

**CABINET/COMMISSIONERS'
DECISION MAKING MEETING
19th February, 2018**

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Commissioner Kenny, Councillors Alam, Beck, Hoddinott, Lelliott, Roche, Watson and Yasseen.

Also in attendance was Councillor Steele, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Apologies for absence were received from Commissioner Bradwell and Commissioner Ney.

The webcast of Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meetings can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts/enctag/Executive%252BArea>

103. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Lelliott and Yasseen declared personal interests in Minute No. 119 (Business Rates Discretionary Relief Renewals in 2018/19) on the grounds of being trustees of one of the registered charities.

104. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

105. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting held on 15th January, 2018, be agreed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

106. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the agenda item 18 on the grounds that the appendix involves 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.

107. COUNCILLOR MEMBERSHIP OF ADOPTION AND FOSTERING PANELS

Consideration was given to the report which detailed how that, until 31st March, 2011, it had been a legal requirement for local authority Adoption and Fostering Panels to include at least one Elected Member. Amendments made to the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 and the introduction of the new regulations, namely the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 that governed Adoption and Fostering Panels, meant that this legal requirement was no longer imposed upon relevant local authorities.

Following continued improvement of the Authority's governance arrangements and services for children, young people and families, it was considered appropriate to review the level of Councillor involvement with both the Adoption Panel and Fostering Panel.

It was considered that corporate parenting would be enhanced by the appointment of two Councillors each to both Panels.

Commissioner Kenny agreed:- (1) That two Councillors be required to sit on hearings of the Adoption Panel and Fostering Panel.

(2) That Councillors M. Elliott and J. Elliot be appointed to the Adoption Panel.

(3) That Councillors Cusworth and Senior be appointed to the Fostering Panel.

108. ANNUAL CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY REPORT

Consideration was given to the 2017-18 Childcare Sufficiency annual report which detailed the current position of the childcare/early education market in Rotherham as required by the Childcare Acts (2006 and 2016).

The report was based on data captured from childcare providers in June/July, 2017 together with data on the take-up of early education in schools and additional information held by the Families Information Services.

The purpose of the report was to identify the current childcare sufficiency position in Rotherham and, as well as being circulated to Elected Members, was of interest to existing and potential childcare providers to support decisions on the creation of additional childcare in the Borough to meet demand.

The report set out the key findings as well as the key issues which included:-

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- Regular communication with all sectors of the market and information sharing on an ongoing basis to enable providers to adapt to changes such as changes in policy to meet needs.
- The take-up of 30 Hour Childcare places from the introduction of the entitlement in September 2017 had been positive with 1,090 children taking up a place in the first term. A shortfall of places in some areas of the borough at the busiest times (summer term) was anticipated and action was currently being taken to address this through submission of a funding bid to the Department for Education to increase capacity and enabling existing/potential providers to apply for existing capital funding to increase capacity in identified areas of need.
- Ongoing review of the childcare market with a termly review of take-up of early education for two, three and four year olds and a full annual childcare analysis to ensure there continued to be adequate provision to meet needs.

This report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-scrutiny process who were in support of the recommendations.

Cabinet Members noted the recorded child poverty figures which had deteriorated since 2016 and the actions being taken to mitigate the wider economic challenges.

Commissioner Kenny agreed:- That the 2017-18 Childcare Sufficiency report be approved for publication.

109. RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION - ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Further to Minute No. 83 of Council held on 18th October, 2017 consideration was given to the report which shared the findings and latest analysis and current thinking of the Improving Lives Select Commission's cross-party review group on the range of Alternative Management Arrangements (AMAs) for Children's Services. It evaluated the relative strengths and challenges of the primary options available to the Council and suggested initial recommendations for future management arrangements.

Appendix A of the report submitted set out the five broad recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review of Alternative Management Arrangements for Children and Young People's Services together with detail in respect of whether the recommendations were agreed, not agreed or deferred and, where agreed, what action would be taken, by when and who would be responsible.

