

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Date and Time:- Friday, 5 May 2017 at 9.00 a.m.
Venue:- Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.
Membership:- Councillors Albiston, Allcock, Clark, Cowles, Mallinder, Price, Sansome, Short, Steele (Chair) , Julie Turner, Walsh and Wyatt

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.
3. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 March 2017 (Pages 1 - 6)
6. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press
7. Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge - Accessibility of Public Transport for Young People (Pages 7 - 23)

Items for Pre-Decision Scrutiny

In accordance with the outcome of the Governance Review, the following item is submitted for pre-scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting on 15 May 2017. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are invited to comment and make recommendations on the proposals contained within the report.

8. Property Asset Management Policy and Strategy (Pages 24 - 43)
9. Building Stronger Communities (Pages 44 - 69)
10. Flag Protocol for Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall (Pages 70 - 78)

For Discussion/Decision:-

11. Work in Progress (Chairs of Select Commissions to report)
12. Date and time of next meeting
Wednesday 7 June 2017 at 11.00 a.m.
(pre-meeting for Members commences at 9.15 a.m.)

Sharon Kemp.

SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
Friday, 31 March, 2017

Present:- Councillor Steele (in the Chair); Councillors Albiston, Allcock, Clark, Cowles, Mallinder, Sansome, Short, Walsh and Wyatt.

Apologies for absence:- Councillors Price and Julie Turner.

124. TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE PRESS AND PUBLIC SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF ANY PART OF THE AGENDA.

The Chair reported that there were no items of business on the agenda which would require the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

125. TO DETERMINE ANY ITEM WHICH THE CHAIRMAN IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.

The Chair reported that there were no items of business on the agenda requiring urgent consideration by the Board.

126. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest by Members or officers present.

127. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

It was reported that no questions had been received from the public or press.

128. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2017

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2017 be agreed as a true and correct record.

129. REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING

Consideration was given to a report which set out the conclusions and recommendations of a review of neighbourhood working across the borough. It was noted that the aim was to undertake a review which would herald the introduction of "a new model of citizen engagement and neighbourhood working linked to a review of Area Assemblies" to provide a focus on communities and introduce a new way of working.

It was reported that the working group, which had been led by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services, had supported a new neighbourhood working model which would result in the 21 electoral wards becoming the key building blocks for supporting councillors in their community leadership role. It was further reported that a complimentary project had been initiated by the Council and Rotherham Together Partnership to examine locality working across the wider partnership. This would present an opportunity to bring together other stakeholders e.g. South Yorkshire Police (SYP), Health, voluntary and community sector, and other Council services to develop a holistic locality model.

The Working Group had made a long list of recommendations regarding the governance and accountability framework for neighbourhood working, the preparation and status of Ward based place plans, devolved budgets and dedicated Ward based support.

It was noted that detailed consultation had taken place with Area Assembly Chairs and Vice-Chairs and that community consultation would be incorporated into the ward plans during the transitional period. It was further noted that the report proposed to Cabinet that transitional arrangement be agreed for the new model to allow a flexible and organic move towards ward based working over a 12 month period.

In presenting the report, the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services, Councillor Yasseen, indicated that the proposals were not prescriptive and had been developed to enhance accountability, as well as citizen engagement and involvement.

Members sought assurances in respect of how the arrangements would work in wards where all three councillors did not represent the same party and where accountability would rest where all three councillors were not agreed on the priorities of the ward plan. In response, the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services indicated that members from the same party did not always agree on the priorities for their ward, so the political split in a ward was not necessarily a significant obstacle to the proposed approach. With regard to accountability, the proposal for reports back to the Cabinet Member, along with reports to the Improving Places Select Commission and Council were considered to be adequate. It was noted that the model was designed to bring councillors to work together for their communities irrespective of political persuasion and that priorities should be influenced by community demand.

Members highlighted the absence of an overall neighbourhood working strategy and indicated that this required attention during the transitional arrangements.

Resolved:-

1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
2. That training be arranged and delivered for Ward Councillors on developing Ward Plans as a matter of urgency.
3. That the Cabinet Member be recommended to initiate the development of an overall strategy for Neighbourhood Working.
4. That an update report on implementation of the new model be submitted to Improving Places in October 2017.
5. That a further report be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in March 2018 detailing the review of the new arrangements.

130. FEBRUARY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the financial position for the Revenue Budget at the end of February 2017 and was based on actual costs and income for the first eleven months of the financial year and forecast costs and income for the remaining one month of 2016/17.

It was reported that the revenue position, compared with the revised budget approved by Council on 7th December 2016, showed a forecast overspend of £2.017m. This forecast overspend had reduced by £526k since the December monitoring report. It was further reported that further mitigation of the potential impact on reserves would be addressed through the robust procurement and recruitment controls that had been put in place. It was noted that the majority of the approved budget savings for 2016/17 had been or were going to be achieved, with the main exception being the £1m saving from the review of staff terms and conditions of employment agreed by Council in March 2016 which would not now be delivered in 2016/17. The non-delivery of the 2016/17 £1m saving was reflected in the forecast outturn in the report.

Members noted the financial position and reflected on the budget setting process, which had concluded at the Council meeting on 8 March 2017, and the ongoing concerns around managing potential overspends and underspends. The Board reiterated its concern to the Leader of the Council regarding the robustness of monitoring throughout the year and indicated that it would wish to receive a quarterly budget monitoring report in the 2017-18 financial year.

Resolved:-

1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
2. That Cabinet continue to monitor the budget on a monthly basis to identify potential variances at an early stage and implement management actions to deal with potential overspends or underspends.
3. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board receive a quarterly financial budget monitoring report in the new financial year.

131. COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR JOINTLY COMMISSIONED SERVICES WITH ROTHERHAM CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP (CCG) - COMMUNITY OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the outcome of a review of Community Occupational Therapy Services by the Council and Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group.

It was noted that the Community Occupational Therapy provided assessments for adults, older people and children who were permanently or substantially disabled and their carers. The overall cost of the services in 2016/17 was £746,000 per annum, with the Council contributing £372,000 towards the service and the CCG contributing £374,000 per annum.

It was reported that a formal review had recently been completed by the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group in order to:

- (a) Ensure that the service is meeting the needs of customers and their carers
- (b) Reduce the waiting times for assessment
- (c) Reduce the number of customers being referred to the service by signposting them to alternative services at the first point of contact
- (d) Carry out analysis of performance data to predict demand and capacity of service
- (e) Carry out analysis and evaluation of customer and carer satisfaction rates and outcomes
- (f) Examine whether the service promotes Value for Money.

The review demonstrated that the Community Occupation Therapy service had carried out assessments for low level/single need customers and that resources needed to be diverted towards providing assessments to support complex needs. In addition to this, it was identified that Assistant Practitioners/OT Assessment Officers could be upskilled to carry out assessments for level access showers, straight stair-lifts and ramps and that the level of paperwork completed was onerous and needed to be streamlined.

The report, therefore, recommended that the contract for the Community Occupational Therapy Service be extended for one further year to allow alignment with the Adult Care Development Programme (including the BCF Work Programme) and the evolving Specialist Housing Strategy. Within the extended period to April 2018, providers would be expected to achieve all recommendations highlighted in the COT review report and to work with the Council and the CCG to implement new models of service delivery. The Lead Commissioner arrangements for the Community Occupational Therapy Service were proposed to be assigned to the Clinical Commissioning Group as they had the largest financial stake and greater capacity to lead the activity.

Having reviewed the proposals within the report, Members indicated that they were broadly supportive of the proposal. The Board considered that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health should seek the input of the Health Select Commission if further work was required on this area at Member level.

Resolved:-

1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
2. That if additional work is required at Member level, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health be recommended to approach the Health Select Commission to support such activity.

132. REVIEW OF PETITIONS SCHEME

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the outcome of a review of the Council's petition scheme, which had been undertaken to support the ongoing improvement of the authority's governance.

It was noted that the Council had adopted a petitions scheme in May 2010 in accordance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. This scheme had been subject to subtle changes following the review of Standing Orders in 2014. It was reported that the statutory provisions governing the petitions scheme had been repealed through the Localism Act 2011.

This report identified that the Council's approach to handling petitions could be improved in a procedural sense and also in terms of the wider trust and confidence held in the Council by the residents of the borough. The report recommended that the current petitions scheme be replaced by guidance which would provide clearer advice to citizens on how to submit a petition and what to expect after submission to the Council.

Members were broadly supportive of the proposal within the report to reduce thresholds to enable debates at full Council and the proposal for any petition with 600 signatures to be referred automatically for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Resolved:-

1. That the Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
2. That petitions with 600 signatures be referred to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for review or investigation and lead petitioners be given 15 minutes to present the petition to that meeting.

133. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board would be held on Friday 5 May 2017.

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 5 May 2017

Title

Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge - Accessibility of Public Transport for Young People

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

The Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge on 21 February 2017 focused on the recommendations made by Rotherham Youth Cabinet in their report "Get in Gear" regarding the accessibility of local public transport for young people.

This report outlines the key points from the discussions with the Cabinet Member, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and representatives from local bus, tram and rail operators.

The response from partner agencies to the young people's recommendations following the spotlight session is included in Appendix 1.

Recommendations

1. That the report be received and consideration be given to the response by partner agencies to the recommendations made by Rotherham Youth Cabinet in "Get in Gear".
2. That the future arrangements for monitoring progress on the agreed actions be determined.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Response template

Background Papers

“Get in Gear: Accessibility of Public Transport for Young People”

Rotherham Youth Cabinet Manifesto 2016-2017

Minutes from OSMB meeting 21 February 2017

Notes of SYPTE and RYC meeting 3 February 2017

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge - Accessibility of Public Transport for Young People

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the report be received and consideration be given to the response by partner agencies to the recommendations made by Rotherham Youth Cabinet in "Get in Gear".
- 1.2 That the future arrangements for monitoring progress on the agreed actions be determined.

2. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) chose public transport as the theme for this year's Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge (CCTOC), as it was one of the five priorities in their manifesto for 2016-2017. It is also an important matter for young people across the wider region, emerging as the key issue in the UK Youth Parliament "Make Your Mark" results for Yorkshire and Humber last year.
- 1.2 RYC launched their report "Get in Gear: Accessibility of Public Transport for Young People" in October 2016. The overall conclusion drawn by the young people was that public transport is on the whole a good service but requiring some improvements. Examples include pricing, advertising and customer service, which all add to the experience of using public transport and had been criticised more than complimented in their consultation.
- 2.3 These issues are reflected in their recommendations which are summarised below:
 - 1 Further the expiry date on the 11-16 Megatravel and 16-19 Student passes.
 - 2 Introduce a zero fare or free bus pass for 16-18 year old students going to a sixth form or college.
 - 3 Improve the advertisement of various tickets.
 - 4 Invest in customer service training.
 - 5 Introduce an 'apprenticeship pass'.
 - 6 Look at the cleanliness.
 - 7 Link the young person's carers' card to their fare.
 - 8 Improve how information is collected regarding complaints and praise.
 - 9 Implement free chargers and Wi-Fi on all services
 - 10 Continue to promote timetables in a variety of ways.
- 2.4 The takeover challenge spotlight session provided the opportunity to explore taking these recommendations forward. Section 3 outlines the key points from the discussions on these areas with Cabinet Member Cllr Lelliott, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTE) and representatives from First Bus, TM Travel, Supertram and Northern. The response from partner agencies to the recommendations is included in Appendix 1.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 After a brief introduction to the work of the Youth Cabinet, and an overview of the main issues and recommendations from the "Get in Gear" report, the majority of the spotlight session was dedicated to Q&A based around the report recommendations.

3.2 Expiry date on the 11-16 Megatravel and 16-19 Student passes

- 3.2.1 A major concern for young people was why they had to pay adult fare from 16 during the summer weeks when they were still in education. They asked whether the expiry date could be extended to the end of the school holiday, allowing young people to use public transport services at a more affordable rate.
- 3.2.2 First Bus supported this and confirmed they had accepted the passes up until the end of September for the last two years, but this matter was being pushed for with the SYPTTE, who issued the passes. It had not been formally announced by the company to avoid confusion if other operators were not doing the same. However there were concessionary funding issues, as any disproportionate growth in passengers would cost the local authority money that had not been budgeted for. First Bus had agreed to waive any increased concession as it was felt to be an important time for young people, particularly between leaving school and starting college.
- 3.2.3 TM Travel agreed and had run a £1 token fare ticket promotion last summer for young people who showed their bus pass. Discussion would take place within the company to ascertain potential schemes for this summer and they would inform RYC what they could offer. TM viewed this concern as part of a national funding issue around concessionary fares, suggesting an alternative approach might be to address it as a road safety issue through the Safer Roads Partnership, as the demographic group most likely to be involved in road accidents was young people aged up to 25 and this in turn could save money in the road safety budget.
- 3.2.4 All operators work under the concessionary travel scheme from the SYPTTE and for every child that travelled at 80p; they receive funding because this was significantly less than an average fare. In South Yorkshire it was a generous scheme as elsewhere child fares were 50% or 75% of an adult fare and much more than 80p. Inconsistency between operators was recognised but there was dialogue between operators and the SYPTTE with regard to providing a clearer and more transparent ticket offer over the summer holidays.
- 3.2.5 The Get in Gear report had been circulated around SYPTTE, including the Executive Director, so the organisation was aware of this issue. They agreed to look at the budget and cost involved and will report back to RYC. The SYPTTE budget has reduced but the organisation is looking at the offer for 16-18 year olds. However, there were budgetary reasons why the date on a pass could not be changed as had been suggested by RYC.

3.3 Free or reduced travel to young people going to college over a certain distance

- 3.3.1 For the bus operators this is linked to the points made under 3.1 regarding concessionary fares and budgets. First Bus receives funding for every journey made by a young person who did not have an education place within three miles. Any similar arrangement for 16-18 year olds would have to be funded from elsewhere as seats would be occupied on a bus that were not generating funding.

3.3.2 The youth and student markets are very competitive and the view from operators was that a range of good fares is available. Qualifying criteria were generally holding the NUS or NUS Extra card or the Apprentice Extra card. Fares include:

- Travelmaster South Yorkshire Connect 18 which is discounted on the adult fare
- First Bus £6 weekly ticket for 16-18 year olds (promoted through the award winning Get Social campaign when launched the previous year costing £5)
- South Yorkshire Students All Term ticket for £210 for 11 months travel (just over £4 a week) which was not subsidised and could be paid in six instalments. These were promoted heavily to university students but not necessarily to all college students at present.
- RYC highlighted the 28 day pass at £48.40 a month for a student (bus, tram and train), regardless of whether they were in full-time education and under 18, but that these had been difficult to find.

