

**COUNCIL MEETING
13th December, 2017**

Present:- The Mayor of Rotherham (Councillor Eve Rose Keenan) (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Albiston, Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Brookes, Buckley, Carter, Cooksey, Cowles, Cusworth, B. Cutts, D. Cutts, Elliot, M. Elliott, R. Elliott, Ellis, Fenwick-Green, Hague, Hoddinott, Ireland, Jarvis, Jepson, Jones, Khan, Lelliott, McNeely, Mallinder, Marles, Marriott, Napper, Pitchley, Price, Read, Roche, Rushforth, Sansome, Senior, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Steele, Taylor, John Turner, Julie Turner, Vjestica, Walsh, Watson, Williams, Wilson and Wyatt.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

96. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor was pleased to report on the last few months' activity which had seen her attend 126 engagements since the last meeting.

The Mayor proposed that she produce a written report on her activity for sharing at future Council meetings in addition to her verbal report.

The Mayor confirmed she was also in receipt of a decorated African Mace, usually given to the Leader of the Tribe, which was presented at the African History Event. This would serve as amazing reminder of a great cultural event and the amazing privilege and responsibility serving the people of Rotherham.

Rotherham's switching on of the Christmas illuminations was again a great success, children filled and the decorations in Rotherham second to none.

The Mayor also opened an event with Grimm and Co. She was pleased to report she had won in the raffle an umbrella that doubled up as a hex protector.

The Mayor was also pleased to report the opening of 2 art galleries in Rotherham, one above Riley's Snooker Hall, and the other at Masbrough showing a hundred portraits of Rotherham people.

On Monday, 18th December, 2017 the Mayor was also hosting an event with the Daniel Barnett Foundation inviting children from Bluebell Wood and the disabled carers' forum children to an art therapy party for the children to make and take home art keepsakes and, of course, meet Father Christmas.

97. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allcock, Bird, Clark, Evans, Reeder, Russell, Whysall and Yasseen.

98. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications received.

99. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18th October, 2017, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

100. PETITIONS

The Mayor reported that no petitions had been received.

101. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cusworth declared a personal interest in Minute No. 108 (Review of District Heating Charges) on the grounds that her brother was a resident on the Swinton Fitzwilliam Estate and whilst would speak on the matter would not participate in the vote.

102. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(1) Mr. L. Harron asked did the Leader of the Council agree that online communications with members of the public about what resources have been specifically allocated to help victims and survivors of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) have been dire and would he ensure that all relevant information was published online, say within two weeks?

The Leader confirmed he was aware of Mr. Harron's ongoing concerns and his championing of this cause and was not sure he agreed that the information on the website was dire. There was a page on the Council's website which detailed the resources available including post abuse support and how to report concerns about any child at risk of CSE with contact details for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, Rotherham Abuse Counselling Service, the Sexual Assault Referral Centre and Barnado's. The web pages did identify useful information for people seeking support and activity in the Borough. This did not include financial resources allocated by the Council if specific details should be added the Leader was happy to take a representation on this. He had also asked the Communications Team to ensure this page was easily accessible from the Council's home page on the website.

In his supplementary question Mr. Harron referred to the statement made by the Leader in public a few weeks ago about the failure of the bid. For people like Mr. Harron actively campaigning information was required to see what help could be given to assist with getting more resources.

He described how three years on the 16th December he had met with Paul Lakin, former Leader, and had offered then to give two days of his own voluntary activity for three months to improve the Council's communications. Ian Thomas was in the meeting at the time and indicated there were thousands who wanted to help. He asked if Ian Thomas could write a report showing how he had utilised people and the time offered to him in his first few weeks in Rotherham.

The Leader was happy to speak to Mr. Thomas about what information could be made available on the Council's website about what the Council had done in relation to child sexual exploitation as Rotherham clearly had a strong story to tell. Whether this should involve information about the use of volunteers it was difficult to decide, but the Leader would reflect on this in the weeks to come.

(2) From Mr. P. Thirlwall asked when was Appendix 8, Schedule 1, of the Council's Constitution amended to include the Leader of the Opposition and could he have a copy of the correspondence from UKIP stating that Councillor Cowles was their present Leader?

The Leader enlightened Members on the previous question about the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance to Councillor Cowles, Leader of the Opposition, and where that had been detailed. A response was provided in writing detailing how at the Annual Council Meeting in May, 2017 a report was tabled identifying Councillor Cowles as the Leader of the Opposition, thus providing a record. In further investigation, however, it became apparent that an error in the part of the Constitution listing office holders and the amount of Special Responsibility Allowance they were entitled to had been made and the detail on the Leader of the Opposition was not included. On the advice on the Monitoring Officer the Statement was updated on Friday, 20th October, 2017.

In a supplementary question Mr. Thirlwall apologised to the Council if he had given the impression he was gullible in the response given. The report referred to made no reference to the payment of expenses to Councillor Cowles, but was about the distribution of political balance and seats on committees etc. and which also indicated there were no financial or procurement implications of the decision. The report also referred to the background papers as the Council's Constitution which was why Mr. Thirlwall had looked and found Councillor Cowles not listed. He expressed his concern about the revision of the Constitution in October, however, this could not be changed without coming back to full Council. He was sure this had not been done and asked that monies already paid to Councillor Cowles be recovered until such time as changes to the Constitution had been agreed properly.

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The Leader explained he had acted on the advice of the Monitoring Officer which allowed for these kind of minor corrections to be agreed between Council Meetings. Should Mr. Thirlwall have any further concerns over this matter he was asked to pick these up with the Monitoring Officer as everything had been undertaken legally.

(3) Mr. D. Smith asked could he be told why it should take a year for a simple complaint against a Parish or Town Councillor to be dealt with by the Standards and Ethics Committee.