The main recommendation was for Children's Services to continue with its adoption of the Practice Partner model as this would secure the most rapid and sustainable improvements in the short term (two years) and present the lowest risk to the Improvement journey. It was agreed that this form of model had made a significant contribution to the first stage of the improvement journey, however, a self-improving culture would be required to get from Good to Outstanding.

On this basis it was suggested that the response from Cabinet to the recommendations from the Improving Lives Select Commission be forwarded onto the Lead Commissioner and the Commissioner responsible for Children's Social Care outlining the support.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board also wished to place on record his thanks and appreciation to the Chair and other members of the Improving Lives Select Commission for their hard work in this review.

Resolved:- (1) That the Cabinet's response to the Scrutiny Review of Alternative Management Arrangements for Children and Young People's Services in Rotherham be approved.

(2) That the response be referred to the next meeting of the Council on 28th February, 2018 and the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission on 13th March, 2018.

(3) That the report of the Improving Lives Select Commission and the Cabinet response to the recommendations be submitted to the Lead Commissioner and the Commissioner responsible for Children's Social Care.

110. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) SUFFICIENCY AND INCREASE IN EDUCATIONAL PROVISION - PHASE 1

Consideration was given to the report outlining the outcome of the consultation undertaken in relation to proposals to increase Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) capacity of provision across the Borough by 138 places by 2021.

The report outlined the growth in the general pupil population in recent years and the subsequent increased need for school places for pupils with a range of SEND needs. It also outlined, following completion of the SEND Sufficiency report, an additional 138 SEND places would be needed across the Borough to meet current and expected future demand up to 2021. These places would reduce out-of-authority placements by half and add additional capacity and provision within the Borough to support future increase in demand from population increase.

The Dedicated Schools Grant (High Needs Budget) was significantly overspent in this area with indications that there would continue to be significant increases in out-of-authority placements should 'in authority' capacity not be increased. The report set out the proposed projects required to create the additional places and reduce the financial burden on the High Needs funding allocation in future year. It also outlined proposals for moving forward to create additional places post-2021 for anticipated future cohort number increases and the project costs.

This report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-scrutiny process who were in support of the recommendations.

Resolved:- (1) That the increase in educational provision for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) across the Borough following consultation be approved.

(2) That the projects linked to the Capital Programme within the Formal Budget and Council 2018-19 report be approved.

111. BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX 2018-19

Consideration was given to the report which proposed the Council's Budget and Council Tax for 2018/19 based on the outcome of the Council's Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement, budget consultation and the consideration of Directorate budget proposals through the Council's formal Budget and Scrutiny process (Overview and Scrutiny Management Board) alongside a review of the financial planning assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In setting the proposed 2018/19 Budget, Council was being recommended to an increase of 2.99% in the Council's basic Council Tax and a further 3% increase for the Adult Social Care precept; a combined increase of 5.99% for 2018/19.

This Budget focussed on continuing to protect and support Rotherham's most vulnerable children and adults whilst trying to ensure that a wide range of services continued to be provided to all residents. There were no new savings from Adult Social Care and a continuation of investment in Children's Safeguarding, as approved by Council in 2017, with no savings required from Children's Safeguarding Services.

The Budget recognised the ongoing demand pressures on both Children's and Adult Social Care Services, but also that to continue to spend at current levels was unaffordable in the long term. Therefore, there was no additional base budget funding for the two services and the current demand pressures were to be managed within the Council's overall resources until such time as the costs could be reduced to levels more representative of other authorities.

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The Budget provided sufficient funding to maintain payment of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Living Wage rate for the Council's own staff and would continue to provide funding to help to partially mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform on the most vulnerable – through the provision of a budget for food parcels and crisis loans.

The Budget included the maximum Adult Social Care Precept in order to maximise resources to directly support Adult Social Care and the maximum Council Tax increase allowable in order to minimise adverse impact on services and also to ensure that there were resources set aside to enable genuine consideration of the feedback from the public on the recent Waste Review.