3.3.3 In a similar vein to the expiry date of the passes discussed in 3.1, the question was also raised as to whether the 11 month pass could be extended to the full year. It is based around 47 weeks to keep the price for college travel as low as possible.

3.3.4 A range of different price options existed, as through Travelmaster rail travel had been split from bus and tram travel because of the restrictive rail pricing set by the Government. A layered system is in place where operators produce their own products because that is cheapest, then the multi-operator ticket and then youth travel with train, so this does mean various options are available.

3.3.5 SYPTE staff go into colleges just before the summer holidays to work with them on the various methods of applying for passes, provided a range of material including all the value for money tickets that would be available. Last year 5000 second year college passes had been automatically renewed so students had them from the start of term, which was well received.

3.3.6 Post-16 transport used to be Government funded, but that had been replaced by a non-ringfenced grant to colleges, so there was money available in colleges to assist with travel bursaries. It might be worthwhile for students to ask colleges what support they could offer to help with transport costs.

3.4 Apprentices paying full fare when still in education and low earners

3.4.1 Operators recognised this as a valid point but as with the recommendations discussed in 3.1 and 3.2 it is a budgetary issue and the relevant legislation does not compel the provision of free travel for apprenticeships. As operators, commercially only so much discount could be offered before it became untenable and then the gap would need to be bridged by the Concessionary Scheme, funded by tax payers. It was a limited fund and as the SYPTE had experienced budget cuts it became a juggling act to determine how the money would be spent and the discounts. Adult fares had also reduced by 25% over the last few years.

- 3.4.2 Another issue was the age of apprentices extending to 24 years, with a potential need to distinguish between 16-18 year old and 19-24 year old apprentices. There was some nervousness in relation to this as it could mean a 50% discount for a 24 year old apprentice who did not really need it and it would mean reduced revenue from peak time travel. Plus full fare paying adults, particularly of the same age, might question why a 24 year old in a full-time job paid a discounted fare. It probably required apprentices being accepted into the 16-18 student pass and differentiating them from the general apprentices. RYC suggested that perhaps apprentices could show proof of their earnings in order get a reduced fare, so that the highest earning apprentices were not claiming a lower fare. First Bus were willing to work with SYPTTE through the Youth User Group to consider this.
- 3.4.3 Taking a broader view, operators would be willing to work with the National Apprenticeship Service to explore a strategic way of funding this transport issue so that transport costs were not a barrier to taking up apprenticeships. As the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Jobcentre Plus had identified budgets to help people into employment opportunities, this could be raised with the Area DWP Manager covering Rotherham. Potentially more strategic use could be made of that budget, perhaps through linking with the SYPTTE. It was also suggested that this issue could be progressed by RYC through working with their elected representatives to put pressure on Government Departments, such as the DWP and Regional Development, to make better use of existing budgets in a cross-government approach recognising that young people had to travel to take up these employment opportunities.
- 3.4.4 As a number of the questions and initial recommendations related to subsidised/free travel an offer was made for Steve Edwards (Transport Executive) to attend the Youth User Group and conduct a session specifically on how budgets were decided at the SYPTTE, how young people could influence them, the impact on their travel and how to improve advertising and promotion of the offer.

3.5 Improve advertising of the various tickets available

- 3.5.1 RYC drew attention to the variety of tickets available from the different service providers. They asked how these were collated for ease of access, whether this could be improved and also how people were able to find out the cost for any individual journey, including multi-modal, prior to getting on public transport.
- 3.5.2 A search engine on the Travel South Yorkshire website allows people to enter their age and provides all ticket options. The local call centre would also be able to help with products.

- 3.5.3 In terms of promotion, the Rotherham Bus Partnership set a marketing budget for the year and then worked together on promotions. Through the Competition Markets Authority it was still a commercial market and individual operators had to promote their services but the Bus Partnership and the SYPTTE was the forum to do it through. The SYPTTE was impartial and there to promote public transport and ensure the best options. The 2017/18 bus partnership marketing plan was being developed and young people's bus tickets would be suggested as part of a co-ordinated campaign.
- 3.5.4 TM Travel intend to improve the marketing of their tickets; these are on the website but there could be further clarity. They would welcome ideas from RYC.
- 3.5.6. Arriva Northern had won the franchise in April 2016 to be a train operating company for this part of the country, for the next eight years. Work had taken place to improve their offer around mobile applications, advanced on demand ticketing and discounts obtainable via the booking system. The Marketing Department was working on capturing the travelling youth market and people would see a marked upgrade in marketing offers on the Northern network over the next 12-18 months.
- 3.5.7 RYC also requested that images of young people and information about young people's fares be included on posters and materials. New timetables for First Bus featured child's fares although the Travelmaster ones were not included due to space.

3.6 Customer service training

- 3.6.1 A positive outcome from a previous CCTOC regarding public transport in Rotherham had been a DVD used for staff training. RYC were interested to learn how staff training had developed since and to hear about future training plans. The young people also questioned the variation in staff attitudes on public transport.
- 3.6.2 At the meeting on 3 February 2017 with a representative from RYC SYPTTE confirmed that the DVD had been used and driver feedback had been quite good. SYPTTE reported that customer service training was carried out, as well as a series of awareness training, for example visual awareness, hidden disability. Suggestions for training and feedback were always welcomed, positive or negative.
- 3.6.3 Every bus driver receives customer service training and has to undertake compulsory driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) training which consists of five days of training over five years. It was always a fine balance about how that time was spent but it was a continuing process.

- 3.6.4 Northern had identified that the customer service skills of some staff needed to be updated. A series of training events had commenced since the start of the new franchise and the “Proud to be Northern” agenda was being rolled out, so all staff would be undergoing the process. It focused strongly on customer service and improving the travelling experience for customers. Branding was also changing and a Station Improvement Fund was in place to improve the customer experience when at the station. Tickets would be sold through vending machines, complemented by staff giving advice and guidance to customers.
- 3.6.5 First Bus stated that bad behaviour by drivers was not condoned and that attitude problems needed to be reported and dealt with on a case by case basis. Complaints about drivers on certain school buses were being dealt with. If a driver received more than one complaint in a period they were spoken to and details were entered into the system with a score card ranking the drivers. Customer service was always one of the modules in the CPC training but sometimes it was more with regard to people skills and common sense rather than customer service skills. They are currently putting together a module called “Find Your Human” which would be delivered over the next year on how deal with other human beings.
- 3.6.6 Customer service training was something Supertram had tried to prioritise for a number of years in their recruitment. Tram operators did not operate under the CPC but Supertram conducted initial training together with refresher training every other year. One of the training modules was anti-conflict training for staff. Front line staff had regular 1:1 with their managers.
- 3.6.7 TM Travel emphasised that bad customer service could never be excused. New psychometric tests had been introduced as part of their driver recruitment process. Feedback was very important if people encountered someone whose attitude was inappropriate.
- 3.6.8 All operators confirmed that if a customer had had a negative experience the driver or conductor could be identified from the fleet number, time and location on the bus or from the information on the bus/tram ticket. Similarly in the rail industry each carriage had an individual number. Within the Northern app there was a report faulting facility where people could give a short description of what the issues were and this would be followed up through the contact centre.
- 3.6.9 There was also recognition that the attitude from customers and behaviour towards transport staff is not always polite. Bus drivers also face more pressures than tram drivers as there are no conductors and other factors such as road congestion and the resulting impact on bus punctuality may also have an effect on their behaviour.
- 3.6.10 First Bus and Northern both invited RYC to attend and assist with their training sessions. Northern suggested they might like to take part as mystery shoppers in the customer service training.

3.7 Improving feedback – complaints and praise

- 3.7.1 SYPTE reported that in addition to operators having their own customer services Travel South Yorkshire have the website (www.travelsouthyorkshire.com), contact centre (01709 515151), Tell Us What You Think forms, and Customer Services desk at the Interchange. They could also forward any comments or complaints to the relevant operator, and the more information provided the better.
- 3.7.2 Stagecoach had feedback slips on buses and they had run a Customer Service Week and Tweet the Manager initiatives, as well as Nominate a Champion, where people could nominate their bus driver or tram conductor. If the employee went on to win the Stagecoach national scheme, the person who nominated the winner received a cash prize. When making a complaint there was no reference to age and every complaint was given a unique reference number and dealt with in exactly the same manner. Any positive feedback was posted on the staff notice board to show that was the standard desired, enforcing the message that people appreciated what the staff were doing.
- 3.7.3 TM Travel was a fairly small company but employed a dedicated Customer Services Officer. If there was an issue with a bus, a member of the public could ring the telephone line, which was staffed until 1.00 a.m. by traffic controllers. The company would be launching social media in the near future and there was also email, with every effort made to respond as quickly as possible. TM always get back to the person who raised the matter with details about what resulted, unless it involves a disciplinary issue. Whenever an employee had a commendation it was put on the noticeboard for the entire depot to see and placed in the driver's file.
- 3.7.4 The largest growing team within Northern was the Social Media Team. There was a dedicated contact centre in Sheffield as well as the ability to raise issues via the app and website. Each area has a Communities Manager whose role is to engage with community groups/youth groups about the service Northern provides and how that service could grow. Any praise was usually for the conductor and the service they provided but it was a crew approach and crew praise because they were all part of a team. If one person received praise then it was for all the team.
- 3.7.5 First Bus are beginning to receive more passenger feedback on-line and through Twitter and would consider RYC's suggestion on incentivising travellers to feed back. They have a Bus Driver of the Year as well as a Superstars Campaign where people can nominate the best drivers.

3.8 Cleanliness of public transport and how it could be improved

- 3.8.1 Transport operators outlined their present regimes for cleaning vehicles and collecting litter and reported that in-service cleaners were discussed recently at the Rotherham Bus Partnership as there would be situations where this was required. However in-service cleaning came down to both cost and the time taken to carry it out, which would impact on the running times and availability of the vehicles.

- First Group vehicles are cleaned every night and deep cleaned every 28 days.
- TM Travel always have a litter receptacle at the front of the bus.
- All the trams are cleaned at night. Litter bins are provided at all tram stops with passengers asked to take their rubbish off the tram with them. In-service cleaning had been provided in the past but had encouraged some passengers to leave their rubbish as they knew someone would be there to clean it up.
- All Northern train stock would be replaced by 2019 with new or refurbished trains, which would improve the train environment and they would be working with the train presentation crews to ensure this improvement was maintained.
- Northern employ a contractor to clean both staffed and unstaffed stations and any problems should be reported on the app. Once a month all the stations are deep cleaned. It was hoped this would improve things significantly but it was always a challenge with unstaffed stations.
- A “Station Adopters” scheme was planned inviting members of the community to get involved with and possibly “adopt” their station. Funding is available to improve the station environment and this approach was intended to encourage community ownership and reduce litter etc.

3.8.2 Public education and awareness raising are important as it is passengers who litter vehicles or soil seats by putting dirty footwear on them. First Bus would welcome any support in communicating with young people about how to conduct themselves on public transport as there had been issues on school trips where the vehicle had ended up in a bad state. RYC agreed it might be worthwhile having a push on reinforcing the message that other people also have to use the vehicle and encouraging social responsibility.

3.9 Free wifi and usb charging

3.9.1 These are very popular with young people and help to save on using 'phone credit. Currently they are available on a small number of services including the X78 and X1 services and the 218 service from Sheffield to Chatsworth/Bakewell. Retrospective fitting is costly for transport operators but wifi and usb ports are increasingly included as new vehicles come into service.

- Wifi was not provided on trams and the seven new vehicles did not have wifi or usb ports as these had not been available when they were purchased. When vehicles are renewed in the future it would be more likely to become standard fit.
- Northern aim to have free wifi on all trains by 2019 when the new stock comes into service, with a seamless interface between station and train, although long tunnels would still be an issue.
- TM Travel are reviewing their provision and hope to extend it to more routes.
- All new First buses come with wifi but usb ports do not come as standard, although new vehicles being received later in the year would have it included in their specification.

3.10 Linking the Young Carer Card to their fare

- 3.10.1 An adult carer is entitled to a free fare when travelling with the person they care for but not a young carer. The question was whether young people who already have a Young Carer Card could also receive a free fare when travelling with the person they were helping to look after, as is the case in Doncaster.
- 3.10.2 Attention was drawn to South Yorkshire being one of the areas where a Mobility Pass could be obtained under the English National Concessionary Scheme. If a person needed someone to help them travel, subject to medical qualification, the pass included free travel for the carer, for any age group.
- 3.10.3 First Bus would support this being introduced for young carers although informally some drivers do already accept the card.
- 3.10.4 Further research after the meeting clarified that if a person qualifies for a Disabled Person's pass, either through meeting certain criteria automatically or following an assessment, they may qualify for a "with carer" pass. This enables a friend or relative travelling with them to travel for free and it does not have to be the same person each journey. For both types of pass the person needs a letter of entitlement from RMBC. Qualification for a "with carer" pass is linked to receipt of certain benefits:
- High rate care component of Disability Living Allowance
 - High rate Attendance Allowance
 - Enhanced rate daily living component of Personal Independence Payment

3.11 Publicising timetables and service information

3.11.1 *Timetables and portals*

SYPTE confirmed all timetable information is available on the Travel South Yorkshire website. People may also register to receive an email alert for any forthcoming timetable or route change to their regular journey.

- Glossy printed timetables were available on TM Travel buses as well as information on their website and on the Travel Line portal. Work would continue on finding ways to improve availability.
- Supertram comes under the Stagecoach bus app and there is a journey planner. They also produce printed material as some sections of the population prefer that method but the advantage of on-line information over print is that timetables could be updated constantly.
- In unstaffed railway stations Northern had invested in customer information screens providing real time information on when the next train was due, if there was a delay etc. The majority of younger customers work off their mobiles but it was accepted that many rail users still prefer printed timetables.
- Information about planned disruptions such as roadworks was easy to post on-line or through social media.

3.11.2 **Apps**

Concerns about the reliability of apps were raised, as people had experienced the times being different to those on printed timetables, or the wrong streets on the route.

- TM Travel acknowledged there had been some technical issues with their travel app which would be resolved quite quickly.
- All First Bus services were mapped in the company's database to a national standard and automated so that services such as Google could use the same database. Problems were probably due to the mapping on a service, but it would be helpful to know if it was the timetable or the countdown that was wrong to know whether the app was tracking real time or not.
- Northern had invested in the company's apps which have real time information.

3.11.3 **Service changes**

A further question was how SYPTE and operators would ensure young people knew when services had changed if a tender had been won by another operator.

SYPTE reported that information regarding any bus changes was provided on bus stops, at the Interchanges, on Travel South Yorkshire, through local and social media and alerts sent out to local Elected Members and community groups. RYC could also be added to the mailing list.