Councillor McNeely confirmed the length of time taken to bring a complaint about the conduct of a town or parish councillor to a conclusion would depend upon the circumstances which could include:-

- The complexity of the complaint and whether it links to other complaints or counter-allegations.
- The time it takes to obtain the views of the councillor being complained about and the complainant's response to those views.
- The time it takes to explore the options for an informal resolution of the complaint.
- If the complaint could not be resolved informally, the time it takes to arrange a hearing convenient to all the parties and to the panel which would hear the complaint and make a final decision

However, a complaint should not take a year to conclude unless there were exceptional circumstances and at its last meeting Council approved a new procedure for handling complaints about councillors with timescales and a presumption that a matter would progress to the next stage of the process if a party had not provided a timely response or would not engage with the process.

In a supplementary question Mr. Smith provided two scenarios where he had tried to contact officers regarding a particular issue and due to the lack of consideration to emails this was eventually resolved after thirteen months. Another complaint took twelve months for a recommendation that the person the subject of the complaint should apologise for his conduct.

The Mayor advised that should Mr. Smith have any concerns over operational matters then he should refer these to the Chief Executive for investigation.

Councillor McNeely confirmed complaints were to be dealt with more effectively, but suggested that should one of the scenarios referred to above be in relation to a racist term used by a Dinnington Town Councillor the process included arranging a meeting with the councillor to see if the matter could be resolved informally, in line with the views of the Independent Person. There were some difficulties in arranging that meeting and when it did take place it was not possible to resolve the matter informally and it had to proceed to a formal hearing.

If there were any other details required then Councillor McNeely was happy to respond in writing.

Mr. Smith wished to place on record that he had not referred to specific details in relation to his questions.

(4) Mr. R. Beecher reported that last year both representatives attended a FBU branch meeting at his invite, where both representatives held 'No More Fire Cuts' posters alongside firefighters. So, why four months later did they not rescind the Fire Authority decision to proceed with the removal of the second fire appliance at night time from Rotherham Fire Station?

Councillor Atkin confirmed both he and Councillor Buckley had attended a FBU branch meeting and offered support against the Fire Service cuts. However, since 2010, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service had suffered significant cuts to its Government funding, which have reduced its operating budget by around 25%. Throughout this period, the Fire Authority and service managers have repeatedly stated their commitment to provide the best possible service to the people of South Yorkshire within the resources available to it. Whilst a slightly more optimistic medium term financial position meant the Service believed it no longer has to implement some planned changes to its frontline services (at least for the duration of the current Integrated Risk Management Plan), there was no opportunity to reverse changes which have already been made as a result of previously published plans. There also remained considerable uncertainty about the Service's funding position beyond April, 2020.

In a supplementary question Mr. Beecher referred to the Fire Authority having a projected underspend of £1.3 million for this financial year which when banked would give the Chief Fire Officer £24.3 million in his pot. The removal of the second appliance saved approximately £200,000 per year. The public of Rotherham had an increase in Council Tax of just short of 2% and this had given an additional £410,000 for the Fire Authority yet still had a 50% reduction in fire cover at night. Fire Authority Members had successfully lobbied in Doncaster and Sheffield and had managed to reverse the effect of similar cuts. Why had Rotherham's taxpayers been disproportionately affected and not given the same fire cover.

Mr. Beecher, therefore, asked all Members of the Council to engage with their Fire Authority Members here and the other 10 Members throughout South Yorkshire to lobby with the Chief Fire Officer and other FBU Officials in order to release the funds necessary to reinstate Rotherham's second fire appliance at night and give constituents the fire cover they deserved and ultimately paying for.

Councillor Atkin responded by outlining how the current IRMP was a living document and on realising the Fire Authority had got a bit more money than it thought reversed the proposed cuts at Doncaster and Sheffield, but there was not enough to go back to a second appliance in Rotherham.

It was true the Fire Authority did have live reserves, but there were plans for the future with a new fire station in Barnsley and new fire appliances. At the moment the FBU were seeking a judicial review over the management of crews at some fire stations, but should this review be successful this would cost the Fire Authority £1.6 million which could result in cuts elsewhere.

103. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That under section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting should the appendices be discussed for Minute Nos. 107 and 108 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.

104. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT

The Leader welcomed the opportunity to address the Council and was pleased to report on four items.

The first was on the development of budget proposals for the coming financial year which would be going to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for consideration over the next few weeks. The Government had also indicated the Local Government Settlement would be delayed until 19th December, 2017 which provided no opportunity to respond to any sudden changes. However, work would continue within the provisions and an update provided in due course. This had been the toughest year yet for budget management going forward.

The second related to efforts with the Home Office and other Government Departments seeking funding for support with child sexual exploitation victims and survivors through criminal trials as part of Operation Stovewood. Progress was slow, but a meeting had been arranged with the Home Office Minister, Victoria Aitkin, next month. The Leader would provide an update on the outcome of this meeting.

Thirdly, Members would be aware that Ofsted had been inspecting Children's Services over the course of the last month. The outcome was not yet known, but the Leader wished to place on record his thanks and gratitude to the entire team within Children's Services for their enormous commitment and fortitude in taking the Council this far in their improvement journey. Staff needed to be advised that all Elected Members fully supported the work being undertaken. The full Ofsted report would be published on the 29th January, 2018 and the Deputy

Leader had already arranged for an all Member Seminar for that morning so Members could be fully briefed on the detail as soon as this was available and in the public domain.

Fourthly, the Leader had also been appointed Chair of the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority and would hold that position through until May, 2018 when the Mayoral election was scheduled to take place.

The Leader also took the opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

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

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet/Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting held on 16th October and 13th November, 2017, be received.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

106. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - INTERIM REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES 2017

Further to Minute No. 67 of the meeting of the Cabinet and Commissioners held on 13th November, 2017 consideration was given to the report which detailed the revised proposals for polling places.