The Budget also maximised the allowable flexibilities in the use of capital receipts to support the Revenue Budget. The Capital Programme had funding allocated to allow for the continuation of annualised and essential investment and also included the addition of a small number of highways schemes plus funding for items that would make a difference to residents in terms of public realm such as improvements in pavements, CCTV cameras to deal with fly tipping and other environmental crime and the provision of larger or different public litter bins.

Feedback from both public and partners in relation to the budget proposals were also provided that were published on the Council's website for consultation until 4th January, 2018.

The Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services as Section 151 Officer gave her assurance that the budget estimates for 2018/19 were robust overall when considered in conjunction with the budget risk contingency identified within the report and alongside the identification of the reserves which would need to be utilised if that risk should be realised. The current spending levels in Social Care Services were not sustainable beyond 2018/19 and needed to be addressed during 2018/19 in order that the Council could maintain a sound financial position.

This assurance was, therefore, predicated on the Council securing plans and actions to ensure that a number of significant risk areas within the budget were addressed and savings delivered.

This report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-scrutiny process who were in support of the recommendations with further suggestions that equality impact assessments on budget proposals be made available to inform Council's consideration of the Budget and Council Tax 2018/2019 at its meeting of 28th February, 2018; that further consideration be given on how improvements could be made to the consultation process to ensure that public views could be taken into account in the scrutiny of the budget proposals; that further discussions take place with the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to discuss the budget timetable to ensure early consideration of budget proposals takes place and that the

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Management Board continue to have oversight of the Adult Social Care budgets.

Cabinet accepted all the suggestions made by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, but indicated the equality impact assessments would be made available as background papers and that consideration would be given on any improvements to the public consultation process and the budget timetable.

Resolved:- (1) That Council be asked to:-

- **Approve the Budget and Financial Strategy for 2018/19 as set out in the report and appendices, including the need to deliver £15.1m of budget savings and a basic Council Tax increase of 2.99%.**
- **Approve that the £965,000 additional Council Tax income generated from 1% of the increase be earmarked for kerbside collection of plastic waste and that the final decision on the operational model for Waste Services be determined by Cabinet following analysis of the public responses to the consultation and related options.**
- **Approve the Government's proposals for the maximum Adult Social Care precept of 3% on Council Tax for 2018/19 to fund additional costs and investment in Adult Social Care Services.**
- **Approve the incorporation of the precept figures from South Yorkshire Police Authority, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the various Parish Councils, when known.**
- **Ensure an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is brought back to Cabinet in 2018/19 after the accounts for 2017/18 have been closed.**
- **Approve the proposed use of reserves as set out in Section 3.5, noting that there may be a variation subject to the Final Local Government Finance Settlement and that the final determination will be approved as part of reporting the outturn for 2017/18.**
- **Approve that any changes resulting from the Final Local Government Finance Settlement be reflected in the Budget report to Council on 28th February with the balance of any change being reflected in a change in the required use of reserves.**

- **Notes and accepts the comments and advice of the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services (Section 151 Officer), provided in compliance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, as to the robustness of the estimates included in the Budget and the adequacy of reserves for which the Budget provides (Section 3.9).**
- **Notes the consultation feedback from the public and partners following publication of Directorate budget savings proposals on the Council's website for public comment from 6th December 2017 to 4th January 2018 (Section 5).**
- **Approve that all Council Fees and Charges be increased for 2018/19 by the September CPI increase of 3% other than Fees and Charges which were determined by national statute and that lists of all proposed Fees and Charges for 2018/19 be submitted to Cabinet in March for approval.**
- **Approve the proposed increases in Adult Social Care Provider contracts as set out in Section 3 of the report.**
- **Approve the use of £200,000 of the Local Welfare Provision balance of grant funding to continue arrangements for Crisis Loan Support as set out in Section 3 of the report.**
- **Approve the carry forward into 2018/19 of any unspent balances of funding for the Community Leadership Fund and Delegated Ward Revenue Budgets.**
- **Approve the use of in-year Capital Receipts up to 2020/21 to maximise capitalisation opportunities arising from Service reconfiguration to deliver efficiencies and improved outcomes for clients and residents, and thereby minimise the impact of costs on the Revenue Budget as included in the Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2018/19 (Appendix 5).**
- **Approve the proposed Capital Strategy as presented in Section 3.7 and Appendices 2A and 2E, to a value of £248m for the General Fund and £177m for the HRA. This required prudential borrowing of £65m to fund non-HRA schemes over the five year period, for which provision has been made in the revenue budget for the associated financing costs.**
- **Approve the management of the Capital Strategy budget in line with the following key principles:-**

