the absolute determination to campaign against those issues whenever possible.

**(6) Councillor Cowles** referred to Look North stating that the tram train project had been further delayed and asked the Cabinet Member if she was aware of this and what she was doing about it? There was also a recent statement about Government funding for housing projects in Sheffield and Barnsley but no mention of Rotherham why not?

Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, confirmed the tram vehicles had been delivered and were at the Supertram Depot in Sheffield. The timetable for start of operations for the Tram-Train to Rotherham was dependent on the completion of works on the rail line by Network Rail. This was not in the control of the Council, but representations to Network Rail and the DfT were being made to ensure that all efforts were made to deliver the project in the shortest possible timescale.

In terms of the housing funding for Sheffield and Barnsley this related to successful applications for Housing Zones. Rotherham submitted a bid for a Housing Zone in conjunction with Sheffield in 2015 which was unsuccessful. The Council was exploring the opportunities for submitting a further bid for Housing Zone status in 2017.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles referred to recent hearings of the sites and policies from the Government Inspector as part of the Local Plan process where the biggest objection from members of the public was on further housing development and the lack of infrastructure especially transport.

All of this highlighted the need for local infrastructure today and tomorrow not in fifteen years' time. He believed that in reality what was support was not in my back yard and at a recent debate he attended in Sheffield Kevin Barron, M.P. supported the train as long as it was on the previous route with a station at Meadowhall, but indicated HS2 was very unlikely to happen. However, engineering reports now indicate that insufficient space is available at Meadowhall to build a station which would mean selection of the eastern route by Government. He, therefore, asked when was this Council going to stand up for Rotherham people and do what they want.

Councillor Lelliott responded by referring to the previous HS2 motion submitted to Council and the Opposition's vote against the amendment which proposed looking at all infrastructure and transport in Rotherham. As with all planning applications transport was always key and if highway inspectors believed the transport network was not viable then this was considered further with developers.

(7) **Councillor B. Cutts** referred to the last Council meeting and question 7 regarding the closure of "children's homes" and the necessity to provide emergency sleeping accommodation other than Riverside Offices. The Cabinet agreed for a "site visit" of the new accommodation and he asked why have the Chamber not been accommodated before now?

Councillor Watson, Deputy Leader, confirmed that a mutual misunderstanding had arisen where both he and Councillor Cutts were waiting for each other to be in contact. This would now be resolved and arrangements would be sorted this week.

(8) Councillor Cowles referred to the improvements in Eastwood which should be applauded, especially in relation to drug seizures. There remained a long way to go and asked was there a sustainability plan for gains made, when can he see it, and what was the cost to-date of the Eastwood operation?

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety responded by thanking Councillor Cowles for the recognition in the first few months of trying to address the issues in Eastwood, but there was still a long way to go.

It was clear from the start that to be sustainable there was a need to change what was happening. Section 4 of the Eastwood Plan set out the need for work with the local community and how to get the sustainable change in place. Work was taking place with community groups and there was a probable need to establish more, such as Neighbourhood Watch which needed to be encouraged and supported. Volunteers had come forward to help with the Eastwood Plan and their first litter pick was next week and the actions of the local residents needed to ensure the change taking place carried on.

There was no special budget for Eastwood and this was picked up from existing resources. What had been witnessed in Eastwood was better partnership working with the Police, local residents and community groups in getting more out of existing resources. There had been one specific cost over and above the Eastwood Plan and this was £2,500 for an extra CCTV camera in the area.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles believed the costs for Eastwood were not being monitored, but he had received information from a reputable source which indicated that between June and September, 2016 the costs were £70,000 and if this was extrapolated across the year this amounted to £200,000, with little control or concern on how much things cost.

The Leader had previously been asked about tangible uncontrolled migration into this area with no response. Examples of problems included largest community migration, fly tipping, drug dealing, noise and anti-social behaviour and children going to school covered in insect bites. The Leader had indicated that he could not stop people living where they wished, However, reference was made to previous Advisers to Government and their reports about local authorities should be more proactive and develop a policy on integration,

If the Council was providing £200,000 a year for Eastwood Councillor Cowles asked if the same amount could be provided for all the other Wards as residents were unhappy at not getting the same support. He also asked if the Leader could ensure a separate line item in the budget so costs could be monitored and controlled as £200,000 was not insignificant.

Councillor Hoddinott expressed her confusion as Councillor Cowles believed the improvements coming about in Eastwood were due to his lobbying yet he did not want to pay for improvements. The £200,000 for Eastwood was from a £3m Street Cleansing budget and the quote given was an average and was simply not broken down by Ward.

Councillor Cowles referred to issues raised around bed bugs and noise all of which had been identified in the Eastwood Plan and as set out in black and white. It was about what to do about them with shrinking resources, but the Council was determined to work with partners and do something about issues. The amount of poverty in Rotherham could not be ignored and Eastwood was one of the most deprived communities, which made tackling the issues a challenge.