This was a relatively straight forward procedure which now avoided the use and subsequent closure of schools unnecessarily.

Rotherham would undergo another full compulsory review in 2018/19, in time for the May 2020 Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner elections taking into account the new electoral boundaries.

Resolved:- (1) That Council be recommended to approve the proposals for polling places as outlined in Appendix 2, in particular that:-

- a. The polling place for AD polling district be changed from Anston Hillcrest Primary School to the Methodist Community Hall, Sheffield Road.
- b. The polling place for CG and KG polling districts be changed from the AMRC Design Prototyping & Testing Centre, Wallis Way to the AMP Technology Centre, Brunel Way.
- c. The polling place for ID polling district be changed from the Maltby Service Centre, Braithwell Road to the Wesley Centre, Blyth Road.

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(2) The polling place for KB polling district be changed from the mobile library to Aston Fence Junior & Infant School.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

107. **RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - PROPOSED ROTHER VALLEY COUNTRY PARK CARAVAN SITE**

Further to Minute No. 68 of the meeting of the Cabinet and Commissioners held on 13th November, 2017 consideration was given to the report which detailed outline proposals for a new caravan site at Rother Valley Country Park following assessment of its business potential and an opportunity to generate revenue and which would further enhance Rotherham's reputation as a welcoming and enjoyable visitor destination.

Ward Members were in full support of the proposals for development as this would not only bring visitors into Rotherham, but create and support business enrichment in the local economy.

Resolved:- That the Rother Valley Country Park Caravan Site project be included within the approved Capital Programme as an invest-to-save initiative.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Lelliott

108. **RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - REVIEW OF DISTRICT HEATING CHARGES**

Further to Minute No. 76 of the meeting of the Cabinet and Commissioners held on 13th November, 2017 consideration was given to the report which recommended the reduction of the kwh charge to 6.28p per kwh with no standing charge for 2017-18 which would be applied retrospectively from 1st April, 2017. These cost reductions would mean that charges for district heating in Rotherham for 2017-18 were comparable to both Sheffield and Doncaster.

Members welcomed the cost reduction for tenants on district heating and this would ensure the adoption of a charging structure that was fair to all tenants on district heating throughout the Borough.

Resolved:- (1) That the revised district heating cost model be approved.

(2) That the unit Kwh charge across all district heating schemes be reduced to 6.28p per kwh (incl. VAT) and apply retrospectively from 1 April 2017.

(3) That the weekly pre-payment charges on all pooled schemes be reduced as detailed in Option 3 of the report.

Mover:- Councillor Beck

Seconder:- Councillor Read

109. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND (LGBCE) - NOTIFICATION OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Consideration was given to the report which detailed how the Council had now received the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) final recommendations for the future Warding of Rotherham from 2020.

The Commission's proposals were published on 31st October, 2017 and confirmed that there should be 59 Councillors in the Borough elected from 25 wards, which was 4 Wards more, but 4 Councillors fewer than there were at present. The Commission also proposed changes to all of the current Ward boundaries in the Borough.

This report, therefore, highlighted the final recommendations from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

Whilst there were a few Members who objected to the proposals where their Wards were affected, the majority accepted the proposals and were in support of the changes to the ward boundaries.

Resolved:- (1) That the final recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in respect of the future Council size and Warding arrangements in the borough of Rotherham be noted.

(2) That the future Council size of 59 Members and the operation of 25 electoral Wards from May 2020 be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

110. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - ORGREAVE PARISH COUNCIL

Further to Minute No. 17 of the meeting of Council held on 3rd June, 2015 consideration was given to the report which detailed the outcome of the request for a Community Governance Review to alter the boundary of the Parish Council to cover only the settlement of Orgreave and the creation of a new Parish Council to cover the remainder of the current area of Orgreave Parish Council, which would include the southern part of the Waverley settlement. On agreeing the Community Governance Review and approval of the Terms of Reference a further report was to be submitted with the results of the consultation exercise.

A consultation exercise did take place, but no further report was submitted to Council. This report sought to rectify that omission. There had been significant development on the Waverley site since 2015 and this report outlined the various proposals which have emerged from recent discussions with Orgreave Parish Council, Catcliffe Parish Council, the Waverley Residents Association and Ward Members and made

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recommendations for the further progress of the Community Governance Review.

Members welcomed the opportunity for further consultation to address some of the concerns that have been raised from recent discussions.

Resolved:- (1) That the modified terms of reference set out at Appendix 4 of this report be agreed.

(2) That further consultation take place as set out at Section 4 of this report.

(3) That a further report on the outcome of the further consultation be submitted to the Council in due course.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Read

111. NOTICES OF MOTION

No motions have been received by the Proper Officer for this Council Meeting.

112. AUDIT COMMITTEE

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

Mover:- Councillor Wyatt

Seconder:- Councillor Walsh

113. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendation and minutes of the meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Seconder:- Councillor Mallinder

114. PLANNING BOARD

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

Mover:- Councillor Atkin

Seconder:- Councillor Walsh

115. STAFFING COMMITTEE

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

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

116. LICENSING

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Board Sub-Committee, Licensing Board and Licensing Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Ellis

Seconder:- Councillor Beaumont

117. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS

Councillor Cowles referred to Prime Minister's questions on the 15th November, 2017 when Jeremy Corbyn raged against the Tories for cuts to the Fire Service, this view was supported by UKIP and local MP's and, other Local Authorities were opposing this policy. Why was our local policy, in Rotherham, supported by Councillor Atkin continuing to support the cuts.