Bus companies confirmed that information is submitted to SYPTE and their websites and apps would be updated. There were also QR codes at bus/tram stops and a paid for text messaging service. However, discussions had recently taken place regarding SYPTE and operators working together more and combining resources to improve notification of changes to the public.

Within the rail industry it was a franchise commitment to inform the public of a timetable change. Communities of interest including rail user groups and local authority transport leads were invited to comment on changes to the timetable. The industry was governed by Network Rail and their current major infrastructure upgrade was impacting on the timetabled upgrade for more frequent and later running trains.

3.12 **Youth Transport Users Group**

3.12.1 One very positive outcome of the launch of the "Get in Gear" report was a meeting between representatives from SYPTE and a member of RYC prior to the CCTOC to discuss establishing a new South Yorkshire-wide Youth Transport Users Group. Issues raised at the CCTOC such as bus passes will be part of the dialogue and one aspiration is greater consistency between transport services across the four local authority areas. RYC agreed to share their contacts from other areas.

3.12.2 The initial meeting of the new group was held at Meadowhall on 21 April 2017.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 SYPTE and operators expressed a willingness to work with young people and highlighted areas where their ideas and input would be welcome, including for advertising and promoting tickets and timetable changes (TM Travel) and staff training (First Bus and Northern).
- 4.2 Clearly the issues in relation to concessionary fares will need further discussion by SYPTE and operators, with a limited budget and the potential impact on operator revenue of fare reductions to consider, before any changes to the offer for young people are made.
- 4.3 A number of immediate actions were agreed at the CCTOC to be followed up by SYPTE, transport operators, Elected Members and RYC.
- 4.4 The full response to the “Get in Gear” recommendations is attached at Appendix 1.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 RYC consulted young people through surveys and held focus groups with Rotherham Young Carers’ Council and the Looked After Children’s Council.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 Timescales for agreed actions have been included within the response template at Appendix 1.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The recommendations are likely to require further exploration by SYPTE and transport operators on the financial or procurement implications of their implementation, particularly in relation to concessionary travel.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no legal implications.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 There are no human resources implications.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 The recommendations in “Get in Gear” aim to impact positively on young people, through enhancing access to local public transport and thus facilitating participation in employment, training, education and social activities.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 The recommendations will bring about a positive contribution to promoting equality through improving access to services.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 The majority of actions are for South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and local transport operators to take forward.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 As stated in 10.1, public transport is a vital means for many people to access a range of activities. SYPTE and operators have to take into account the needs of all service users and regular engagement with stakeholders is essential to inform service development and provision.

13.2 The new Youth Transport Users Group will be an important means of ensuring young people's voice and influence in relation to local public transport.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

James McLaughlin, Democratic Services Manager

Approvals Obtained from:

Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services: N/A

Assistant Director of Legal Services: N/A

Head of Procurement: N/A

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

Appendix 1

Response to CCTOC review by Rotherham Youth Cabinet – Accessibility of public transport for young people

Recommendation	Decision <i>(Accepted/ Rejected/ Deferred)</i>	Response <i>(detailing proposed action(s) if accepted, rationale for rejection, and why and when issue will be reconsidered if deferred)</i>	Officer Responsible	Action by <i>(Date)</i>
<p>1) Further the expiry date on the 11-16 Megatravel and 16-19 Student passes. (to early September to allow young people to have the chance to get a renewed pass and avoid confrontation/additional costs)</p>	<p>Deferred pending further discussion</p>	<p>SYPTTE has taken this issue raised and is looking at how it can develop the current concessionary scheme to address the issue of passes currently expiring on 31 July.</p> <p>SYPTTE has set up a Youth Transport User Group in response to this report and the first meeting was held on Friday 21 April. This issue was discussed at the meeting and an update will be provided in due course.</p>		
<p>2) Introduce a zero fare or free bus pass for 16-18 year old students going to a sixth form or college. (if you live further than a certain distance, free travel should be available, as for secondary and primary education)</p>	<p>Deferred - to be discussed within RMBC</p>	<p>Zero fare passes are paid for by the local authority and therefore the remit to extend is not in SYPTTE's control.</p> <p>Rotherham Bus Partnership is keen to promote value for money tickets to this age group and all partners will continue to look at the provision for this age group.</p>		
<p>3) Improve the advertisement of various tickets. (people will be able to purchase the most appropriate ticket at a fairer rate)</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Operators have taken this recommendation away and will consider the points raised when producing future promotional material.</p>	<p>Transport Operators and SYPTTE</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Recommendation	Decision <i>(Accepted/ Rejected/ Deferred)</i>	Response <i>(detailing proposed action(s) if accepted, rationale for rejection, and why and when issue will be reconsidered if deferred)</i>	Officer Responsible	Action by (Date)
4) Invest in customer service training. (for individuals who are the face of the company, such as bus drivers, conductors and complaints people, as they influence the opinions individuals hold and affect the experience of service users)	Accepted	Customer service training is taken very seriously by all partners. SYPTE and the Operators understand that the customer experience is a vital part of the service offered and will explore this further with the Youth Transport User Group in the summer. They will continue to strive to improve their customer service and respond to feedback and suggestions.	Transport Operators and SYPTE	Sept 2017
5) Introduce an ‘apprenticeship pass’. (for 16-18 year olds who earn below a certain amount to encourage travel by public transport)	Deferred pending further discussion	SYPTE is looking at recommendation 5 together with recommendation 1 and will provide an update on both in due course.		
6) Look at the cleanliness. (after a busy time period check the buses, trams and trains for any litter etc. which could also free up seating and reduce accidents)	Accepted	Operators will consider the practicality and associated costs with this recommendation. Operators would like to stress that all vehicles are cleaned nightly. Operators will work with the Youth Transport User Group in the autumn to look at what options there are to encourage passengers to take their rubbish with them	Transport operators	November 2017
7) Link the young person’s carers’ card to their fare. (if a young carer is with the person that they help look after, a free fare should be permitted, like it is for adults)	Accepted	SYPTE can confirm that if a disabled person has the “With Carer” pass then their accompanying carer travels free whether they are a young person or an adult.	Transport Operators and SYPTE	In place

Recommendation	Decision <i>(Accepted/ Rejected/ Deferred)</i>	Response <i>(detailing proposed action(s) if accepted, rationale for rejection, and why and when issue will be reconsidered if deferred)</i>	Officer Responsible	Action by (Date)
8) Improve how information is collected regarding complaints and praise. (so a true reflection of what is required can be gained, helping improvements to be made in the future)	Accepted	Following this report Operators will consider comments they receive and will look at possible improvements that can be made in response to these. This recommendation will again be discussed at a future Youth Transport User Group meeting in the summer to allow for both operators and SYPTE to provide more information regarding how comments are handled and discuss the issues with attendees.	Transport Operators and SYPTE	September 2017
9) Implement free chargers and Wi-Fi on all services	Partially accepted	USB chargers and WiFi is currently fitted to most new vehicles as they are made and can be seen on a number of services across South Yorkshire. Fitting WiFi to older vehicles is very expensive so the costs are prohibitive.	Transport operators	Ongoing for new vehicles
10) Continue to promote timetables in a variety of ways. (both paper and electronic timetables)	Accepted	Operators have taken the comments on board and will consider these when producing future timetables.	Transport operators	Ongoing

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Cabinet and Commissioner's Decision Making Meeting - 15 May 2017

Title

Asset Management Policy and Strategy

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes, this is a key decision and has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Damien Wilson, Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Paul Smith – Head of Asset Management
01709 254061 or paul.smith@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

The Council's Land and Property Assets are not only buildings that support service delivery, but valuable assets that can further the delivery of the Council's plans and objectives, particularly in achieving a modern, efficient Council.

This report defines the proposed Council Policy and Strategy to guide the use of the Council's Land and Property Assets. It proposes the Council's approach to the management, usage and development of the Council's Land and Property Assets in supporting the Council's Corporate Plan and the Asset Management Improvement Plan.

Recommendations

1. That the Asset Management Policy and Strategy be agreed.
2. That the Asset Management Policy and Strategy be referred to Council.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Proposed Asset Management Policy and Strategy

Background Papers

Report to Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 13 February 2017 – 'Corporate Property/Asset Management Health Check'.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 5 May 2017

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Title

Property Asset Management Policy and Strategy

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Asset Management Policy and Strategy be agreed.
- 1.2 That the Asset Management Policy and Strategy be referred to Council.

2 Background

- 2.1 As reported to the 13th February 2017 Cabinet meeting the Asset Management Health Check and Improvement Plan recommends that the Council looks to take a more strategic approach to its land and property assets. An important part of this approach is to develop an Asset Management Policy and Strategy.
- 2.2 A key aspect underpinning the proposed Policy and Strategy is to adopt a “one public estate” perspective to identify the opportunities provided by all publicly owned land and property.
- 2.3 The proposed Policy and Strategy is influenced by the following:-
 - The Corporate Plan 2017-2018.
 - Sheffield City Region (SCR) and The Combined Authority, especially through the Joint Asset Board (JAB)
 - One Public Estate (OPE) Programme
 - South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw NHS Strategic Transformation Plan
 - Rotherham Together Partnership
 - Housing & Economic Growth Plan
 - Children’s and Adult Services Improvement Plans
 - The need to grow revenue income to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - The need for revenue savings and capital receipts to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - Health check of the Council’s own Asset Management practices.
 - Asset Management Improvement Plan

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Asset Management Health Check and Improvement Action Plan was reported and agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 13th February 2017. This followed on from an external Health Check into the service carried out by CIPFA which had 22 recommendations. In addition, Commissioner Kenny wrote to the Council’s Chief Executive in November 2016 identifying ten “hall marks of good Asset Management” and five areas requiring a “strong programme” that the Council must evidence as being complete or credibly in hand before Asset Management will be recommended for return to the Council. The return of Powers process also includes 4 commissioner tests.

3.2 Within the Council's Asset Management Improvement Plan the Council is tasked with defining its corporate approach to and requirements from property by producing a Corporate Asset Management Plan which covers:-

- (i) Property Asset Management Policy.
- (ii) Property Asset Management Strategy.
- (iii) Asset Management Action Plan.
- (iv) Corporate Landlord Model & Service Level Agreements.
- (v) Asset Management Governance.
- (vi) Change procedures for operational property.
- (vii) Performance Management.

3.3 Items (i) and (ii), Policy and Strategy, will require Commissioner/Cabinet and Full Council approval. Items (iii) through (vii) will be considered by the Council's Asset Management Board.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 It is proposed that the Council adopts the five Asset Management Policy Principles described below for the management and development of the Council's Land and Property:

- Asset Management Principle 1 (AMP1): Enabling delivery of the Council's services and priorities.
- Asset Management Principle 2 (AMP2): Supporting Economic Growth, Housing Growth and Town Centre Regeneration.
- Asset Management Principle 3 (AMP3): Maximising the opportunities that are available through the 'one public estate'.
- Asset Management Principle 4 (AMP4): Developing growth income from commercial/non-operational activities.
- Asset Management Principle 5 (AMP5): Maximising the range of benefits through the commissioning of property projects and property services.

4.2 The expected outputs and the Asset Management Strategy to achieve these outputs is contained within Appendix 1.

5. Consultation

5.1 The proposed Asset Management Policy and Strategy has been to the Asset Management Board and Asset Management Officer Group as part of the consultation process and consultation has also taken place with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Economy and the Lead Commissioner.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 The Asset Management Policy and Strategy are two of the factors that inform the Council's Asset Management Plan which is to be presented to the Asset Management Board in September 2017. The Policy shall be implemented if it obtains Council approval on 19th May 2017.
- 6.2 The Accountable officer is Damien Wilson, Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment.

7. Finance and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The Asset Management Policy and Strategy are critical to the successful delivery of the Council's Capital and Medium Term Financial Strategies. Within these strategies regeneration, investment and growth outcomes are a key priority, as they are critical to generating future income to the Authority from capital receipts and the growth in business rates and council tax/new homes bonus to support the Revenue Budget. The Asset Management Policy and Strategy will enable the delivery of savings arising from property closures, disposals and major Directorate service reviews, which have been put forward as part of the 2017/18 Revenue Budget Setting process. This also links in with the need to reduce costs through the joint use of accommodation and joint working arrangements with other public sector partners, through the "One Public Estate."

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report

9. Human Resource Implications

- 9.1 None

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 Adoption of the Policy and Strategy will support service delivery.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 None.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 The proposed Asset Management approach is designed to ensure that all Directorates and partners have the assets they need to deliver and develop their services.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Risk : Within the Council's Asset Management Improvement Plan the Council is tasked with defining its corporate approach to and requirements from property. This definition is required if the Council's Property Assets are to be utilised to their maximum potential.

13.2 Mitigation: Approve the proposed Asset Management Policy and Strategy.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Damien Wilson	Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment.
Paul Woodcock	Assistant Director of Planning Regeneration & Transport.
Paul Smith	Head of Asset Management.

Approvals obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services:-
Jon Baggaley, Finance Manager 31st March 2017

Assistant Director of Legal Services:-
Stuart Fletcher Service Manager (Commercial & Governance) 30th March 2017

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-
Not applicable

Appendix 1 – Introduction to the Asset Management Policy and Strategy 2017 - 2025

Foreword

The Council commissioned a Property and Asset Management Health Check in June 2016 and a draft report on the findings including recommendations for improvements was approved by Cabinet in February 2017. The review found that there were no risks in terms of health and safety related to the Council's management of its assets, however, made key recommendations around a new strategic approach to the management and development of our assets.

Following the approval of the policy and strategy, the Asset Management Board will oversee the production of an Asset Management Plan for the Council which will include an action plan scheduling specific activities to optimise the use of our assets.

The CIPFA Health Check report in November 2016 focused on Asset Management and recommended, amongst other things, that the Corporate Landlord Model be adopted, that a Strategic Asset Management function be installed to support strategic asset management and regeneration ambitions and that a comprehensive property review be undertaken. The development of a Corporate Strategic Asset Management Plan was also strongly recommended. This Policy and Strategy form two thirds of that Plan, with the final part, the Action Plan due to follow shortly.

The Policy and Strategy will ensure the Council adopts a corporate approach to the management of assets and that they are managed and utilised to the benefit of the Borough and all who live and work within it. It is a "live" document which will be reviewed, at least, annually.

Executive Summary

The Council commissioned a review of Asset Management which it reported in November 2016.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides services to a growing population of 260,000 people in an area covering approximately 110 square miles. The Borough benefits from a wide range of environments - urban, suburban and rural – providing our residents with a varied region in which to live. 70% of this is open countryside, providing opportunities to enrich the lives of an increasingly diverse population.

The Council owns or occupies a portfolio which includes a wide range of assets, all of which require individual consideration in terms of their management. This Policy and Strategy document is intended to govern how those assets are managed to best effect to not only capitalise on their benefit to the Borough, its communities and residents but also to maximise efficiency and effectiveness going forward.