- (i) Any underspends on the existing approved Capital Programme in respect of 2017/18 be rolled forward into future years, subject to an individual review of each carry forward to be set out within the Financial Outturn 2017/18 report to Cabinet.**
 - (ii) In line with Financial Regulation 13.8, any successful grant applications in respect of capital projects will be added to the Council's approved Capital Programme on an ongoing basis. the Development Pool, where funding has yet to be identified.**
 - (iii) Capitalisation opportunities and capital receipts flexibilities will be maximised, with capital receipts earmarked to minimise revenue costs.**
 - (iv) Decisions on the financing of capital expenditure for individual capital projects are delegated to the Council's Section 151 Officer.**
- Approve the Treasury Management Matters for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix 3 of the report including the Prudential Indicators, the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, the Treasury Management Strategy and the Investment Strategy.**

112. DECEMBER FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2017/18

Consideration was given to the report which set out the financial position for the Revenue and Capital Budgets at the end of December, 2017 based on actual costs and income and forecasts for the remainder of the financial year. This was the third of a series of monitoring reports for the 2017/18 financial year which would continue to be brought forward to Cabinet and Commissioners on a regular basis.

Delivery of the Council's Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy within the parameters agreed at the start of the current financial year was essential if the Council's objectives were to be achieved. Financial performance was a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework.

As at December 2017 the Council had a net forecast overspend on the General Fund of £992,000. This comprised a forecast overspend of £9.992m on Directorate/Service budgets mitigated by £9m savings from Central Services budgets and funding.

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The forecast overspend on Directorate/Service budgets had increased by £398,000 from the position report to Cabinet in December, 2017. However, within the net increase was a significant increase of £1.5m in the forecast overspend for Children and Young People which was now forecasting at £5.5m for the year. The increasing overspend was attributable to the continuing increase in the number of children in care which had increased by 43 (8%) since last reported and had risen by 18.3% since April 2017.

The increase in the number of Looked After Children had also placed significant and unavoidable pressure on Legal Services within the Finance and Customer Services Directorate with a current forecasted overspend for Legal Services of £1.254m, an increase of £113K since the December report.

Management actions to address areas of overspend were also ongoing in an attempt to eradicate the forecast overspend and ensure the delivery of a financial outturn within budget for 2017/18. If expenditure could not be contained within budgets by management actions or by identifying additional savings, the Council would need to call on its reserves in order to balance the revenue budget for 2017/18.

In light of this, all Services would, therefore, continue to develop mitigating actions and alternative savings to compensate for financial pressures and delays in delivering the full amount of savings. The financial effects of the mitigating actions that have been identified and implemented to date were reflected in the current forecast outturn. Regular updates on the progress made in maintaining a balanced budget position would be reported regularly through these Financial Monitoring reports.

A significant in-year pressure on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block remained – the projected overspend having increased by £855k since the December monitoring report to the current projection of £8.075m. Whilst this pressure did not directly affect the Council's financial position at this time it was imperative that the recovery strategy was implemented, which was outlined further by the Strategic Director, clearly setting out how this position would be resolved and to avoid any risk to the Council in the future. This included the planned transfer of £3m DSG in 2017/18 to reduce the forecast High Needs Block deficit.

A recovery plan intending to mitigate as far as possible the in-year pressure and achieve the previously reported position of an overall cumulative deficit of £1.796m by April, 2019 had been devised.