Councillor Atkin, Designated Spokesperson for South Yorkshire Fire Authority, explained South Yorkshire Fire Authority and service managers have repeatedly stated their commitment to provide the best possible service to the people of South Yorkshire within the resources available to it, despite Government imposed funding cuts which have reduced its annual budget by around 25%. As a member of the Association of Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities, South Yorkshire's Fire Authority had consistently lobbied for a fairer local funding settlement and would continue to do so.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles made reference to the I.R.M.P. which was currently out of date and pointed out plans were not set in stone. Plans were set and resources identified covering a particular period of time, but plans should be reviewed and amended accordingly. First priority should be to residents and fire fighters as fire fighters were entering buildings against national policy in order to save lives before a second pump was available from out of area to arrive approximately ten minutes later.

The problems were at night and Mr. Corbyn went on to report that fire related incidents had increased by 25% since 2010. Other figures were also heading north and the Fire Authority had financial reserves of £27.3 m. There would be an opportunity to do something about the precept in 2020. The Fire Authority appeared to be cash rich so if it only cost £200,000 to run a pump you could do so for a number of years. The Labour Party had been setting unsound budgets for years and using reserves. More houses were being built thus increasing the risk.

Councillor Cowles asked why were the cuts being supported when surely looking at things now there were 2 options and only one outcome – do you agree?

Councillor Atkin responded and confirmed nobody wanted to support the cuts, but it was the duty to balance a budget. Quoting from Jeremy Corbyn he had indicated that no Labour Councillor should set an illegal budget and Councillor Atkin was not willing to go against this.

118. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN

(1) Councillor Wyatt wished to thank Councillor Beck for the time and attention he and officers have given seeking a fair pricing structure for customers on district heating, the opportunities to make representations to him and the diligence applied to these issues. Councillor Beck had referred in Agenda Item 13 to the reduction of costs and the ongoing work that would continue on thermal comforts and improvements and asked would he please investigate residents' concerns regarding positioning of internal thermostats, in particular those on the inside of external walls to a small number of properties, but this had possibly contributed to increased costs.

Councillor Beck confirmed the Council would investigate this further as this related to some properties on the Swinton Fitzwilliam Estate where the thermostat was erected on external walls and could result in a bigger draw on the heating.

In a supplementary question Councillor Wyatt referred to information he had since received regarding thermal imaging surveys that would take place between Christmas and New Year on the Swinton Fitzwilliam Estate. He asked that proper advice also be given to tenants about further refunds expected.

Councillor Beck pointed out that a number of engagement sessions have taken place across all district heating schemes over the past few months, and involved talking to residents, raising awareness and sharing information about how to improve the thermal comfort and efficiency of older properties. The Council would do as much as it could to make residents aware how they could help themselves and where the Council needed to help.

(2) Councillor Carter referred to health promotion being the backbone of preventing disease in our communities and asked what plans did the Council have to increase the uptake of exercise and sporting activities among younger children in the Borough?

Councillor Roche pointed out the Council along with the CCG and the Hospital Trust used early intervention and prevention alongside health promotion and as part of this the Council was providing an extensive range of opportunities to promote healthier lifestyle. Examples included:-

- Holiday activity called Mega Active during Summer, Spring Bank and Easter, October and February – Total of 5,393 attendances during 2016/17 programme.

- Active Rotherham delivered a disability sport programme targeting people aged 14 years + - Total of 5,083 attendances during 2016/17.
- The Council have an agreement with Places for People Leisure to deliver a range of sport and physical activity opportunities for young people - Number of physical visits to Leisure Facilities during 2016/17 was 1,241,225. This was the total visits which included young people.
- The Council facilitated 2 action groups for sport to work with schools and partners with the aim of developing, mapping and co-ordinating sports provision for young people.
- The Council worked with numerous voluntary sports clubs on issues such as funding bids, facility development, training and development to increase opportunities for young people to have better quality sport and physical activity experiences and better quality facilities.
- The Council was currently working with Yorkshire Sport Foundation to refresh its Activity Partnership which would have a strategic overview of the Borough's sport and physical activity offer

Furthermore, the Council was also now working with Housing and Green Spaces to see if in housing developments there were opportunities to increase sporting activities as part of a new big development.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked about those people from less fortunate homes and greater inequality in health how they could access these opportunities in sporting activities and principally what support was available for these people to participate.

Councillor Roche explained the Council was continuing to try to increase those activities, but was concerned about funding cutbacks by the Government which did limit what could be done. The Council was committed to funding facilities for all young people as there were long term savings for early intervention and prevention related to health.

(3) Councillor Simpson asked could the Council support and promote in schools the NSPCC campaign packs that were available to help children, teachers and parents.

They taught children important messages, about safety online and that their body belongs to them.

Available from

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/>

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Councillor Watson thanked Councillor Simpson for his question and advised that all schools have established safeguarding policies and procedures which included sections around the training of staff and education of pupils in relation to their safety and online security. The policies also included contact details and website addresses for statutory and voluntary organisations, including the NSPCC and resources available. The Council was, however, happy to remind schools of the excellent resource support packs available from the NSPCC and this would also be highlighted as an available resource through the regular Education Safeguarding Fora.

In a supplementary comment Councillor Simpson pointed out he was supporting 2 petitions which related to stopping child rapists getting early release and giving new immigrants rules on expected behaviour in our country especially towards children. These were presently being discussed by the Government.

(4) Councillor Carter asked what plans, if any, did the administration have to devolve more powers and responsibility to the Ward assembly structures that have been introduced this year and have shown to be more effective than the previous regime?

Councillor Read confirmed there were no formal plans in place to devolve further responsibilities, but this would be subject to review. This was the first year of the new arrangements and the Cabinet Member would urge Councillor Carter to attend the workshop on the 20th December, 2017 where Members could feed back their views and discuss any further proposals that would be taken into consideration.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked would the administration consider devolving powers to area assemblies for areas such as planning in the future.

Councillor Read pointed out the whole regime was to be kept under review and consideration would be given as to how to build on the success and mitigate the things that had not worked quite so well this year. Planning was a difficult issue to deal with on a locality basis, but would urge Councillor Carter to take his ideas forward and raise them in the session on the 20th December.