Strategic asset management is crucial in ensuring that assets are managed in accordance with a pre-determined, well thought through plan but with a flexibility and adaptability that allows that plan to change should that be the right thing for the Borough. The Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Strategy have been developed to deliver a cohesive and considered approach and to inform the development of a comprehensive and timely Asset Management Action Plan to ensure effective delivery of identified short, medium and long term priorities. The three documents together will form the Council's Asset Management Plan for the period from 2017 to 2025.

Proactive implementation of Strategic Asset Management provides the opportunity to:

- Make best use of publicly owned assets across Rotherham.
- Encourage shared use of property resources.
- Minimise cost of occupation and management of land and buildings.

Introduction

The Council has developed a new Vision together with four Corporate Strategic Priorities providing direction and focus for the transformation of the Borough as well as the services the Council provides. The Corporate Plan for 2016/17 sets out a clear framework for progress in all areas, including regeneration and the environment.

Rotherham Council's land and property asset portfolio is one of the key enablers to growth and regeneration and will play an important role in the delivery of the Vision and the Priorities. The corporate estate comprises 232 non-operational assets with an estimated market value of in excess of £37m. In addition to this, the operational estate consists of 248 operational land and property assets at an estimated value of £154m. This Strategy will facilitate the review of these assets and also a range of other miscellaneous assets throughout the Borough, enabling opportunities to be realised, income to be generated and capital receipts to be generated to support the provision of services for our residents.

It is imperative that in the current environment of budget constraints together with increased transparency and scrutiny that all resources at the Council's disposal are employed as efficiently and effectively as possible. This Policy and Strategy and the subsequent Action Plan will ensure this is the case, providing assurance to all that the asset base is being used to best effect at every opportunity.

Context

1. Purpose

The Corporate Plan for 2016/17 established the Vision and Corporate Priorities which will take Rotherham into the future. The Plan includes details of how each Directorate will contribute towards delivery of the Vision and Priorities, a firm commitment to working in partnership with others and the expected staff values and behaviours for those working in a modern and efficient Council. There are plans for delivering each Priority together with performance measures so that progress can be effectively monitored.

The purpose of this Policy and Strategy and subsequent Action Plan, which will be known collectively as the Asset Management Plan, is to ensure that the Council's land and property assets contribute pro-actively to the delivery of the Vision and the Priorities so that effective Asset Management is recognised as an enabler of progress and growth. There will be a focus on income generation, minimisation of outgoings, of surplus assets being used to support housing and economic growth and also on service delivery and customer care. The Policy, Strategy and Action Plan will also inform investment decisions, where assets are purchased to either support regeneration or to increase income generation.

In essence, effective Strategic Asset Management will ensure that the asset portfolio is consistently aligned with corporate priorities, provides value for money with management of the portfolio in accordance with industry standards, benchmarked against comparable peers and with a view to the long term. This strategic approach to management and investment of the corporate portfolio will ensure that the asset base remains fit for purpose for years to come.

2. Vision and priorities

Following consultation with residents during the Summer of 2015, a new Vision for the Borough was defined, which is:

“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.

To achieve this as a Council we must work in a modern efficient way, to deliver sustainable services in partnership with our local neighbourhoods, looking outwards, yet focused relentlessly on the needs of our residents.”

To deliver this Vision for the Borough the Council has set out four priorities:

1. Every child making the best start in life.
2. Every adult secure, responsible and empowered.
3. A strong community in a clean, safe environment.
4. Extending opportunity, prosperity and planning for the future.

Underpinning this is the need for Rotherham to be a modern, efficient Council, thereby enabling delivery of the Vision. A modern, efficient Council will provide value for money, customer-focused services, make best use of the resource available to it, be outward looking and work effectively with partners.

This Policy and Strategy help the Council to deliver that vision and the four priorities in a number of ways – some direct and tangible, others less so but still crucially important to eventual success.

As the owner of such a significant number of assets within the Borough, the Council is in perhaps a unique position to influence the positive development of communities and business and make a real difference through its assets.

Well managed assets create opportunities to grow, flourish and prosper.

They encourage businesses to start or to expand, creating jobs and wealth which largely remains within the Borough as residents are increasingly less likely to travel elsewhere to shop, work and spend their leisure time. Through those assets regeneration can be encouraged, strategic acquisitions can make things happen, leading to innovation and creativity in the way those assets are used now and in the future.

They allow families to live in homes rather than simply houses, creating stability and sustainability and a respect for the neighbourhoods in which they live.

They encourage learning and development, providing the skills, knowledge and experience to remain, and fully participate in, the highly skilled economy of the future.

3. External Influences

3.1 Financial Context

For some years now, central government has required local authorities and partner organisations to make substantial savings in both revenue and capital spend. This has affected Rotherham in much the same way as other Councils.

This requires the Council to make significant savings over the coming years, meaning that the focus on efficiency and value for money the Council holds even more important.

The effective, strategic management of the Council's assets will enable revenue savings to be made through rationalisation, growth to be achieved through new initiatives and innovative thinking in partnership with others and capital receipts to be generated to support the Council's ambitions for the Borough.

But efficiencies should not be made at the expense of the provision of quality services, nor should rationalisation be undertaken in a way which leaves the Council with an unfit for purpose portfolio, unable to meet its Vision and priorities.

Value for Money is key and will form an integral part of the decision-making processes governed by this Policy and Strategy and which inform asset management in Rotherham for the future.

3.2 Social Context

Rotherham is ranked as the 52nd most deprived district in England, mainly as a result of poor health, worklessness and low educational levels. In addition, evidence is that whilst deprivation is decreasing in some areas, it is increasing.

While large scale job losses affected the Borough in the last economic downturn, there are many positive initiatives underway, including the continued growth of the flagship Advanced Manufacturing Park at Waverley, set to create 3,500 new jobs plus deliver 4,000 homes and the formation of a new community.

Positive Strategic Asset Management by the Borough will be used in varied ways to deliver regeneration and growth in the places they are needed the most and where they will deliver the maximum beneficial impact.

This Policy and Strategy will lead to the creation of additional sustainable employment, opportunities for growth and entrepreneurship, the regeneration of the town centre and other key areas of the Borough and the creative use of assets to deliver outcomes which improve the lives of those who live and work here.

3.3 Planning Policy

The Government has implemented many changes in recent years designed to speed up the planning system. The overall aim has been the simplification of the system so Councils have the freedom to make decisions in the best interests of their area. A key tenet of the changes is a belief that Councils and communities should be central to a system that achieves socially, environmentally and economically sustainable development.

The latest iteration is the Neighbourhood Planning Bill which aims to speed up processes even further through strengthening but simplifying the popular neighbourhood planning process, similarly removing some of the complexities from the compulsory purchase process and also ensuring planning conditions are only used when strictly necessary.

When the Bill becomes law this will affect Rotherham as Local Planning Authority resulting in changes in practices. However, it will also affect the Strategic Asset Management function, requiring increased consideration of the views of communities and a need for additional active consultation on proposals. Changes to compulsory purchase may enable regeneration but the reduction of the imposition of conditions will make the need for covenants in disposals to be very well considered and fully enforceable to ensure assets are developed in the way intended. This will be facilitated through this refreshed approach to Asset Management.

3.4 Transparency Agenda

The Government's Transparency Agenda requires all Local Authorities to annually publish details of their property portfolio online to enable residents, and any other interested party, to have access to how assets are being used in terms of service delivery and also to facilitate economic development. This Policy, Strategy and Action Plan will underpin this required publication, providing confirmation of an ongoing review of all assets and that they are indeed being used to their best effect.

4. Internal influences

4.1 Transformational Change

Rotherham has undergone a significantly challenging process of change and transformation since the appointment of Government Commissioners in February 2015, resulting in many significant changes in culture, processes and key personnel.

The CIPFA Health Check report (November 2016) highlighted the need for a clearer strategic direction for Asset Management and that there were significant opportunities for improvement in the way the service is provided to the Council as whole. This has led to the introduction of the Corporate Landlord Model and a commitment to manage properties in a holistic way, one which supports the delivery of the Council's Vision and its corporate objectives and with the intention that a number of key asset management focused objectives be delivered. This Policy and Strategy will enable that delivery, ensuring that the Asset Management service re-focuses its attention to include not only management of property to deliver optimum Value for Money but also excellent external and internal customer service.

4.2 Introduction of Corporate Landlord

The adoption of the Corporate Landlord Model from 1 April 2017 has effected a transfer of the majority of the Council's assets, to the Asset Management service.

This is designed to enable the Council to utilise its assets to deliver better, more efficient services to communities:

- To unlock the value of assets, seek efficiencies through joint arrangements with public sector partners and maximise private sector investment.
- To support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- To integrate thinking about property with financial, regeneration and other considerations.

Under a Corporate landlord approach the ownership of an asset and the responsibility for its management; maintenance and funding are transferred from service department to the Corporate Landlord. The respective roles and responsibilities will be outlined and clarified under a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

This change is being facilitated by the development of Service Asset Management Plans (SAMPs), produced by each distinct service area and setting out what the property they own and use currently and also their aspirations for the future. The

information gathered will be collated and interrogated by the Strategic Asset Management team within the Asset Management service so that an overall picture of the asset base and the needs of the various services can be ascertained. This will then be assessed, aligned with this Strategy and a fully informed Asset Management Action Plan developed.

4.3 Performance Management

Performance Management involves the adoption of a systematic approach to help improve performance through measurement and review.

This will be implemented to ensure the successful delivery of the Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Action Plan (the Asset Management Plan) through a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) reported via a balanced scorecard. Asset Management KPIs will be focused on key outcomes, they will be manageable and realistic and they will be relevant to stakeholders. The scorecard will contain indicators relating to the critical success factors in the Plan, threading through to ensure effective contribution to delivery of the four corporate priorities and the Vision for the Borough. They will measure elements which make a positive difference to the Borough and those which demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness.

Following review and challenge, results will be analysed and acted upon with the intention of driving exemplar performance.

4.4 Benchmarking

Benchmarking involves the continuous search for better ways of working with the intention of delivering superior performance.

This practice will be incorporated into the performance management process so that results can be compared against similar organisations and in order that any learning can be incorporated into ways of working. This will serve to inform future target setting whilst also encouraging an innovative and creative approach and a competitive spirit. The intention will be to drive peer-compared excellence in all practices with a view to achieving upper quartile performance in respect of key indicators by 2020.

Asset Management Policy

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council recognises the inherent value in the effective and efficient direction and utilisation of land and property assets in sustaining the provision of services in the Borough and enabling the delivery of the Vision and four priorities. The alignment of asset management with organisational priorities and objectives is key to ensuring that decisions are made in the correct context and having regard to all relevant factors.

The following five policy objectives for Property Asset Management have been designed to enable decision-making in respect of assets which supports the Council's Vision and four priorities.

Asset Management Objective 1: Enabling delivery of the Council's services and priorities.

Asset Management Objective 2: Supporting Economic Growth, Housing Growth and Town Centre Regeneration.

Asset Management Objective 3: Maximising the opportunities that are available through the adoption of 'one public estate'.

Asset Management Objective 4: Developing growth income from commercial/non-operational activities.

Asset Management Objective 5: Maximising the range of benefits through the commissioning of property projects and property services.

The following existing and approved documents are relevant to the Asset Management Policy and should be referred to when appropriate:

- The Corporate Plan 2017-2018.
- Sheffield City Region (SCR) and The Combined Authority, especially through the Joint Asset Board (JAB)
- One Public Estate (OPE) Programme
- South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw NHS Strategic Transformation Plan
- Rotherham Together Partnership
- Housing & Economic Growth Plan
- Children's and Adult Services Improvement Plans
- The need to grow revenue income to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- The need for revenue savings and capital receipts to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Health check of the Council's own Asset Management practices.
- Asset Management Improvement Plan

Asset Management Strategy

The Asset Management Strategy identifies how the policy will be delivered and implemented. The Strategy sets the strategic direction and key outcomes to be delivered, which will be detailed in the Asset Management Action Plan, along with relevant timescales.

1. Asset Management Objective 1: Enabling delivery of the Council's services and priorities

1.1. Expected Outputs:

- **Enabling delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial strategy (MTFS), the Capital Strategy, the Corporate Plan, Service plans, improvement and transformation plans.**
In seeking to ensure best value for money is achieved from property assets, effective asset management will naturally enable savings to be made, growth to be achieved and the Borough to be transformed through regeneration. This Strategy will be integrated with the delivery of the above Strategies and Plans to ensure that joined up, consistent thinking and actions deliver optimum solutions.
- **The delivery of schools basic need.**
A key focus of this Strategy is to encourage a Borough with a vibrant, attractive offer in terms of housing, employment opportunities and lifestyle. Such an increase in population will lead to a corresponding increase in school places and the level of basic need funding received together with associated maintenance funding, thereby improving the estate and the attractiveness of the Borough even further.
- **A rationalised efficient estate provided at lowest possible cost.**
The implementation of the SAMPs process to identify the requirements of each discrete service area will enable future plans for the portfolio in terms of investment and rationalisation to be formulated in a structured and coherent way, ensuring that linkages are made to reduce costs and maximise efficiency across the estate.
- **An effective estate suitable for modern ways of working.**
The operational portfolio will be reviewed following receipt and overall assessment of the SAMPs by the Strategic Asset Management function. It is intended this will lead to a rationalisation review, providing a portfolio which reflects Rotherham's position as a modern, efficient Council. The effectiveness of WorkSmart will simultaneously be assessed and a view taken regarding roll out to other properties within the rationalised operational estate.
- **An estate with an effective preventative condition maintenance plan.**
Following a comprehensive programme of condition surveys, a revised preventative maintenance programme will be devised taking into account component life cycles and building life expectancy, ensuring assets are maintained in a way which maximises their capital value and preserves their use for the longest time possible.

- **A resilient estate.**
In an ever-changing political, economic and social world it will become increasingly important to ensure the estate owned and occupied by the Council after rationalisation is able to withstand external pressures. Each asset will be assessed to determine whether continued use of ownership is appropriate and, if not, the most beneficial disposal approach. Assets retained will be those which are considered to be of use or to have investment return potential in the short, medium or long term. They will be adaptable, flexible, fit for purpose and financially viable.