Reference was made to previous reports and Councillor Hoddinott reflected on the recent Casey Report about segregation in this country and usefully highlighted issues of Local Authorities and funding to deal with migration.

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Resources were needed, but unfortunately this Government was taking this away, but it was hoped the recommendations in the report would provide some extra funding.

As a Council there was no control over migration, but had to deal with some of the issues related to it. It was increasingly difficult to deal with issues in the Eastwood Plan and it was important to feedback regularly. A feedback event had been held recently and there would be a further one through the Area Assembly scheduled for February to share information on the progress being made.

**(9) Councillor B. Cutts** referred to the Council hosting a meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November with all internal services and the Police discussing an extreme criminal event that was most likely to again severely damage Rotherham's reputation on the National media. He asked with representation from Sheffield involved could the Leader confirm this situation and advise why he was not present?

The Leader confirmed a strategy meeting was held at the Town Hall to consider the murder of a local man and to share information and plan any response to potential safeguarding issues. This was an operational meeting and free from political interference which was why the Leader was not in attendance.

In a supplementary question Councillor B. Cutts asked where the Leader was that morning because if he had been the Leader he would have been present.

The Leader explained he would have to check his diary as to his whereabouts, but reiterated it would have been inappropriate for anyone in his position to have attended that meeting. He would let the professionals get on with their job, receive updates and not interfere.

**(10) Councillor Cowles** referred to recent Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meetings where it was shared that some previous budgets have been set at a level that were knowingly unachievable. Thus it had been necessary to use reserves to cover the shortfall and asked was the Leader aware of this and what did he think about this practice?

The Leader confirmed there had been an increase in the budget for Children and Young People's Services each year for three year increasing it by 50%. In 2015/16 the budget was set at £44m but was further increased during the course of the year when it was found the Service would outturn at higher level because of the out of authority places and agency staff. The majority of this came from reserves.

In the current year a budget was set and this had been increased again with some savings realised around Early Help. A review had been undertaken of high out of authority placements, but if savings were not delivered the Directorate was still continuing to face pressures. The

Deputy Leader and Strategic Director had the task of delivering a high quality Service to keep children safe with investment in a sustainable way.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles referred to the Deputy Leader indicating the budget had been set at a level that was not achievable. He accepted that there was a need to balance the budget, but setting it at an unachievable level was a misrepresentation of the finances of this Authority.

He referred to the mid-year and in year increase of £8m to £53m with the outturn at £61m. On a budget of £44m, which was so poor, there was a £17m overspend. The state of the town's finances was not due to Government cuts, but the Labour Party had the finances of this town on its knees and he asked what was the Leader going to do about it.

The Leader responded to Councillor Cowles and explained that when the budget was set two years with increased investment UKIP was in agreement. Of course many Councils faced a challenge in balancing its Children's Services budgets but Rotherham's had been increased probably more than anyone else in the country. By taking these steps and keeping costs under control the Council would continue meet the needs of its Children's Services Department in a way that was sustainable.

**(11) Councillor Albiston** referred to Shelter reports that 250,000 people were homeless across England. A figure that was set to rise further and asked what was the Council's approach to helping those who were homeless/vulnerably housed in Rotherham?

Councillor Beck, Cabinet Member for Housing, confirmed this year in Rotherham so far there had been 65 households registered as homeless, but importantly 369 prevented from becoming homeless as a result of the partnership service provided. In terms of the partnership approach the Council was working closely with Shiloh to support people potentially falling homeless or becoming homeless, along with the Citizens Advice Bureau in making sure people could claim the relevant benefits, a greater understanding of their finances and being able to cope with ever increasing strains on personal budgets.

On a positive note two bids had recently been submitted to Government Office – one with regards to rough sleepers to assist and talking to them in locating and accessing services. Currently the Council knew of three males who were rough sleepers and work was taking place to assist them in the best way possible.

Another bid was in partnership with Shiloh for £200k over three years to develop the digital interface to access services. This was most important as this was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of capital home and all efforts were being made to raise awareness and offer support where necessary.

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In a supplementary question, Councillor Albiston asked was the Cabinet Member confident that the Council fully understood and was prepared for the devastating impact of the removal of the housing benefit entitlement for 18-24 year olds in the local housing allowance cap and would the Authority not end up with the difficulties like Sheffield and Doncaster.

Councillor Beck referred to the previous Council Meeting where he spoke about the devastating changes that the Government was introducing as part of welfare reform and the expectation to pay essentially private sector rents. The Council was prepared and Councillor Beck liked to think Rotherham was ahead of the game in helping to mitigate the impact on potentially 1900 tenants in Rotherham by these changes.