(5) Councillor M. Elliott referred to Aughton Early Years' Centre being Ofsted rated as "Outstanding" in 2010 and 2013. The recent Ofsted inspection report dated 16th November, 2017 now rated it as "Requires Improvement" and he asked what had caused this deterioration?

Councillor Watson explained the outcome of the recent inspection was disappointing, but possibly not a surprise, given the tragic turn of events in the last twelve months. This coincided with the awful news of the death of the previous Centre Head Teacher last Christmas. Unfortunately, many only read the headlines of a report without reading the detail. Since then,

as Ofsted noted in their published report; “The Acting Head teacher has steadied the ship during an unsettled time and enabled staff to continue to put children first and Governors are committed and supportive.”

The Local Authority had offered support throughout this difficult time and Officers would continue to do so, working with the current staff and Governors, with the aim of improving the rating. It was perhaps worth acknowledging that Ofsted also noted that; “Staff are kind, dedicated and nurturing. They care well for children, so children feel safe and happy in the Centre. Consequently, the Centre was calm and secure.”

Moving forward and with support from the Local Authority it was hoped that this unfortunate blip could be overcome and allow all children to be educated in a good or outstanding setting.

(6) Councillor Carter asked what actions were the administration undertaking to support and cultivate the digital economy in Rotherham?

Councillor Lelliott confirmed the Council delivered a programme of workshops to new start and growing businesses around issues such as websites, social media and digital marketing and also provided start up and growth advice to businesses including leading on the delivery of Accelerator Programmes through Y–accelerator for the Sheffield City Region. The latest programme was due to start in the New Year and had received 30 applicants (which were currently being worked through) a number of which were in the digital economy

The businesses centres were also digitally connected and provided excellent facilities for small businesses in the digital economy.

The Council would work with the Sheffield City Region on developing and implementing the “Sheffield City Region Digital Action Plan” currently being drafted.

The Council was working with SuperFast South Yorkshire (a group of four South Yorkshire Councils) to deliver superfast broadband across the Borough. This project would have delivered Superfast broadband to 94.2% premises across South Yorkshire – both homes and businesses by the end of 2017.

The Council was currently planning to rollout free WiFi to the public in the centre of Rotherham. This was agreed as part of the Council Digital Strategy. The solution would be delivered at no cost to the Authority and be able to be used by residents and visitors to the town centre. The plans were for this to be delivered during the second half of 2018.

(7) Councillor B. Cutts asked could the Cabinet Member please provide a list of services either closed or outsourced to the private sector, since 2010, for example Meals on Wheels, Laundry Services etc. clearly showing which were no longer available and which have been outsourced?

Councillor Roche explained the decision to decommission the Meals on Wheels service took place in 2008 following extensive consultation. Adults requiring support with taking on nutrition were supported to do so as part of their care package should this be required. The preparation of meals was undertaken by a provider as a commercial enterprise with the service user choosing that provider and the price they wish to pay.

The Laundry Service was decommissioned in 2009. It ran on fixed days and was not personalised. The service was not financially viable with high replacement and maintenance costs associated with the building which housed the laundry and the machinery/boilers. The service users utilising the laundry service as a result of continence issues were supported by the NHS Community Nursing Service to be prescribed as appropriate.

The Warden Service was reviewed and changed to merge into the in-house Enabling Service back in 2010. The Warden Service staff were merged into the new Enabling offer and the Neighbourhood Centres attached to the former sheltered housing sites were handed over to Housing.

Three services were also decommissioned as part of the modernisation of Adult Care during 2016/17:-

- Netherfield Court intermediate care unit – this service was relocated to Lord Hardy Court and Davies Court creating additional capacity in 2016.
- Copeland Lodge day centre for older people – This older people's day care offer was reviewed and customers were assessed and alternative options were explored and offered. The customers from Copeland did choose to access alternative provision for example: Day Support Service, Direct Payments for personal assistance or support at home in 2016.
- Charnwood House day centre for older people and people with a learning disability - customers were reviewed and alternative options were explored and offered. Customers did choose alternative provision in the same way as Copeland Lodge. The outcomes for both customer groups were positive.

All these proposals were brought forward to full Council for a decision.

Since 2010, 6 services that have been commissioned and contracted with the independent sector and voluntary and community sector have not replaced any 'in-house' service. The list of services which have been decommissioned were:-

- Floating Support (HIV/AIDS).
- Rotherham Advocacy Services.
- Royal National Institute for Blind - Advocacy Service and Eye Clinic Liaison Officer
- Age UK Advocacy Service.
- Action on Hearing Loss - British Sign Language service.

No Adult Services have been moved from the public to the private sector. As you may aware many tenders have to be judged blind in a sense and until a successful tender was selected it was not possible to determine if this was a private or a public organisation, but would be judged on which best met the needs of the public.

In a supplementary question Councillor B. Cutts asked if the details of the question could be provided in a simple list of services.

Councillor Roche confirmed details of the above answer would be provided in full alongside a list of services.

(8) Councillor Carter referred to the waste collection changes not going far enough in addressing the concerns of local residents and asked why was it that this Council could not introduce plastic recycling?

Councillor Hoddinott explained the Council did recycle plastic as this could be taken to waste collection and recycling centres and was extracted from the black bins at Manvers. However, this was not collected at the kerbside. The proposals did not propose to do so in the future as it would cost about £700,000 to implement, therefore, turning a saving into a cost.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked if people were able to take plastic bottles to the waste collection or recycling centres how did this affect the least well off in our society who may not have the means of transport to do this?

Councillor Hoddinott explained it was always better to take to waste recycling centres, but plastic could still be put into the black bin as this was extracted at Manvers and was actually putting less than 5% into landfill.