1.2. Actions to Deliver Objective:

- **Implement a Corporate Landlord approach across the estate.**
The use of the Corporate Landlord Model was recommended by CIPFA in its “Property Function Health Check” approved at Cabinet on the 13th February 2017. The Model was implemented across the estate from 1st April 2017 and is expected to introduce an increasingly co-ordinated approach to asset management throughout the Council’s portfolio. This Strategy will embed that process further through provision of an explanation of the future of asset management at Rotherham, encouraging discussion and communication between Directorates.
- **Rationalise and minimise the cost of the estate.**
The implementation of this Strategy to enable considered decision-making in accordance with the Principles set out in the Asset Management Policy will provide a framework for the rationalisation of the estate, leading to a reduction in costs.
- **Use of modern agile and flexible working principles to make best use of the estate (WorkSmart).**
The review of the operational estate will allow investment in new ways of working and WorkSmart practices to be focused upon buildings which have been determined to be retained in at least the medium to long term. Decisions regarding investment will be made according to the Corporate Landlord model, thereby reducing waste and the making of short-term spending decisions which fail to take account of the bigger picture.
- **Developing and operating an increasingly energy efficient and environmentally low impact estate.**
The comprehensive property review will include an assessment of the energy efficiency and/or environmental impact of all assets. Decisions regarding the future of assets will be made having regard to the forthcoming Environment and Energy Policy.
- **Implement a Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) Plan across the estate.**
The implementation of PPM across the portfolio will allow workstreams to be planned, assisting in resource planning, and financial requirements to be assessed in the medium to long term.

2. Asset Management Objective 2: Supporting Economic Growth, Housing Growth and Town Centre Regeneration:

2.1. Expected Outputs:

- **Provision of sites and developments that deliver economic growth, employment, housing growth and town centre regeneration.**
The comprehensive property review and ongoing review of the asset base will likely enable sites and properties to be released, which can be used for economic growth, employment, housing growth and town centre regeneration. Sites may be of use in Council-driven initiatives, or the decision may be taken to dispose of the site on the open market or with the Council retaining an interest to ensure regeneration and growth are indeed driven through the release of those sites.

2.2. Actions to Deliver Objective:

- **Proactive release of public sector sites for development.**
Central Government believes that public sector bodies are holding land which could, and should, be released for development by others. This Strategy provides for the comprehensive review of all sites with a view to actively identifying sites which can be developed by our partners.
- **Development of Council owned sites.**
Where sites are considered viable for development by the Council directly then these will be retained and, following a valid business case and subject to availability of funding, will be developed in accordance with the most appropriate outcomes for that locality.
- **Targeted Council development of sites to stimulate the market/address market failure.**
The review of all assets will identify those sites available for development which are in areas most in need of Council intervention.
- **Investment in developments with a financial viability gap when that investment enables/achieves Housing, Economic growth and regeneration.**
The sites identified through the review will not all be viable from a financial point of view. Assessment of the sites released through the process of comprehensive review will allow any viability gaps to be quantified and options which will permit progression to be considered.
- **Strategic acquisition of sites for development.**
The comprehensive review may also show where there are gaps in ownership in areas where Council intervention could make a real difference. The SAMPs will similarly inform of Directorate requirements where acquisition may be appropriate and justified. Once such gaps have been identified the Asset Management service will work with other areas and potential local and sub-regional partners within the Council, using more detailed provided briefs, to acquire sites to meet needs, subject to funds being available.

3. Asset Management Objective 3: Maximising the opportunities that are available through the adoption of 'one public estate'.

3.1. Expected Outputs:

- **Co-location & joint rationalisation to achieve;**
 - **Revenue savings and generation.**
 - **Capital receipts.**
 - **Release of development sites.**
 - **Better integrated public services.**

The Council is already actively working with a range of partners to deliver the benefits of “one public estate” and this is expected to increase further through the implementation of this Strategy. The identification of not only the assets held by each partner but also the intelligent formulation of co-location options which benefit all partners in terms of customer service as well as rationalisation will be enabled further by the adoption of the Corporate Landlord Model.

3.2. Actions to Deliver Objective:

- **Active participation with Sheffield City Region – Joint Asset Board and One Public Estate Programme.**
- **Active Participation in the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw NHS Strategic Transformation Plan.**
- **Active participation in Rotherham Together Partnership - Local Estates Forum and Integrated Working Programme.**

Continued active participation in the above partnerships will deliver co-location and rationalisation opportunities for all concerned, resulting in benefits for Rotherham Borough and also for the wider region.

4. Asset Management Objective 4: Developing growth income from commercial/non-operational activities.

4.1. Expected Outputs:

- **To maximise income generated through the Council’s Commercial estate, property investment and Asset Management Service external trading activity, to support the Council’s revenue position.**

The further commercialisation of Council services, where this is possible, will present a significant opportunity to generate additional revenue to support the overall budget. The Comprehensive Asset Review will lead to the rationalisation of the commercial and overall estate and may lead to opportunities to maximise return being identified. In addition, the Asset Management service has a number of elements which are marketable and that with some resource applied together with investment, may generate a valuable revenue stream in the future.

4.2. Actions to Deliver Objective:

- **Investing in property to deliver revenue income.**

Condition surveys will confirm the investment required to meet ownership and Landlord obligations and also the investment needed to maximise capital value going forward. This will be used to drive investment decisions not only through the Planned Maintenance Programme but also in terms of the ongoing capital improvement programme.

- **Developing and growing the non-operational estate to improve its yield and surplus.**

Opportunities will be explored in order to potentially fund the acquisition of non-operational assets which will produce a good return and sustain the portfolio in future years.

- **Combining income development and managed risk appetite to enable economic growth and housing development where the commercial market is too risk adverse to deliver.**

The identification of both housing and economic growth sites will deliver additional revenue or capital income, or both, depending on the nature of the opportunity and will also regenerate areas which are difficult to reach through market-led interventions. Receipt of New Homes Bonus, additional business rates income and the creation of new jobs will further benefit the Borough.

- **Investment/ development in the existing estate.**

This will be informed via the comprehensive property review and the condition surveys being undertaken, with the investment needs of retained assets being included in either the planned maintenance or capital improvement programmes. Development sites will be either developed by the Council, in partnership or released to the market where the capital receipt receivable is significant. This will be enhanced wherever possible by the prior obtaining of planning permission to maximise value.

- **Purchasing commercial and housing developments.**

The purchase of commercial developments through Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RIDO) and housing developments in conjunction with the Housing Service will be dependent upon the developments proving to be commercially viable and with a positive return. Such return can be purely financial or may be formed in part by a calculated Social Return on Investment.

- **Developing new commercial assets.**

This will also be facilitated through RIDO with advice provided by Asset Management to facilitate the development of opportunities in areas where such Council intervention will have the most positive impact.

- **External trading of the Council's Professional Asset Management Services.**

The Council's Asset Management service includes a number of areas of professional provision which may be marketable to third parties. The potential options available will be assessed and progressed once the existing estate has been reviewed explored to its full potential.

5. Asset Management Objective 5: Maximising the range of benefits through the commissioning of property projects and property services.

5.1. Expected Outputs:

- **The Council is a significant commissioner for the supply of property, construction, consultancy and energy services and the effective management of this process will:**
 - **Ensure cost effective construction and energy services are provided to the Council.**
 - **Maximise the benefits of collaboration and partnership in commissioning property services in the public sector.**
 - **Support inward investment in SME business in Rotherham, Sheffield City Region and the wider Yorkshire and East Midlands region.**
 - **Promote training, development and retention of a skilled labour market in the region.**
 - **Add social value through the delivery of projects and services which enhance the communities they serve.**

5.2. Action to Deliver Objective:

- **Work across the public sector to jointly procure and commission. Continue to develop the YORHub frameworks.**
- **Develop a Rotherham Construction Partnership (RCP) framework of SME specialist contractors.**

Summary Sheet

Cabinet and Commissioner Decision Making Meeting – 15 May 2017

Title

Building Stronger Communities

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

Michael Holmes, Policy and Partnership Officer
Waheed Akhtar, Voluntary Sector Liaison Officer

Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

Organisations and agencies across Rotherham are working to support stronger, more cohesive and inclusive local communities. The Council's work in this area is a key priority within the Rotherham Improvement Plan, which calls for the development of a corporate policy statement on community cohesion. Dame Louise Casey's recent review of "*opportunity and integration*" in local communities is also having a bearing across the whole of the local government sector.

Other partners, including the police, fire service, voluntary and community sector, and health agencies are all seeking to work in the interests of building stronger communities so that the needs of different areas and demographic groups are better understood and services can be better targeted.

The draft "building stronger communities" strategy appended to this report aims to provide clear direction for a number of workstreams broadly focused on the cohesion/stronger communities agenda. A draft action plan is also attached setting out a range of actions and milestones across the strategy's key themes, which are:

- A strong civic community and pride of place
- Bringing people together
- Our rights and responsibilities towards each other
- Expanding opportunity and economic security

Whilst acknowledging the Council's central role in relation to community cohesion, the strategy has a clear emphasis on partnership working and – critically – on meaningfully engaging with local communities so that they can help shape our approach.

It is proposed, therefore, that a Stronger Communities Forum (SCF) is established. This could be chaired by the Council Leader, reflecting the Council's pivotal community leadership role, but with membership primarily comprised of community representatives as well as partner public service organisations.

The need for a small grants programme is identified in the action plan. An application for external funding has been made to resource this programme. If the external funding application is not successful, then an internal budget has been identified to provide a £5,000 contribution from the council to the small grants programme, which would be overseen by the Stronger Communities Forum. Rotherham Together Partnership has agreed an additional £5,000 for the programme.

Recommendations

- 1) That the draft Building Stronger Communities strategy be agreed, subject to any amendments.
- 2) That the establishment of a Stronger Communities Forum within the structures of Rotherham Together Partnership, to be chaired by the Leader of the Council, be endorsed.
- 3) That the establishment of a Building Stronger Communities small grants fund, to be overseen by the forum be endorsed.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A – draft Building Stronger Communities strategy

Appendix B – Building Stronger Communities action plan

Background Papers

- Rotherham Improvement Plan – A Fresh Start
http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/2313/rotherham_improvement_plan
- The Casey Review: a review into opportunity and integration
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-casey-review-a-review-into-opportunity-and-integration>
- The Rotherham Plan – a new perspective 2025
http://rotherhamtogetherpartnership.org.uk/downloads/file/7/the_rotherham_plan_a_new_perspective_2025

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Title: Building Stronger Communities

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the draft Building Stronger Communities strategy be agreed, subject to any amendments.
- 1.2 That the establishment of a Stronger Communities Forum within the structures of Rotherham Together Partnership, to be chaired by the Leader of the Council, be endorsed.
- 1.3 That the establishment of a Building Stronger Communities small grants fund, to be overseen by the forum be endorsed.

2. Background

- 2.1 Organisations and agencies across Rotherham are working to support stronger, more cohesive and inclusive local communities.
- 2.2 The Council's work in this area is a key priority within its improvement plan, which calls for the development of a corporate policy statement on community cohesion. Dame Louise Casey's recent review of "*opportunity and integration*" in local communities (published in December) is also having a bearing across the whole of the local government sector.
- 2.3 Other partners, including the police, fire service, voluntary and community sector, and health agencies are all seeking to work in the interests of building stronger communities so that the needs of different areas and demographic groups are better understood and services can be better targeted.
- 2.4 Rotherham Together Partnership's annual plan for 2016/17 included a *bringing communities together* theme and the partnership instigated a number of events under the umbrella of "let's get Rotherham talking". The partnership's new long-term Rotherham Plan has a specific focus on *building stronger communities*.
- 2.5 A range of activities and initiatives have been instigated by partners during 2016 to support stronger communities and to bring different groups together. This includes:
 - Coordinated activity around the protests and marches in Rotherham (17 since 2012) to ensure effective service responses, engage with communities and businesses, and lobby government on steps needed to ban such disruption in the town (e.g. last year's "Enough is Enough" campaign)
 - Operation Solar – to improve responses to hate crime and previous under-reporting
 - Safer Rotherham Partnership's strategic focus on "building confident and cohesive communities", including specific measures on tackling hate crime.

- Targeting more joined-up action in particular areas – e.g. Eastwood action plan
- Focusing on perceptions of safety to create a more welcoming town centre through the “masterplan” process
- Various events to bring people from different backgrounds together – e.g. Love is Louder (which won the Celebrating Diversity award at the voluntary arts sector’s Epic Awards in March), Armed Forces Day, Rotherham Show, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women’s Day, Reclaim the Night, Let’s Drink Tea Together etc.

2.6 There is now a need to draw together a number of inter-related workstreams to form a cohesive programme of partnership activity focused on creating stronger, more cohesive communities.

3. Key Issues

3.1 The draft “building stronger communities” strategy appended to this report aims to provide clear direction for a number of workstreams broadly focused on the cohesion/stronger communities agenda:

- Work within the council to develop a policy/strategy and action plan on cohesion, in line with the improvement plan
- A requirement to develop an action plan for Safer Rotherham Partnership’s “building confident and cohesive communities” priority
- The need to identify actions and milestones to deliver the *building stronger communities* element of the Rotherham Plan

The strategy sets out the local and national context and provides a definition and framework for activity. An action plan is also being developed setting out a range of actions and milestones across the strategy’s key themes.

3.2 The context reflects on both Rotherham’s recent history (e.g. failings identified in the corporate governance inspection report in relation to child sexual exploitation and embedding equalities and cohesion policies; far right marches; and racially motivated attacks) and the national picture. It also acknowledges the particular impact on girls and women, from all communities, across Rotherham.

3.3 Louise Casey’s recent review into opportunity and integration made four clear recommendations:

- Build local communities’ resilience in the towns and cities where the greatest challenges exist
- Improve the integration of communities in Britain and establish a set of values around which people from all different backgrounds can unite
- Reduce economic exclusion, inequality and segregation in our most isolated and deprived communities and schools, and
- Increase standards of leadership and integrity in public office

3.4 The 2007 government commissioned report on integrated and cohesive communities, *Our Shared Future*, stressed the need to recognise that cohesion is not just about race and faith, and that integration is not about assimilation. It defined integrated and cohesive communities as those where:

- There is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision
- There is a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them and what they can expect in turn
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities and access to services
- There is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests
- There is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common
- There are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods.

3.5 These national reviews have informed the strategy, which defines stronger communities as:

“People living and working in harmony, with a shared sense of community spirit - having respect for each other as citizens and respect for Rotherham as a place”.

3.6 Whilst acknowledging the Council's central role in relation to community cohesion, the strategy has a clear emphasis on partnership working and – critically – on meaningfully engaging with local communities so that they can help shape our approach.

3.7 It is proposed, therefore, that a Stronger Communities Forum (SCF) is established. This could be chaired by the Leader of the Council, reflecting RMBC's pivotal community leadership role, but with membership primarily comprised of community representatives as well as partner public service organisations.

3.8 The forum would provide intelligence on local issues; advise partners on potential responses, informed by good practice in Rotherham and elsewhere; and oversee and coordinate activity, in line with the strategy and action plan.