The HRA was now forecast to underspend and not require the planned transfer from HRA reserves. The changed position was mainly the result of delays in capital spending on cluster sites and the strategic acquisitions programme which would now take place in future years which reduced the planned Revenue Contribution to Capital spending in the current financial year.

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The 2017/18 Capital Programme was currently forecasting an underspend of £20.12m in the main due to slippage on capital schemes for which the spend would be re-profiled into 2018/19 and subsequent years.

The Strategic Director for Finance and Customers Services further clarified that, subject to that further review, alongside finalising costs for the year for voluntary redundancies and depending on the actual amount of capital receipts achieved, it was anticipated that total savings of around £9m could contribute to the Council mitigating budget pressures and towards delivery of a balanced financial outturn for 2017/18.

As a result of a detailed review of the profiling of Adults Care and Housing schemes the December report forecast outturn position for the 2017/18 approved Capital Programme indicated an in-year underspend of £15.4m, which required re-profiling into later financial years. The report set out in detail the revised programme budgets and latest forecasts of outturn expenditure by Directorate programme and an explanation of the changes.

It was proposed that amendments be made to the Revaluation Support Scheme for Rotherham's Business Rates payers. This was in light of changes to some Business Rates accounts and new information obtained which affected some businesses' qualification for relief meant that a substantial amount of the grant allocation would not now be awarded based on the current scheme criteria. It was proposed that:-

- The rateable value threshold for businesses to be able to qualify for the relief be increased from £100,000 or less to £300,00 or less
- The maximum award of relief for a business property be increased from £5,000 to £25,000

Resolved:- (1) That the current forecast overspend for 2017/18 of £922k be noted.

(2) That the management actions that continue to be developed to address areas of overspend be noted and alternative and additional savings be identified to mitigate shortfalls in achieving planned savings in 2017/18.

(3) That the current forecast outturn position on the approved Capital Programme for 2017/18 be noted.

(4) That the changes to the Business Rates Revaluation Support Scheme, as set out in paragraphs 3.67 to 3.68 of the report, be approved.

113. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - EMERGENCY PLANNING

Further to Minute No. 84 of the Council Meeting held on 18th October, 2017, consideration was given to the report which shared the recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission's cross-party review group on Emergency Planning process for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. The existing Emergency Plan was considered to be out of date and called into question its resilience and was a determining factor for undertaking the review.

Details of the methodology to the review and the visits undertaken were outlined, further assisted by the experience of a live incident during the review period.

Appendix A of the report submitted set out the fifteen recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review of Emergency Planning together with detail in respect of whether the recommendations should be agreed, not agreed or deferred and the action being taken.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board also wished to place on record his thanks and appreciation to the Chair and other members of the Improving Places Select Commission for their hard work in this review.

Resolved:- (1) That the Cabinet's response to the recommendations of the Improving Places Select Commission Scrutiny Review of Emergency Planning be approved.

(2) That the response be referred to the next meeting of the Council on 28th February, 2018 and the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission on 14th March, 2018.

114. MONETARY PENALTIES RELATING TO THE HOUSING AND PLANNING ACT 2016

Consideration was given to the report which set out the range of new tools and powers available to the Council under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 which strengthened the Council's enforcement capabilities to tackle poor housing conditions whilst introducing civil financial penalties on landlords who sought to avoid their responsibilities.

The value of the civil penalties, set by the Council and based on a transparent risk based process, could range from £25 to £30,000 per offence dependent upon harm and culpability. Once an individual was subject to a civil penalty, the Council must consider a Rent Repayment Order to recover monies paid through Housing Benefit or through the housing element of Universal Credit.

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Whilst the Housing and Planning Act 2016 amended the Housing Act 2004 in relation to civil penalties, the Council needed to adopt the provision of Chapter 4 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to utilise the Rent Repayment Orders.