(9) Councillor Carter referred to the waste consultation letter stating that the changes would “bring the council in line with what other councils are doing already” and asked which of the six neighbouring councils were not already recycling plastic bottles at the kerbside?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed neighbouring authorities did recycle plastic at the kerbside and across the country this varied enormously. The changes to the waste collection would bring Rotherham into line with other Councils facing massive cuts and it was appropriate that a review took place of the efficiency of the waste service. Some Councils did charge for their green waste so this brought Rotherham into line with bin swaps and smaller bins. Some Councils had also looked at 3 weekly collections, but this was not something Rotherham wanted to consider at this time.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked with the budget cuts why was a Liberal Democrat run Council like Watford recycling plastic bottles and able to keep weekly collections and Rotherham were not able to do the same.

Councillor Hoddinott pointed out it would cost the Council to recycle plastic bottles and introducing this cost was not something that could be done at this time as two-thirds of the Council’s budget was used for the protection of children and adults. Rotherham was not the same as Watford.

(10) Councillor Cowles explained he had been approached by both residents and a couple of funeral directors who would like to know just how long the scaffolding at the crematorium, which has been there months, would remain in place and, why could weekend working not be introduced to speed up the refurbishment?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed the scaffolding would be removed by the end of the year. The work had been carried out only at the weekends and the services were taking place during the week.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles had been informed that because of the situation people were requesting cremations be carried out at Doncaster, which was much nicer and £200 cheaper. Doncaster made £1.7 million and Rotherham £500,000 so he was pleased to hear that the Council was liaising with Dignity to get the work completed as soon as possible.

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed every effort was being made to get the best service out of Dignity and she herself had written numerous times about the service. The Cabinet Member was pleased to report that scrutiny was going to be looking at the Dignity contract and to see what could be done to improve the service for residents.

(11) Councillor Carter referred to Eastwood and how it had been a major flytipping area and asked, given the administration's failures here, how could a smaller general waste bin not exacerbate this problem?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed there had been 500 flytipping incident reports made for 2016/17, with 265 flytips reported during the current year up until the end of October. This was a reduction in flytipping through co-ordinating action. There was no excuse for flytipping and one of things implemented in Eastwood as part of the deal was to introduce bulky waste for landlords. Flytipping was an issue not just in Eastwood and there had been some focus on some of the problems in the north and south of the Borough with flytipping in woods and country lanes which other Councillors had reported.

There was no evidence to suggest a smaller bin was going to exacerbate the problem of flytipping. Smaller bins implemented in another authority had resulted in their recycling rates going up by 20% and evidential how people dealt with their waste and recycling.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter referred to how many residents were struggling to fit all plastic bottles and other waste in their current bins, particularly houses of multiple occupation and large families and suggested this could lead to more litter around the Borough.

Councillor Hoddinott explained that this was not an easy issue. Consideration needed to be given as to why people were producing so much waste and the reasons for this. There were some circumstances where extra capacity was provided for, but this was for specific reasons. The Cabinet Member offered to visit those families with a Recycling Officer to gain some understanding as to the amount of waste they were producing and to see how they could do more recycling.

(12) Councillor Napper referred recently to Facebook where it showed eleven police cars and 4 riot vans all with red and blue lights flashing. He had asked the Police at a SIMS meeting what was going on and they replied "nothing". He asked did the Council know what was going on in Eastwood?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed the Council did know what was going on in Eastwood as did local Ward Councillors for that area. Through regular liaison and two way dialogue with the Police there was a working closer together in Eastwood.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper pointed out that in his own Ward there had been a robbery and the Police had not attended nor any vehicles.

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Councillor Hoddinott confirmed she did have the reasons why so many vehicles had been present at one time in Eastwood and this was due to child protection and domestic issues. She was happy to provide the details as to why there was such a presence in the area.

(13) Councillor Cowles asked, in order to be fully clear and transparent with the public on the proposal to revise waste collecting and introduce Labour's new 'bin tax' for collection of green waste, what would be the total cost of introducing the charge e.g. new bins, extended coverage?

Councillor Hoddinott explained there was no such thing as a "bin tax" and there have been some misunderstanding around the service. Inclusion was optional and people did not have to pay for green waste collection if they did not want to. Bins would be purchased from Capital and the cost recovered over a few years. The cost could only be estimated. The Council would only purchase the number of bins required, on the basis of the number of subscribers to the scheme.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked again for the total cost of introducing the changes to waste collection and, as the Council took consultancy advice on, what was the cost of the consultancy charge.

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed she would provide the figures in writing to Councillor Cowles, but would double check the cost of support received in putting together the proposals. External advice was received as massive changes were proposed which would affect every household in the Borough. Benchmarking and modelling advice was required to get the process right, to be compliant and to ensure the proposals were doable for the area and something that could be put in place. If this kind of expertise was not available within the Council then this should be sought externally.

(14) Councillor Carter asked how could a retiree from Brinsworth who relied purely on public transport, make use of Rother Valley Country Park?

Councillor Watson was surprised with this question as he had got this worry that a retiree in Brinsworth was waiting 6 weeks for an answer. Councillor Carter could have done the same as the Deputy Leader and either walked into the Interchange for advice, gone online or made a telephone call to find out that you could catch a No. 73 bus from Brinsworth to Rotherham, then catch No. 29 from Rotherham to Ormond Tree Road and then walk about 0.8 miles through the Park. Alternatively, a person could catch Nos. 72, 74 or 74A from Brinsworth to Oakley Road and then take the X5 to Ormond Tree Road. This would take in the order of 66 to 70 minutes depending on the time of day and a total of 7 possible journeys an hour for anyone wanting to travel by public transport.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter referred to the last Council Meeting when discussion took place on the parks and country park strategy available for the public. He found it a little peculiar that in order for parks and green spaces to be open and used by all cross sections of the community, a 66 minute 2 bus and a walk journey appeared a little bizarre. Perhaps the Council needed to invest in its community car parks so it was not just the few that accessed the parks, but many.