3.9 Headline actions and milestones have been identified based on ongoing work but it is envisaged that the forum would develop this further. The actions / milestones are grouped under the following headings, based on the strategy's themes:

- Coordination and overarching activity
 - A strong civic community and pride of place
 - Bringing people together
 - Our rights and responsibilities towards each other
 - Expanding opportunity and economic security
- 3.10 The forum will need to have representation from and/or clear reporting links into both Safer Rotherham Partnership and the wider Rotherham Together Partnership.
- 3.11 The need for a small grants programme is identified in the action plan. An application for external funding has been made to resource this programme. If the external funding application is not successful, then an internal budget has been identified to provide a £5,000 contribution from the council to the small grants programme which would be overseen by the Stronger Communities Forum.
- 3.12 A further suggestion is to hold a series of “roadshows” across the borough, bringing people together for an honest discussion on Rotherham’s recent history and current challenges. The aim would be to promote understanding and empathy, ultimately developing shared Rotherham values that emphasise what people have in common rather than the things that divide them.

4. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1 Do nothing – identified issues within communities would not be addressed effectively, potentially leading to relations within and between communities, and with public agencies, deteriorating.
- 4.2 Continue to develop separate approaches (as outlined in 3.1 above) which risks duplication of resources, poor coordination and a lack of clarity on roles, responsibilities and accountability.
- 4.3 The preferred approach, as set out in the report, is to agree the Building Stronger Communities strategy and establish a Stronger Communities Forum, which would bring the various strands of activity together and enable a genuine community-led approach.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Leader chaired a community relations meeting with participation from a number of local community members. The new proposed forum will build on this work. Discussions have also been held with the chairs of the thematic boards within Rotherham Together Partnership (RTP) as well as the RTP Board.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 The Council’s Assistant Chief Executive has officer level responsibility for this work which will be overseen at the political level by the Leader.

It is envisaged that the timetable will be:

May 2017	First meeting of the Stronger Communities Forum (SCF)
May 2017	Decision on funding for the Building Stronger Communities (BSC) Coordinator
June 2017	BSC grants programme open to applications
July 2017	BSC Coordinator in post
July 2017	Action plan and priorities reviewed by SCF

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 A funding application has been submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government. A decision is expected by late April / early May. Subject to the external funding, a BSC coordinator will be recruited.
- 7.2 Should the funding application not be successful and a £5,000 grant be provided by the Council, then a monitoring report on the use of the grant will need to be prepared at the end of each financial year during the grant programme.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council's duties as a public body under the Equality Act 2010 are set out in section 11 below.
- 8.2 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion.
- 8.3 The approach also fits with other reviews, guidance and policy documents issued by the government, such as the Casey Review into opportunity and integration.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 Subject to funding being secured, a new post of Building Stronger Communities Coordinator will be established.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 Existing work within schools will benefit from effective linkages with community-based work in their localities, which will be encouraged through the proposals set out in this report.

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 The Equality Act 2010 establishes both a general duty and specific duties for public bodies like the Council. The law establishes that the protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

11.2 By law public bodies must try to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

11.3 The act explains that 'due regard' for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

11.4 The proposals set out within this report are consistent with duties set out in the Equality Act 2010.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 Adopting the proposed approach to building stronger communities will require the participation of all directorates as well as external partners. This work will be coordinated through the Stronger Communities Forum and Rotherham Together Partnership.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The proposals will help to develop stronger relations between communities. The risks include:

- Funding for the BSC Coordinator not being secured – this has been included in a wider programme of activity for which the post will be critical, thus increasing the chances of securing funding.
- Some communities may feel that resources are being unfairly targeted in other areas. The approach suggested is about understanding the needs of our communities and engaging all communities to help design service improvements and to strengthen inter-community relations.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Approvals obtained from:

Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services: Judith Badger, 20/04/17

Assistant Director of Legal Services: Dermot Pearson, 24/04/17

Head of Procurement (if appropriate): not applicable

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:

<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

Rotherham: “Building Stronger Communities”

[a corporate strategy on community cohesion]

DRAFT April 2017

A vision for stronger communities throughout Rotherham

Building stronger communities is central to the **vision** set out for the Council – emphasising that Rotherham is a **shared community**, which **values decency**, and **provides opportunities** so that **no one is left behind**.

This vision - first set out by the Leader of the Council in October 2015 and underpinning *all* activity and service delivery across the Council – is as follows:

“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.

“To achieve this as a council we must work in a modern, efficient way, to deliver sustainable services in partnership with our local neighbourhoods, looking outwards, yet focused relentlessly on the needs of our residents.”

There can be no clearer statement than this about the central importance of strong, successful and cohesive communities in determining a more successful future for Rotherham – and this overall vision best articulates the **Council’s commitment to making sure that its services and activities work together to build stronger communities throughout the borough**.

Stronger communities will mean different things to different people, but for the purposes of this document it is intended to mean, very simply:

“People living and working in harmony, with a shared sense of community spirit - having respect for each other as citizens and respect for Rotherham as a place”.

In achieving this, there are a number of central aspects or themes:

- We will need a **strong civic community and pride of place**, with people trusting local institutions based on their demonstrable commitment to acting fairly and honestly in arbitrating between different interests, and their transparency and accountability. To be effective, engagement with local people should be carried out on their terms and be an ongoing dialogue aimed at understanding the issues and challenges faced by communities, whilst recognising their strengths and aspirations.
- The Council and partners must be proactive in providing opportunities to **bring people together**, fostering positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and facilitating the range of community voices and resident-led neighbourhood initiatives.
- This, in turn, will support a positive view of diversity, encouraging people to live and work together on the basis of shared values and ensuring people understand their **rights and responsibilities towards each other**: people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn. A crucial part of this is challenging extremism and those who would seek to weaken and divide our community and intimidate individuals.

- Finally, there is a fundamental requirement to **expand opportunity and economic security**, with people from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment. There is a particularly important role for community development and for the voluntary, community and faith sector in tackling the barriers which prevent people from participating fully in society and the life of our borough.

In taking this work forward, the Council **will also work in partnership** with others across Rotherham. Achieving the goal of stronger communities is a **shared priority of the Rotherham Together Partnership**, which brings together the key public, private and community sector voices from across the borough. As well as setting out how the Council itself will work to engage with and support local communities, this statement also explains how all services will work with others, as part of the new, shared “Rotherham Plan”.

Stronger communities mean better service delivery as the Council and its partners become more responsive and attuned to the needs of local people. With the impact of austerity and the increasingly difficult choices about where and how to invest tax-payers’ money, they are also central to the future sustainability of public services across Rotherham.

There is an increasing emphasis being given to community-led solutions to both provide more public services directly, as well as to reduce the demands on the public purse. Central to the Council’s long term vision is communities taking on greater responsibility and this requires different communities to work positively together, on the basis of shared values.

Building stronger communities also underpins the Council’s “One Rotherham” values and behaviours for its workforce, which help define how it works in the best interests of the Rotherham public, namely:

- **Honest:** open and truthful in everything we say and do
- **Accountable:** we own our decisions, we do what we say, and we acknowledge and learn from our mistakes
- **Respectful:** we show regard and sensitivity for the feelings, rights and views of others
- **Ambitious:** we are dedicated, committed and positive, embracing change with energy and creativity
- **Proud:** we take pride in our borough and in the job that we do

History and context

With a population of around 260,100 Rotherham borough comprises a diverse and vibrant mix of people, cultures and communities. 70% of Rotherham’s area is rural in nature, and the borough benefits from a wealth of natural and built environments.

In common with the rest of the UK, Rotherham has an ageing population with as many people aged 65+ as children under 16. This trend is particularly apparent in the very elderly; the number of people over 85 increased by 41% from 4,100 in 2001 to 5,800 in 2015. This trend has clear implications for the provision of health and social care services.

Rotherham’s minority ethnic population is 8.1% (2011), which is well below the national average of 20%. The largest minority ethnic group within Rotherham is the Pakistani & Kashmiri community with 3.1% of the total population.

Rotherham has experienced significant migration of EU citizens since the accession of 8 new countries in 2004. In Rotherham, around half of EU registrations for National Insurance have been from either

Poland (1,938) or Roma people from the Slovak and Czech Republic (2,845) and, since 2014, from Romania (620 - the majority of whom are Roma).

The Casey Review into opportunity and integration, published in December 2016, made four clear recommendations: build local communities' resilience in the towns and cities where the greatest challenges exist; improve the integration of communities in Britain and establish a set of values around which people from all different backgrounds can unite; reduce economic exclusion, inequality and segregation in our most isolated and deprived communities and schools; and increase standards of leadership and integrity in public office.

The review also identified Rotherham as one of the country's top ten areas in which the ethnicities of school populations were most out of kilter with the overall population of school aged children in the area – meaning that there are disproportionately high levels of minority ethnic concentrations in particular schools.

Many of the challenges facing the borough stem from the decline in the traditional coal and steel industries. This has resulted in massive changes within the local economy, changing jobs and businesses as well as the environment, communities and social conditions.

There has been much success in attracting new jobs to Rotherham in emerging sectors such as call centres, which was evidenced by the growth in the number of jobs between 1995 and 2005, an increase of 30,000 or 40%, one of the highest growth rates in the country. Despite job losses since 2007, Rotherham still has a higher percentage of its workforce in manufacturing than the national average. The number of VAT registered businesses in Rotherham per 1,000 population remains below the national average and there are too few businesses in high value-added sectors. Rotherham's average weekly wage is only 86% of the average for England as a whole, although the local cost of living is also lower.

The employment rate in Rotherham has generally fallen over recent years with 67.7% of those aged 16-64 in employment in 2016, 6.4 percentage points below the national average. The recent fall in employment rate is a result of a rise in economic inactivity rather than unemployment rates.

The claimant count of unemployment in Rotherham fell by 705 claimants between March 2015 and March 2017, mirroring falls seen across the country. The claimant count rate stood at 2.8% of working age population in March 2017, 0.5 percentage points above the regional rate and 0.9 percentage points above the national rate.

Some areas of Rotherham are affected by acute economic and social deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 showed that 50,400 (19.5%) Rotherham residents are living in the 10% most deprived areas of England. This has increased significantly from 44,170 in 2010 and 30,400 in 2007. As Rotherham's overall IMD "ranking" has changed little since 2010, the data suggests that deprivation is becoming more concentrated in the poorest parts of the borough.

The central area of Rotherham is the main area of deprivation although there are also pockets of high deprivation in Maltby, Rawmarsh, Dinnington, Thurgroft, Wath, Swinton and Aston. The main forms of deprivation are low educational attainment and adult skills, poor health, high rates of disability and high worklessness, notably long term sickness.

Educational attainment in Rotherham has been rising with the percentage of 16 years olds with 5 or more GCSEs A*-C, including English and maths, having risen from 37.4% in 1997 to 73.3% in 2010. This is still below the national average of 76.1% although the gap has closed significantly. The number

of people aged 16-64 in Rotherham with no qualifications is above the national average (15.8% compared to 12.2% for England & Wales in 2009).

Rotherham's particular recent history – including that set out in Dame Louise Casey's Corporate Governance Inspection (CGI) report (February 2015) - is that, while the Council often had the right policies and procedures on paper with regard to equalities and community cohesion, they were not embedded in the way services operated; and all too often ignored in the way that the Council behaved in practice. The Council also failed, previously, to work effectively in partnership with others on these critical issues.

The CGI report criticised the Council for not facing up to some of the most urgent issues surrounding race and cohesion because of a fear of the impact this could have on its reputation; and was highly critical of the Council's past political and managerial leadership in failing to confront these issues.

Tackling the legacy of these historical failings has been a key priority of the Council's improvement programme since government intervention following the CGI report.

Rotherham has been a focal point nationally for far-right protests for a number of years, with 17 taking place in the town since 2012. Aside from the economic and social disorder impacts, these recurrent protests and counter-demonstrations have put a substantial strain on the community – inciting racial and religious hatred and emphasising difference rather than what people have in common.

Rotherham, in many ways, is no different to other areas of the country in this respect, but does have this particular local context to bear in mind. For example, in consultation and engagement with the public, migration and cohesion issues are consistently voiced as top concerns; and hate crime reports in Rotherham have increased by more than 50% in the last year. Rotherham's recent history – child sexual exploitation (CSE) and the associated court trials; numerous protests; high profile racially motivated attacks, including the murder of an 81-year old man on his way to prayers at the local mosque; and reports of deteriorating community relationships with the police in particular - all serve to make dealing with these issues a top priority. These issues are likely to continue to have a continuing and profoundly local impact over the coming years.

In addition, this recent history and context has had a particular impact on girls and women of all ages, from all communities, across Rotherham.

However, Rotherham also has a thriving voluntary and community sector (VCS) to capitalise on, with over 47,000 active volunteers. There are numerous examples of VCS leadership and innovation in Rotherham to build upon, including national exemplar work on "social prescribing". A revised "Compact" is being launched in March 2017, following extensive consultation, to reset the relationship between the voluntary sector and all Rotherham's public service providers.

What have we already done?

A strong civic community and pride of place:

- We engaged hundreds of residents from all communities across the borough in our **Views from Rotherham** consultation, helping to shape the Rotherham Plan, our ambitious proposals for the future of the borough.
- Making **Rotherham Town Centre** feel and look a safe, welcoming place for all is at the core of the Council's commitment to a new "masterplan" that seeks to re-energise the

town centre through commercial, retail and residential development. There is a commitment to ensuring community focus in the masterplan, e.g. taking opportunities to create spaces for people to get together.

- The intensive work by the Council to **support the victims and survivors of CSE and bring perpetrators to justice**, regardless of their background or heritage, is an important part of rebuilding trust between communities and restoring confidence in public services. This touches upon the critical roles of both adult and children's social care in supporting stronger communities.
- Raising **public awareness of key issues affecting Rotherham** to inform and enable the public to take action. Recent examples including putting key information about hate crime and CSE on bus tickets, and the launch of the 'Ending the Silence' toolkit. This is a community toolkit that has been developed to raise awareness amongst South Asian parents and families about CSE and grooming.
- To provide the operational infrastructure to support engagement with communities, a **review of the Council's neighbourhood and engagement function is being finalised**. The aim is to provide more effective support to elected ward members in having a better understanding of their local communities and issues that impact on cohesion. This intelligence will be fed back to service teams, via elected members directly and service managers, to embed improved understanding of local issues.
- Continuing to honour the borough's civic traditions, including the Civic Parade and our annual **Armed Forces Day** celebrations, including members from all sections of the community.