Rent Repayment Orders were capped to a maximum of 12 months' rent. The Council would assist tenants to recover any rent paid by them to the landlord during the relevant period. A Rent Repayment Order, when sanctioned by the First-tier Tribunal, would require a landlord to repay a specified amount of rent. The Council was also required to adopt a policy that directed the implementation of those powers before the Council was able to utilise the tools.

The procedures to impose civil penalties, appeals against such penalties and recovery procedures, were prescribed in Legislation and Statutory Guidance by the Sentencing Council which the Council must adhere to.

The policy by which the Council would determine the use of Rent Repayment Orders and civil penalties was set out in Appendix A. The policy made provision for up to a maximum 20% discount at the discretion of the Assistant Director of Community Safety and Street Scene subject to compliance and payment of the penalty.

It should be noted that the tools and powers were equally available to privately rented properties which were let as Houses in Multiple Occupation. Appendix B set out the Council's expectations of the standards demanded from those operating Houses in Multiple Occupation and provided consistency and advice on how acceptable standards might be achieved.

Cabinet Members welcomed these new tools and powers which would contribute to the wider issues and environmental concerns.

Resolved:- (1) That the tools, powers and policy for the Use of Civil Penalty and Rent Repayment Orders under the Housing Act 2004 as amended and Houses in Multiple Occupation Guidance and Amenity Standards (Appendix A) be adopted.

(2) That the Council's General Enforcement Policy be amended to include the Policy for use of Civil Penalty and Rent Repayment Orders under the Housing Act 2004 as amended, referred to at 4.2 in the report submitted.

115. **THE SAFER ROTHERHAM PARTNERSHIP (SRP) DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY 2017 - 2020**

Consideration was given to the report setting out the Safer Rotherham Partnership's (SRP) Domestic Abuse Strategy for 2017-2020 which sought to enhance the co-ordinated response to domestic abuse.

The report and accompanying Strategy set out how the SRP wanted everyone who worked with families experiencing domestic abuse to identify domestic abuse and work together to tackle it. It provided clear expectations and a course of action which would make a difference to addressing the issues and help support people to change their lives.

Vacancies in a number of critical posts for some time had meant the Partnership drive had not existed in a structured and co-ordinated manner. However, there was now a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator in post, the reformation of a Partnership strategic group, new strategic lead and a clear strategic approach. Alongside the strategic elements of delivery, partners had also delivered practically with a South Yorkshire-wide Perpetrator Programme due to start in February, revisions to a number of policies and procedures and development of a multi-agency protocol (detailing the whole domestic abuse support system) and Charter.

The SRP had also identified a 'critical friend' (the city of Bradford Metropolitan District Council) and had undertaken a peer review into Domestic Abuse Services. The review had explored all areas of domestic abuse delivery with early feedback suggesting that the SRP had some strengths one of which was being the political and managerial leadership.

Domestic Abuse continued to be a priority for the SRP and, although progress had been made, more needed to be done to improve provision which the Strategy sought to achieve. The need to do more was reflected by the current reservation of a power of direction in this area by Commissioners.

Partners were acutely aware of the need to engage with victims, survivors and Service users to inform the strategic approach and delivery. This had been highlighted by the Improving Lives Select Commission and was a key piece of work.

The Chair of the Domestic Abuse Priority Action Group also confirmed the performance of the activity and delivery of the action plan would be reported back into the Safer Rotherham Partnership alongside oversight by the Senior Leadership Team.

Cabinet Members welcomed this Strategy as it provided clear expectations and a course of action which would make a difference to addressing this issue and help support people to change their lives.

Resolved:- That the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2017-2020 be endorsed.

116. ALLOTMENT RENTS 2019/20

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval to increase allotment rents for the 2019-20 financial year. Rents were set a year in advance to allow tenants to be given twelve months' notice of any increase in accordance with the statutory requirement.

The Council had consulted with Rotherham and District Allotments Association on both directly-managed and society sites during September and October 2017.

Plot-holders were asked which of the options within the report they would choose. Of 270 people who responded, 51.5% supported a rise in line with the current CPI, 26.3% preferred a fall in real terms, 9.3% wanted rents to rise in real terms, and 13% said they did not know.