There had been a recent report to Cabinet on housing income which should reinforce to make it more about financial inclusion and supporting people early so they can make choices. Shortly the Allocations Policy would make amendments which detailed an approach to give priority to under 35 year olds to the 74 bedsits. A multi-agency working group had also been established looking at accommodation for under 35 year olds. The Council was doing a lot, could do more, but could never do enough.

**(12) Councillor Cowles** explained at the same Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting it became apparent that current overspend forecast of £7.8m for Children and Young People's Services was also understated and he asked could the Deputy Leader now inform us as to what the projected overspend for this budget item for this financial year 2016/17 was now expected to be?

Councillor Watson, Deputy Leader, responded by confirming as a like for like comparison this was just under £8.6 m.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked if the 2015/16 overspend was £8m then moved to £17m he did not believe a word the Deputy Leader had to say. For two-thirds of this year the overspend was £7.8m and by the end of the financial year could this be nearer £12m.

Councillor Watson believed he had given Councillor Cowles a genuine answer.

**(13) Councillor Napper** referred to a recent Government reports where 4,000 children were missing in England and Wales and he asked if the Council know how many if any were in Rotherham?

Councillor Watson, Deputy Leader, assumed that this question could be taken in two ways - how many children in Rotherham have gone missing, as opposed to how many children go missing and end up in Rotherham. He was unable to answer the latter.

He explained that if one child went missing it was too many. Services were working hard to reduce that number. Compared to last year this had gone down by 50%. This year there had been in the order of 200 missing episodes and that could be just a few hours, but could be longer. The reason why this number had decreased was due to the extra work taking place in Social Services to improve the permanency of placements. This was an improving picture, but it would never be good enough while ever children were still going missing.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper asked what could Children Services do to trace these missing children when some may be taken abroad for forced marriage etc. and how do we check if they have been taken out of the country.

Councillor Watson explained that none of the reported children were still missing. The young people in this regard related to missing episodes where the people who had got parental responsibility did not know their whereabouts. When the children did return officers rigorously undertook return home interviews to find out what the issues were and to secure improvements to ensure it less likely to happen again. As indicated previously it was an improving picture and actions were being taken to reduce the risk.

**(14) Councillor Cowles** referred to the Rotherham Institute for Obesity (RIO) which was being much publicised as needing nearly £200,000 to stay open and asked was there any commitment to fund from Council budgets in 2017/18?

Councillor Roche, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, explained Public Health had to consider prioritising the spend of the Public Health Grant which had reduced by £1.3m in 2016 and would be reduced further over the next three years (from a £17m budget), plus the Council's ASR savings.

The National Institute of Health and Clinical Evidence (NICE) recommends that all clinical weight management services (above Tier 2) should be the responsibility of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to commission in the future and that included Tier 3 Adult Services such as RIO. Any services commissioned by Local Authorities should focus on prevention services and those at Tier 2 or below.

Adult Weight Management Services would continue to be offered across Rotherham, but the way it was delivered may have to change. Rotherham spent proportionally more money on Adult Obesity Services than our neighbours and national average. We could not continue to commission all of the existing Adult Weight Management Services to the same degree within the reduced budgets we were facing.

To do this Public Health had:-

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- Carried out a comprehensive consultation programme running from July – September 2016.
- Established a Members Working Group to help prioritise areas of Public Health delivery.
- To consider evidence based guidelines, such as NICE.
- To consider local need.

Currently Weight Management Services were not a mandated service within the terms of the Government Public Health Grant. There were a range of services that must be delivered by the Council as a condition of the Public Health Grant. Services including Child Health Services (e.g. Health Visiting), Drug and Alcohol Services, Sexual Health Services, plus a range of other services that also contributed to public health priorities (e.g. Stop Smoking Services).

Any final decision on Weight Management Services would be made at full Council when the budget is considered in March.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles was pleased to hear what Councillor Roche had to say because on googling the guy who ran this organisation he was shocked at some of the responses with claims like the Britain's leading anti-obesity campaign was in turmoil. He, therefore, asked if there were any stringent public access indicators.

Councillor Roche confirmed there were metrics of these Services and he was more than happy to ask the Director of Public Health to pass this information on.

**(15) Councillor Napper** referred to un-regulated schools which were not covered by any rules or regulations and asked did the Council have any in the Rotherham area?

Councillor Watson, Deputy Leader, confirmed that as far as the Council was aware there were no unregulated schools in Rotherham, but by the very nature of the unregulated school they did not have to register.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper referred to some of the more extreme groups who did not allow young people to celebrate Christmas, birthdays, had no TV or telephones, which he believed was against a child's human rights. He asked if the Deputy Leader could please check again.

Councillor Watson confirmed he would ask relevant officers to re-check.

In coming to the end of the agenda the Deputy Mayor wished everyone a Merry Christmas, a happy and safe holiday period and all the very best for the New Year and formally closed the meeting.