Bringing people together:

- The Council is involved with an extensive **programme of events** across the borough every year to foster positive relations – this has included the Diversity Festival as part of the Rotherham Show, Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations, Rotherham Carnival, the "Love is Louder" campaign, Volunteer Walk, "Reclaim the Night", Rotherham Pride, Workers' Memorial Day and International Women's Day.
- Funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner has been used by the Safer Rotherham Partnership and Rotherham United Community Sports Trust for the **Building Bridges project**, bringing together young people from different communities using film, sports and the arts to discuss difficult issues such as racism.
- For new arrivals who settle in Rotherham, the Council has an important role in **citizenship ceremonies** – we will seek to make this more explicitly linked to life in Rotherham.
- The **Love is Louder** partnership project run by Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA), which has worked with over 50 local organisations, has won a national Epic award as part of BBC Radio 3's Free Thinking Festival. Love is Louder won for celebrating diversity by counteracting negative perceptions of the town through an inclusive and creative approach to community cohesion.
- An enhanced focus on the Council's **arts, culture and tourism** will fully explore what more can be done through public events to bring communities together.

Our rights and responsibilities towards each other:

- The **Safer Rotherham Partnership and Strategy**¹ has a crucial role to play, and has set out “building confident and cohesive communities” as a top priority for council and police joint work. Its wider **focus on disorder, anti-social behaviour** and other forms of enforcement which help to make Rotherham a safer, more welcoming place are critical to building community confidence and also bringing people together. The Council’s new, **robust taxi licensing policies and enforcement** activity is a further example, placing paramount importance on the safety of customers.
- **Tackling environment issues** – including through an enhanced focus on enforcement of littering, fly-tipping and other “enviro-crimes” - is also a major factor. Beyond this, however, it is critical for services to work with communities to **improve understanding** of how environmental services are delivered and what the **responsibilities are of all Rotherham citizens** in looking after and being proud of their local area.
- Where there are **particular issues to tackle in specific localities** the Council also has a key role to target activity, including the work of partners. One example is the dedicated **Eastwood Action Plan**, addressing the issues and challenges in this area and bringing people together to understand local needs and promote integration, including new arrivals. The Council will explore with local communities where similar, local action plans could add value.
- The Council also works with others to address the specific issues that threaten to undermine strong local communities, where people feel unsafe or unprotected. This includes through tackling issues such as **hate crime** with the police (where measures such as Operation Solar have improved reporting); and by working with **schools** in terms of their duty² to promote and report on cohesion issues.
- The Safer Rotherham Partnership has funded a **Hate Crime Advocates** project in 2016/17, helping to build the confidence of BME women and strengthen Rotherham’s response to hate crime.
- There is no room for **extremism or intolerance** from any part of the community or society in Rotherham – and the Council will do everything it can, working with partners, to challenge the negative influences that seek to undermine local communities and divide citizens. This includes fulfilling its **Prevent** duties, as a council and through schools.
- Distinct from Prevent, the Council is working on community responses to extremism and engaging with the Home Office counter extremism strategy through the appointment of a community engagement co-ordinator to support mainstream voices that are against extremism or intolerance.
- The Council also has particular responsibilities in response to the **right-wing marches and counter protests** that have had such a damaging impact on the town and its communities over recent years. While the Home Office has promised a full review of current legislation, this failed to emerge in 2016 and current powers mean it is almost

¹ See the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) website at www.rotherham.gov.uk/srp/homepage/3/priorities

² The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002 introducing a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion

impossible to stop these protests going ahead, despite the disruption they cause. In addition to managing the impacts of these marches and doing all it can to minimise the impact on the public and businesses, the Council has a further role to **bring community and faith leaders together** to reach a better mutual understanding of the long-term impacts on local communities. The “Enough is Enough” campaign is one example of the joint work in this area.

- The Council attends the South Yorkshire **Police and Crime Commissioner’s independent panel on protest marches**, to ensure a better understanding of the wider social, community and economic impacts of the protests, beyond the disruption on the day. As the threat of protests continues into 2017, this community leadership role will again be critical.

Expanding opportunity and economic security:

- The Council agreed a new **Equality and Diversity Policy** in July 2016³, the delivery of which is now supported by officer and community reference groups overseeing a detailed strategy and action plan: “**Equality for All**”. This sets out the Council’s commitment to addressing the needs of all protected characteristic groups, as set out in legislation; but goes wider than this to tackle inequalities across the board – including in terms of socio-economic and health factors. Importantly, the strategy includes helpful profiles of different local communities across Rotherham (in terms of ethnicity, disabilities, religion, age, gender and sexual orientation and identity). A key focus of this work is to bring these different groups together and directly support the ambitions to build stronger communities that understand and can celebrate differences.
- Through the economic growth plan for 2015-25, progress is already being made in creating jobs by supporting businesses to start up and grow and attracting investment. The **new university centre** in the town centre, due to open in 2018, will help to boost skill levels and add to the vibrancy of the town centre as the new masterplan takes shape. To help people who find it difficult to secure and maintain decent employment, local partners will work with Sheffield City Region to develop a **work and health programme**. This will provide individually tailored support, focusing particularly on those with health problems or disabilities.
- **English language provision** is supported through the Council’s adult learning service. There is good provision of English language courses in Rotherham – but more needs to be done to reach out to those who are ineligible but in need of support, as well as alternative ways of delivering English language beyond the classroom setting. This includes conversational approaches and taking English language tuition into sports, arts and cultural settings. A particular focus is also needed to reach out to women who may be marginalised by mainstream English language courses. A first step will be to fully map current provision and discuss with the community how gaps and shortcomings can be addressed.
- Celebrating the **positive and strong role of women in Rotherham** is a further theme that demands particular focus through the partnership-wide commitment. For example, a Rotherham “Louder Together” group is developing positive ideas to create a “social movement” which shares and celebrates the many positive female role models in the town, encourages respect for women, increases aspiration and self-confidence, and

³ See <http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s106464/Appendix%20-%20Corporate%20Equality%20and%20Diversity%20Policy.pdf>

challenges sexist attitudes and behaviours. The group is keen to use social media to share positive stories of strong local women to challenge stereotypes, demonstrate the impact that supporting women has, and develop self-belief.

- The Safer Rotherham Partnership has supported **Remedi Girls Group**, working with girls aged between 13-17 who have been identified as vulnerable (e.g. they have low self-esteem, find it difficult to form relationships, or are being bullied at school or by siblings at home). The overall aim of the programme is to help girls and young women improve their level of self-esteem.

Working in Partnership – a shared commitment and programme of action

The Council cannot achieve its ambitions to support stronger communities across Rotherham without ***working alongside its partners in the Rotherham Together Partnership***⁴.

This Partnership - re-launched and expanded in the autumn of 2015 – includes all the strategic partnership organisations across Rotherham with a clear priority to bring communities together.

The Partnership has now launched its new, long-term “*Rotherham Plan*” setting out a shared ambition for a more prosperous borough; and *building stronger communities* is a key theme within this.

The Council will therefore seek to focus and target its work to support stronger communities through the Rotherham Together Partnership structures. Specifically, it will work with its partners to set out a fresh programme of activity, including:

1. Establish a new community-led, Stronger Communities Forum for Rotherham

An important first step will be to establish a new **Stronger Communities Forum for Rotherham** to change the terms of community-led debate on these critical issues, and advise all agencies involved in the Rotherham Together Partnership.

This should bring together service leads from across the Partnership with local community representatives and faith-based organisations, to rethink what actions and support are needed to bring people together.

The forum will build on engagement mechanisms established to respond to the impacts that repeated right-wing and counter protests have had on Rotherham over recent years. But it will also overtly bring different community voices and opinions together in a safe environment, and there is also commitment from local universities to support this work and bring in new thinking, analysis and expertise. In this way, we will be well placed to pick up signs of particular issues, difficulties, or breakdowns in integration.

The approach will focus on dialogue, but with communities in the driving seat. The forum would give communities the opportunity to engage directly with the full range of public service providers in Rotherham – the police, NHS, fire service, education institutions etc.

2. Provide a Stronger Communities grant programme to fund practical, community-led projects

The Council will provide **£5,000 of funding** to design a community-led programme of support and activity with Voluntary Action Rotherham, to be **matched by a further £5,000 from the Rotherham Together Partnership**. Other public agencies and partners are called upon to add to this wherever they can, with the aim of producing a rolling pot of funding that can support small scale initiatives.

⁴ See www.rotherhamtogetherpartnership.org.uk

To further support and facilitate this, the Council will also **deliver against its plans to re-energise neighbourhood level working** (as noted above) by clarifying the role of ward-level support officers and local engagement teams who help ensure that the needs of local citizens are effectively communicated back to those that design and deliver the Council's services, as well as to partner agencies.

3. Deliver a programme of activity that responds to the specific challenges and increased demand on services resulting from migration and settlement patterns

The council, supported by a range of partners, will seek external funding, including from the government's **Controlling Migration Fund**, to deliver activity focused on:

- Service integration
- Rogue landlords
- English language support
- Cohesion
- Data and evidence gathering

4. Commit to a programme of public engagement that seeks to have the “difficult conversations” about Rotherham’s recent history and current challenges, whilst focusing on the positive things that unite people

A series of “roadshows” will be held across the borough and with a wide range of demographic groups, providing opportunities for an honest and open dialogue. The aim would be to promote understanding and empathy and ultimately develop shared **Rotherham values** that emphasise what people have in common rather than the things that divide them.

Dedicated support to embed understanding within the Council – while also reaching out to communities

Delivering against the ambitions and aims set out in this document requires **focused and dedicated support**. While the Council’s Cabinet and entire Strategic Leadership Team are fully committed to driving this work forward, it requires coordination within the Council, coordination across partners, and coordination directly with communities and their representative groups.

The Council will therefore secure dedicated officer support to lead on this activity and ensure that there are a range of focused actions. Wherever possible, it will seek to fund this support via relevant external sources of funding, including those from central Government which may be linked to the recommendations included in Dame Louise Casey’s independent report on integration and cohesion⁵.

It is envisaged that the officer(s) would:

- Directly support the work of the forum
- Be skilled in direct interaction with community and faith groups about issues associated with cohesion and integration – able to have the “difficult conversations” that are often required
- Channel intelligence back to strategic and service managers, and elected members (including Cabinet)
- Work in tandem with the Neighbourhood and Engagement Service, drawing on their support to elected members to further enhance the information being fed back to service teams on the needs of local communities

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-casey-review-a-review-into-opportunity-and-integration>

- Have similar access to senior leadership colleagues in all partner organisations
- Facilitate and deliver training and awareness raising amongst Council staff, and also within partner organisations
- Provide direct outreach support to communities, leading projects where appropriate to bring different communities together

How the Council will embed its focus on stronger communities

In addition to the dedicated capacity noted above and the associated learning and awareness-raising associated with it, there are a number of further ways that the Council (and partners) can look to “mainstream” this critical focus on building stronger communities:

- Ensuring a key focus within the refreshed Council (corporate) Plan for 2017/18 onwards, complete with appropriate success/outcome measures defined so that the situation can be monitored, on an ongoing basis, at the highest level.
- Ensuring the supporting service business plans that each Council directorate produces in support of the Council Plan have an overt focus on the role of each service in fostering stronger communities.
- Ensuring that future public satisfaction surveys carried out by the Council address the issue of community cohesion and integration, so that the views and opinions of local people can be tracked and trends analysed.

Maintaining focus and looking to the future

The “Building Stronger Communities” statement will be subject to political leadership at the Council at the highest level by the Leader, who is also the current Chair of the Rotherham Together Partnership.

At officer level activity will be championed and overseen across the Council by the Assistant Chief Executive.

The Stronger Communities Forum will also provide a critical external perspective that can provide robust and constructive challenge, both to the Council and to other partners.

There will be ongoing engagement with the LGA specialist interest group led by Leeds and Luton councils to ensure that Rotherham is aware of and learning from best practice nationally.

Resources and further advice

- The Casey Review: a review into opportunity and integration
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-casey-review-a-review-into-opportunity-and-integration>
- Community Cohesion: Seven Steps A Practitioner's Guide
www.tedcandle.co.uk/publications/015%20Community%20cohesion%20seven%20steps%20%20Community%20Cohesion%20Unit%20.pdf
- Local Government Association's helpful resource pages at www.local.gov.uk/community-safety/-/journal_content/56/10180/7878729

Building Stronger Communities Action Plan (DRAFT 25th April 2017)

Ref	Action	Action owner	Milestones	Update	RAG status
Coordination and overarching activity					
C1	Establish a Stronger Communities Forum (Chaired by the Leader of the Council)	Shokat Lal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First meeting to take place - May 2017 	Initial discussion meeting arranged for 11th April	
C2	Secure funding for a dedicated officer to support this work	Shokat Lal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid submitted - March 2017 • Decision expected - May 2017 	Controlling Migration Fund bid submitted	
C3	Deliver a small grants and initiatives programme	Carole Haywood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch programme - June 2017 	Funding agreed by RMBC and RTP; VAR have agreed to administer	
Priority 1 – A strong civic community and pride of place					
1.1	Rotherham Together Partnership (RTP) and its supporting boards ensure effective joint working on local priorities	Head of PIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotherham Plan launched – March 2017 • Ongoing programme of partnership communications, including: Quarterly newsletter – June, Sept, Dec, Mar 2017/18 Increase use of social media to reach a wider audience – RTP presence on appropriate platforms – September 17 • Promote joint work through 		