Councillor Watson wanted the parks to be accessed by the many, but Councillor Carter had deliberately chosen his own Ward and a park on the far south of the Borough. Councillor Watson accepted that even from where he himself lived it would take him a while to travel on public transport as it was to a country park.

(15) Councillor Napper asked how many retrospective planning consents have RMBC given since 2000?

Councillor Lelliott explained the Planning Service did not hold this information. The Local Planning Authority did not log whether an application was retrospective or not, as this was not material planning consideration, and was therefore, not recorded.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper asked by giving retrospective planning permission revenue was not collected from Building Control so the Council was losing income as it was not known how that building had been erected.

Councillor Lelliott took on board Councillor Napper's concerns.

(16) Councillor Cowles asked, in order to be clear and transparent with the public would it be necessary in future years to review the charge and increase the 'bin tax', would this be made clear during the consultation and, had the Service decided upon the frequency of such increases.

Councillor Hoddinott explained this was a proposal and was still out for consultation with the public. If it was to be approved then it would become a normal fee charge of the Council and these were reviewed annually as part of the budget.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles made reference to this being a tax as it was part of Council Tax. The costs of this Service would have to be reviewed as the Service may increase, but the revenue may not.

Whilst this Service was optional as people got older their reliance on this Service would increase as they would be unable to transport waste around the Borough.

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Councillor Cowles, therefore, asked what assumptions had been made to how long it would take to recover the costs and how much profit might be available to support other services.

Councillor Hoddinott reiterated this was not a tax. The link to the Council Tax was misleading for the public. This was an optional fee and an opt-in service. In terms of the proposals the modelling figures were over 10 years and the capital costs covered that amount of time. Take up had been considered in other areas which were around 15-30% and the Service could be scaled up or down so that the charge covered the cost of the Service. The comment about elderly people was interesting as discussions had taken place with the Rotherham Pensioners' Action Group and the need to talk about initiatives like composting which was easier and more environmentally friendly.

(17) Councillor Napper referred to the 4th November when a lot of kids were running riot in Woodlaithes Village. They were smashing car wing mirrors and wrecking garden fences etc. but the Police would not respond to calls from the public. He asked what could RMBC do to stop this kind of behaviour before someone got hurt?

Councillor Hoddinott explained about the need to work better together in terms of neighbourhood working to help to resolve and prevent these issues locally. A seminar would take place in the New Year with the Police to look at this issue. The Cabinet Member had raised these issues with the Police and the concerns and she had got a full response which she was happy to share. The Police had received details of the crimes, but these were reported the next day and, as there was no CCTV or lines of enquiry, visits were not made to the people involved. To be fair to the Police they had to prioritise their workloads and due to the absence of lines of enquiry no visits were made.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper pointed out some of the residents did have some CCTV footage, but the Police would only take information from the properties that were damaged.

Councillor Hoddinott pointed out this was casework and should be picked up outside the full Council meeting as there were some discrepancies and the Cabinet Member was happy to pick this up after the meeting.

(18) Councillor Carter asked as a Labour Council, if you were able, would you wish to build more social housing as an authority in Rotherham?

Councillor Beck confirmed yes he would

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked how would the Cabinet Member propose doing this and was he lobbying the Government to enable the Local Authority to do so.

Councillor Beck confirmed that over the last 4 months the Cabinet had approved several reports which had paved the way for 160 new Council houses in Rotherham over the next few years. This week he was in Maltby with Ward Representatives undertaking the sod cutting on the Braithwell Road site which was going to deliver 217 new homes – half for open market sale and 98 new Council properties for people that needed them. There were over 6,000 people on the housing waiting list who were desperate for appropriate housing.

This Council was looking to do as much as it could using its own funds to build as many Council houses as it could replacing those lost through the Right to Buy Scheme. More help was needed from the Government on this, but the Council had been successful recently with the Homes and Communities Agency in drawing down assistance to deliver new homes for people.

(19) Councillor Carter asked had Councillor Read maintained any lines of communication with the Elected Members and senior officers at Barnsley Council since the collapsed Sheffield City Region Deal earlier this year?

The Leader confirmed lines of communication were kept open with all organisations and South Yorkshire Leaders continued to meet regularly and with the Combined Authority and these lines of communication would remain open.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked if consensus had been regained in the four South Yorkshire Authorities on the devolution deal moving forward?

The Leader confirmed consensus had not been regained. Doncaster and Barnsley were out to vote with the public about a preferred devolution deal and he himself had taken part in a media debate which would be broadcast later this week. Many would prefer a one Yorkshire settlement, but a mayoral election would take place next year and the City Region would make the most of this and benefit from additional powers and funding to deliver jobs irrespective of the preference in the future. The Leader hoped to receive consensus on this in the coming months.

(20) Councillor Napper referred again to people asking what action was RMBC going to take in relation to illegal parking in the areas of Wellgate, Westgate, Fitzwilliam Road and Wharncliffe Street of Rotherham?

Councillor Lelliott confirmed the Council's Parking Services patrolled each of these locations several times daily as they all formed part of a regular 'beat'.

Wellgate in particular had been the subject of intensive patrols over the past 2 years as a result of numerous complaints and reports of parking activities that contravened the restrictions.

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Several joint operations have been undertaken with South Yorkshire Police and the Council's Licensing Team (who focused on infringements by taxis and licensed hire vehicles) in an effort to reinforce the message to drivers that such parking activities were not acceptable.

Further joint patrols are planned for early 2018 and daily patrols would continue up to and beyond those patrols.