Resolved:- (1) That allotment rents for the 2019-20 financial year be approved and set at levels shown in Appendix 1.

(2) That officers in Leisure and Green Spaces write to existing allotment tenants to advise them of the new rents, at least twelve months in advance of their introduction on 1st April, 2019.

117. RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT WITH ROTHERHAM RUGBY CLUB LTD, KNOWN AS ROTHERHAM PHOENIX RUGBY CLUB

Consideration was given to the report seeking renewal of the agreement with Rotherham Rugby Club (the Club) for the lease of three rugby pitches on Herringthorpe Playing Fields.

The Club aimed to improve the drainage and surface of the pitches with the help of funding from Sport England (the funder). The pitches were currently leased by the Club from the Council through an Asset Transfer lease for a yearly rent of £1 (if demanded) which ran until 2038. The lease was for land only; there were no other Council assets on the site.

In order to protect their proposed investment, the funder required a minimum twenty-five year lease with no break clause during that period. This would make necessary the Club's surrender of their current lease agreement and the creation of a new twenty-five year Asset Transfer lease which would end in 2042. The Club had requested the Council's assistance to overcome the funding obstacle.

In consultation with the Cabinet Member for Culture and Neighbourhood Working and local Ward Members in February, 2017, a number of issues relating to the Club's management and use of the site were raised.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and the commitment to continued active management of the site, to continued engagement with residents within the local community and to diversifying the ethnic profile of their users.

This report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-scrutiny process who were in support of the recommendations.

Resolved:- (1) That the surrender of the existing Asset Transfer Lease and the granting of a new twenty-five year Asset Transfer Lease with Rotherham Rugby Club Ltd. without any break clauses be approved.

(2) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport be authorised to negotiate the terms of the lease and the Assistant Director of Legal Services authorised to complete the necessary documentation.

(3) That the Assistant Director of Culture, Sport and Tourism be authorised to negotiate a new Service Level Agreement to monitor activities relating to sports development, community engagement and equalities.

118. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA APPLICATION FROM DALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Consideration was given to the report stating Dalton Parish Council's intention to produce a neighbourhood plan covering the Dalton Parish. It was proposed that the Council approve the application from Dalton Parish Council as the relevant neighbourhood planning body and the designation of Dalton Parish as a Neighbourhood Area.

Resolved:- (1) That the Neighbourhood Area application from Dalton Parish Council as the relevant neighbourhood planning body be approved.

(2) That the designation of Dalton Parish as a Neighbourhood Area be approved.

119. BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY RELIEF RENEWALS IN 2018-19

Consideration was given to a report which set out seventy-four renewal applications for the award of discretionary business rate relief for the organisations and premises listed in the attached appendix to this report.

This was in accordance with the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy (approved 12th December, 2016).

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It was noted that the Rural Rate Relief scheme was introduced to help protect the last retail outlets and similar services in designated rural areas with a population of less than 3,000. Under the scheme qualifying businesses were entitled to 50% mandatory relief.

Local Authorities were asked to use their local discretionary powers to grant 100% relief from 1st April, 2017 with the Government giving full compensation for the cost of the additional relief. A report recommending this was approved by Cabinet on 10th April, 2017.

Cabinet similarly approved the implementation of the Support for Pubs Discretionary scheme on 16th October, 2017 and to date a number of awards have been made with further applications continuing to be received.

Resolved:- (1) That the applications for discretionary business rate relief for the organisations listed in Appendix 1 of this report, in accordance with the details set out in Section 7 to this report, be approved for 2018/19.

(2) That the extension of Discretionary Relief in the 2018/19 financial year for qualifying rural ratepayers and qualifying public houses be approved.

(Councillors Lelliott and Yasseen declared personal interests on the grounds of being trustees of some of the registered charities listed)

120. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Consideration was given to the circulated report, the contents of which were included as part of the relevant items and the details included accordingly.