			<p>partner events (e.g. AGMs) and newsletters – dates TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual partnership showcase – March 2018 		
1.2	Establish a Community Engagement Co-ordinator role to provide a conduit between local communities and public services	Shokat Lal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job description agreed and funding secured - March 2017 • Appoint coordinator - June 2017 		
1.3	Renewed approach to neighbourhood level working and engagement with local communities	Tom Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised neighbourhood working model to RMBC Cabinet - April 2017 • Constitutional changes agreed, as required - May 2017 • Implementation begins (approx. 12-month process) – June 2017 (designated officer per ward / ward profiles / ward plans) 		
1.4	Rotherham Together Partnership's integrated, place-based approach - "Rotherham Working Together" - implemented	RTP CEO Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 2 workshops held - February/March 2017 • Principles agreed and draft approach developed – April 2017 • Final workshop focused on implementation – May 2017 • Implementation begins – June 2017 		
1.5	Promote active citizenship and volunteering opportunities within and	Janet Wheatley	Milestones to be identified		

	between communities	(VAR)			
1.6	Enhance the role of libraries as community hubs	Polly Hamilton	Milestones to be identified		
Priority 2 – Bringing people together					
2.1	Work with schools, providers and local communities to promote more integrated schools and opportunities for pupils to mix with others from different backgrounds – September 2017	Karen Borthwick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver conflict prevention training with young people School links/twinning? <p>Further milestones to be identified</p>		
2.2	Deliver an extensive programme of events across the borough to foster positive relations	RTP team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Love is Louder” campaign – ongoing Rotherham Carnival - TBC “Reclaim the Night” – date TBC Volunteer Walk – June 2017 Mela (festival) – July 2017 Holocaust Memorial Day – January 2018 International Women’s Day – March 2018 		
2.3	Actively promote opportunities for cross-working between communities of different backgrounds and isolate extreme voices	Adrian Dexter (RTP faith rep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review faith leaders council membership & priorities – April 2017 Use sport sessions to promote community cohesion (e.g. parents together for sport project) 		

			in CMF bid)		
2.4	Identifying and learning from successful approaches to integration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meeting with University of Sheffield – April 2017 		
2.5	Programme of public engagement to discuss issues and challenges and identify shared “Rotherham values”		Timescales/milestones to be agreed		
2.6	Adapt citizenship ceremonies to make them more explicitly linked to life in Rotherham.				
2.7	Schools programme of support developed to promote shared values	Karen Borthwick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme agreed via Stronger Communities Forum – Aug 2017 Programme rolled out – from Sept 2017 		
Priority 3 – Our rights and responsibilities towards each other					
3.1	Project-based delivery subject to approval of Controlling Migration fund bid		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rotherham Citizenship programme Good neighbour project Difficult conversations 		
3.2	Encouraging and building the confidence of communities to report incidents of hate crime including Islamophobia, disability hate crime, homophobic behaviour or anti-semitism	Carol Adamson, RMBC PC Chris Nicholson,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly monitoring of police recorded hate crime and incidents. Quarterly programme of community engagement and awareness raising across all 		

		SYP	protected groups.		
3.3	Deliver effective and positive media engagement on hate crime, which publicises when perpetrators of hate crime are prosecuted.	PC Chris Nicholson, SYP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly review of outcomes of hate crime reports. • Bi-monthly review of hate crime good news stories at SRP PAD meetings. 		
3.4	Safeguard children, young people and adults from becoming involved in or supporting terrorism		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review SRP Partnership Prevent Plan for 17/18 and provide update report to: 17/05/17 - SRP PAD 12/06/17 - SRP Board 15/11/17 - SRP PAD 04/12/17 - SRP Board 		
3.5	Ensure joint community engagement and tension monitoring plans are in place		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review approaches in Leeds and Luton to learn from best practice • Implement consistent approach in Rotherham 		
3.6	Review the tactical approach to policing protests, to ensure a robust method which complies with legislation, but limits impact on the community and town centre businesses		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine approaches in other areas 		
Priority 4 – Expanding opportunity and economic security					

4.1	Developing approaches to help address unemployment and economic inactivity for particular groups		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of work and health programme commences – Oct 2017 		
4.2	Challenging behaviours and practices which are discriminatory towards women and girls, such as equal access to education, justice and employment				
4.3	Embed the council's equalities and diversity strategy	Zaidah Ahmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish community reference group that partners would consult and engage with on equality and diversity issues • Hold an annual stakeholder conference, bringing together people from different backgrounds to discuss issues & identify solutions 		
4.4	Prioritise the delivery of services to those most in need of them, ensuring a visible presence in the areas where this will have the most impact				
4.5	Work with education partners and businesses to support opportunities and access to education, employment and English language training to those most vulnerable, especially women and young people				
4.6	"Louder Together" programme of activities				

Key performance measures:

- More residents feeling safe in their community
- More people satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- More people actively participating in their community
- Increased reporting of hate crime
- Increased 'positive' outcomes for victims and witnesses of hate crime offences
- Increased awareness of the impacts of the work of the Safer Rotherham Partnership
- Number of hate crime and community cohesion activities delivered

Public Report
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 5 May 2017
Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 15 May 2017

Flag Protocol for Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author

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Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle

Summary

Following a number of enquiries and requests to fly alternative flags, a protocol has been prepared to establish a calendar of dates on which flags should be flown, the circumstances of how those flags should be flown and any associated decision making in respect of flying flags outside of the terms of the protocol.

Whilst the general principle applied by the authority is to follow the advice provided by central government, a framework for local decision making in respect of the flying of flags would assist in the determination of any additional requests.

This report therefore seeks the approval and adoption of a protocol to govern the flying of flags at Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall.

Recommendations

1. That the Flag Protocol for Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall be approved and adopted.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A – Proposed Flag Flying Protocol

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Flag Protocol for Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Flag Protocol for Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall be approved and adopted.

2. Background

- 2.1 Following a number of enquiries and requests to fly alternative flags, work has been undertaken to develop a protocol to guide the Council in respect of the flying of flags at Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall.
- 2.2 The flying of flags is not the subject of statute across Great Britain and advice is issued from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on the flying of national flags from government buildings. The advice relates to government buildings only, but many local authorities, such as Rotherham MBC, also follow the advice on a voluntary basis.
- 2.3 The Government's Flag and Heraldry Committee produced a Flag Flying Guidance in 2010. The guidance covers simple rules which apply to flying flags in a variety of situations and aims to ensure flags across the nation are flown correctly and treated with dignity and respect.
- 2.4 In January 2012, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a discussion paper aimed at liberalising the regime for flying flags. The outcome from that paper was a number of proposals aimed at modernising and relaxing Government flag protocols. Notably the recommendations included:
 - Adding in both the Armed Forces Flag and the Pride (Rainbow Flag); and
 - Extending the category of flags which can be flown with consent to include certain officially sanctioned award schemes which have an approved flag, such as Investors in People and Eco-Schools.
- 2.5 In November 2012, DCLG published a *Plain English Guide to Flying Flags*, which provided a summary of new regulations.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The matter of flag flying on local government buildings is not bound by any specific directive. It remains a matter for individual local authorities to establish their own flag flying protocols.
- 3.2 The protocols of other local authorities vary in their content, formality and the number of flagpoles available at each Council building. However, a growing number of local authorities are formalising their policy and relaxing the traditional stance to allow additional flags to be flown.

- 3.3 For a number of years, the Council has flown flags in accordance with the advice from the Government. In addition to those dates, the Council has also flown flags to mark specific cultural, community and sporting events. In the absence of a formal policy, it is recommended that the existing schedule of dates be incorporated within the proposed protocol.
- 3.4 The flying of flags has proved a contentious issue in other local authority areas due to the symbolic meaning attached by various communities to various flags. Whilst the proposed protocol has been prepared in recognition of this, consideration should also be given to how decisions will be made in respect of whether and how flags should be flown in response to certain events. Whilst advice is often provided by DCLG, a Member-level view should be sought to give effect to the implementation of the advice.
- 3.5 Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall are the two principal buildings of the Council, one being the administrative centre of the authority and the other being the civic heart of Rotherham. Whilst the existing schedule for the flying of flags has been in place for some time in respect of Riverside House, the practice at Rotherham Town Hall has not been the same. The adoption of a protocol covering both sites would ensure a consistent and seamless approach to the flying of flags from these two buildings.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 The Council does not currently have any protocol or formally agreed guidance on the flying of flags. Decision making in respect of the flying of flags has been informal and on the direction of the Leader of the Council or a senior officer. In addition to this, a schedule of dates for the flying of flags has been prepared which has applied to Riverside House, but not consistently used by Rotherham Town Hall. This approach requires development to ensure that there is sufficient clarity and transparency in respect of the flying of flags.
- 4.2 Requests may be received from individuals or groups to fly flags at either Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall which are in effect seeking the Council's support for a particular cause or campaign. Where such requests are received, the Council should consider whether it wishes to support the cause or campaign rather than exercising delegated powers in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
- 4.3 It is recommended that the protocol appended to this report, which is based on the principles of the Council following the lead of the relevant government department and requests for support for campaigns or causes being determined at a meeting of the Council, is approved and adopted.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The adoption of a Flag Protocol for the flying of flags at Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall is an executive responsibility. The protocol will therefore be implemented immediately after the expiration of the call-in period after the decision is made.

5.2 Whilst ultimate accountability for this protocol will lie with the Chief Executive, the Democratic Services Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the protocol is observed and for ensuring that any decisions required in respect of the flying of flags outside of the protocol are taken by the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council. The Head of Asset Management will also be responsible for ensuring that flags are flown and taken down at Riverside House and taken down in accordance with the protocol.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial or procurement implications associated with this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with the adoption of the flag protocol.

8. Human Resources Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for children and young people or vulnerable adults associated with this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

10.1 When the Equality Act 2010 was introduced, a duty was placed upon public bodies. This duty requires public bodies throughout the exercise of their functions to pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, victimisation, harassment and any other unlawful conduct under the Act;
- Promote equality of opportunity between those who have an equality characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between those who have an equality characteristic and those who do not.

10.2 Local authorities have been approached by equality groups nationally and from local communities requesting the flying of their representative flag. Following the introduction of the Equality Duties, the council should equality assess any flag flying protocol to ensure that it is compliant with the Act and consider flying additional flags as appropriate.

10.3 The proposed protocol will allow the council to actively and openly demonstrate its commitment to equality of opportunity, to celebrate diversity and promote inclusion. In doing so, the council will be actively undertaking its equalities duties and meeting the requirement of the Equality Act 2010.

11. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

11.1 There are no implications for partners or other directorates associated with this report.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 There is a risk that formalising the council protocol on flag flying may prove contentious with some members of the public, however, the overriding concern is ensuring that the protocol clarifies the authority's position and does not adversely impact on its requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive
James McLaughlin, Democratic Services Manager

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services:- Graham Saxton

Assistant Director of Legal Services:- Dermot Pearson

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-

James McLaughlin, Democratic Services Manager
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This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-
<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FLAG PROTOCOL

1. This protocol has been prepared to provide a formal schedule of dates upon which specific flags will be flown from Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall. The two principles governing this protocol are:
 - (a) That the Council will follow the advice of the relevant Government department in respect of the dates upon and the manner in which flags are to be flown.
 - (b) That the requests for support for a cause or campaign, which by implication will include the flying of a flag, will require a decision by Members at a meeting of the Council.
2. Where a request is received for a flag to be flown in support of a particular campaign, the Chief Executive shall arrange for a report to be prepared for consideration by the Council. It will be a matter for the Council to determine whether it wishes to demonstrate support for a campaign by permitting the flying of a flag from either Riverside House or Rotherham Town Hall.
3. In the event of a request to fly a flag at either Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall being received which is not dealt with under this protocol and accompanying schedule, the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, will have authority to arrange for specific flags to be flown, subject to the Council having demonstrated its commitment to the cause, set out in clause 2 above.

(NB when the Chief Executive is not available, the designated deputy will consult the Leader of the Council and arrange for specific flags to be flown. In the absence or unavailability of the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council shall be consulted.)

Instances where this approach would be required may include recognition of sporting events, such as the FIFA World Cup or The Ashes International Cricket Series, demonstrating support for particular communities or campaign groups

4. In the event of a national or international incident, the advice of the Department for Communities and Local Government will be followed in respect of how and when flags will be flown at Riverside House and Rotherham Town Hall.
5. When recognising a national or international incident, the Council will fly the Union Flag. If the Council is in possession of the flag of an affected nation, the Chief Executive may consult the Leader of the Council on flying the appropriate national flag at Riverside House and/or Rotherham Town Hall.
6. The Union Flag is to be hoisted on Rotherham Town Hall and Riverside House on dates in accordance with circular issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

***Days for Hoisting the Flag from Government Buildings
(from 6.30am until 6.00pm)***

9 January	Birthday of the Duchess of Cambridge
20 January	Birthday of the Countess of Wessex
6 February	Her Majesty's Accession
19 February	Birthday of the Duke of York
10 March	Birthday of the Earl of Wessex
March	Commonwealth Day (2nd Monday in March)
21 April	Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen
23 April	St George's Day
9 May	Europe Day
2 June	Coronation Day
10 June	Birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh
June	Official Celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday (date varies)
21 June	Birthday of the Duke of Cambridge
17 July	Birthday of the Duchess of Cornwall
22 July	Birthday of Prince George of Cambridge
15 August	Birthday of the Princess Royal
15 September	Birthday of Prince Henry of Wales
11 November	Remembrance Day
November	Remembrance Sunday (Nearest Sunday to 11 November)*
14 November	Birthday of the Prince of Wales
20 November	Her Majesty's Wedding Day

Occasions on which the Union Flag is to be flown at half-mast

- (a) From the announcement of the Death up to the Funeral of the Head of State except on Proclamation Day on which they are hoisted full mast from 11am until sunset.
 - (b) The funerals of members of the Royal Family, subject to any Special Commands by the Head of State in each case.
 - (c) The funerals of Foreign Rulers, subject to any Special Commands from the Head of State.
 - (d) The funerals of Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom.
 - (e) Other occasions by Special Command of the Head of State.
7. The Cross of St. George Flag is the traditional flag for England and was the legal national flag of the Kingdom of England until 1707. This flag can be flown in conjunction with the Union Flag. However, the Union Flag will take precedence over the flag of the Cross of St. George. This flag will be flown specifically on 23 April to mark St. George's Day and on other days in accordance with the schedule of dates.

8. The Borough Council's Flag incorporates the Coat of Arms of the Authority and motto 'By Industry and Honour'. The Borough Flag should be flown on the day of the Annual Meeting, the day of the Civic Service (usually the third Saturday in May) and whenever the Mayor holds an official reception at Rotherham Town Hall. The Borough Flag is to be flown on the days when meetings of the Council are taking place.

(a) Mayor and Past Mayors of the Council

The Local Authority Flag is to be flown at half mast on the death of the current Mayor, from the day of the death until 6.30pm on the day of the funeral. In relation to past Mayors, the Local Authority Flag will be flown at half mast on the day of the death and the day of the funeral where known. The dates will be notified by the Mayor's Office.

(b) Serving Members of the Council

The flag is to be flown at half mast on the day of the death of a serving member and then on the day of the funeral until 6.30pm. The dates will be notified by Democratic Services.

Note: If death occurred after normal working hours the flag would be flown at half mast on the next working day.

9. The Yorkshire Flag should be flown at all times at Riverside House unless there are other specific circumstances requiring other flags to be flown, as identified in the schedule of dates. The Yorkshire Flag will specifically be flown annually to mark Yorkshire Day on 1 August.
10. On the occasion that an overseas visitor is present at Riverside House or Rotherham Town Hall, on official business/visit, whenever possible, the flag for the visiting country will be flown. The organiser for the visit should notify the Head of Asset Management and the Town Hall Attendants as soon as the date of the visit is known in order that the appropriate flag may be obtained and flown.
11. At Riverside House, the Union Flag should be flown on the nearest flagpole to the building, which is the principal flag pole. There are four flagpoles at Riverside House. Two flagpoles are situated at Rotherham Town Hall. The principal flagpole is located on the north-west edge of the Town Hall. The other flagpole is located above the entrance to the Town Hall.