Councillor Lelliott was in receipt of a list which she was happy to email out to Councillor Napper of all the Fixed Penalty Notices issued over the last few months.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper referred to a recent meeting where the Strategic Director indicated one person had had 25 tickets for illegal parking and he asked could the Enforcement Officer enlist the assistance of a Traffic Officer to see if this was an illegal driver and to see if his vehicle could be lifted.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed in relation to this one particular individual his vehicle had already been removed. There had been a number of joint operations with the Police on this kind of activity. Unfortunately, many who received a Fixed Penalty Notice had not registered the vehicle so there was no listed legal owner so it was difficult to identify the location of the vehicle to clamp. On one such occasion a vehicle that was in the process of being lifted onto a tow truck had been driven away. Now on each occasion, whilst the arrival of a tow truck was awaited, all vehicles were clamped. Whilst the whereabouts of these individuals were known due process had to be followed.

(21) Councillor John Turner asked how long did it take a new immigrant to receive British and indeed Rotherham Citizenship after they arrived in Rotherham?

Councillor Alam confirmed Citizenship was granted from the Home Office. The Register Office and the Council have no control over the timescale of new arrivals receiving their British Citizenship once they have applied. It took around 6 months or more for Citizenship to be granted and a number of conditions have to be met before this could be issued.

In a supplementary question Councillor John Turner asked what proportion of these new immigrants receiving new Citizenship at the next election would vote Labour.

Councillor Alam was unable to comment.

(22) Councillor Carter asked had Councillor Read maintained any lines of communication with the elected members and senior officers at Doncaster Council since the collapse Sheffield City Region Deal earlier this year?

The Leader confirmed he had.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked as a result of the discussion with the Sheffield City Council Leader and the Doncaster Chief Executive, which side did the Leader sit on.

The Leader pointed out the disagreements between the position of Doncaster and Sheffield were not helpful nor were if for the frustrations to spill over in public. He had outlined what was best for the Sheffield City Region devolution deal and what was needed was to get a deal that worked for the people of South Yorkshire.

(23) Councillor Carter asked since September what contact had Councillor Read had with the Department for Communities and Local Government in relation to the Sheffield City Region Deal?

The Leader confirmed he had not had any formal contact with the Department for Communities and Local Government personally, but contact between the Local Authority and Combined Authority did occasionally occur to discuss any matters as and when they arose.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter referred to a rough proposal recently to have a different solution to the devolution deal with would involve 4 regional Mayors covering the whole of Yorkshire some kind of Cabinet model to lobby on a Yorkshire wide basis for their specific areas and asked the Leader was this something he could support.

The Leader explained this was a suggestion as a way of breaking the deadlock on a regional basis. His own position was for the need for the Sheffield City Region deal to go ahead and to be delivered for the public of South Yorkshire. If other areas wished to have Mayors on a sub-regional basis this would be a matter for them and if those Mayors then wished to come together in some form of Cabinet arrangement to make decisions based on their legal powers that would be their decision if colleagues were minded to move in that direction. For now the Leader was keen not to move beyond the plans already in place for the City Region.

(24) Councillor Napper referred to the most congested road in Rotherham which was Rawmarsh Road and in particular, the stretch between Parkgate Retail World to the roundabout at Parkgate and he asked when was the Council going to address this big problem?

Councillor Lelliott explained the Council recognised that this was a congested section of highway. As a result, recent changes have been made to the traffic signals to help control the flow of traffic and improve capacity at the junctions. A number of traffic management interventions have been introduced on this route including restrictions on loading/waiting and to the signalised junction at Broad Street and

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Greasbrough Road to further improve the flow of traffic and reduce delays.

The physical restrictions along the route meant that any road widening solution between Taylor's Lane and Rawmarsh Hill would be unaffordable. The most suitable large scale intervention to reduce congestion in the area was to provide a new road through Parkgate Retail World to Aldwarke Lane. Funding for this scheme had not been secured although efforts are being undertaken to identify available opportunities.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper wondered why a slip road could not be inserted near to the Station Public House just to ease some of the congestion. This was not a big task into the top end of retail world.

Councillor Lelliott believed there would be some reasoning behind this, but would consult further with officers and get back to Councillor Napper.

(25) Councillor Carter referred to residents in Brinsworth being affected by air pollution from Aggregate Industries Asphalt and asked what would the Council be doing to address this?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed, having checked with officers, she was not aware that Aggregate Industries were causing air pollution.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter referred to a number of residents who had reported a deterioration in their respiratory conditions such as asthma and that having consulted with Environment Health Officers had indicated at various points to residents the pollution was coming from this company and he asked what action been taken by officers here.

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed air pollution was a serious issue and hoped Councillor Carter could have raised the concerns sooner. If there were those concerns the Cabinet Member urged residents to take these up with the Service who would investigate, but having checked with the Department no reports had been received.

(26) Councillor John Turner asked did the Labour Government blame the Tory Government for the current financial cuts and strictures or did it blame the previous Labour Government for the £1.3 Trillion debt that could not be got rid of.

The Leader explained the responsibility for the current financial cuts and strictures were as a result of this Tory Government. People only had to look at the impact on public services and Local Government in Rotherham against other parts of the country.

(27) Councillor Napper asked what was RMBC doing when in a Council house in Rotherham there was mould causing ill health with the mould on carpets and furniture and the floor and which was not caused by condensation.

Councillor Beck confirmed mould growth did cause ill health in properties and there were lots of reasons why it appeared. However, he asked Councillor Napper that if he had any particular concerns that it would be helpful for the 2 Councillors to talk after this meeting and any particular problems would be investigated further

In a supplementary question, Councillor Napper, having raised the same issue with Housing, asked why for over 12 months had an outside contractor been saying to a pensioner that she needed to move a large wardrobe and pull carpets back for the floor to be sprayed and then to claim on her house insurance.

Councillor Beck agreed this was unacceptable and would see Councillor Napper after this meeting.

119. URGENT ITEMS

There were none.