

**COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Wednesday, 22nd May, 2019**

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

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

**181. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor offered her congratulations to Councillor Marles on the birth of his first child.

**182. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allcock, Cusworth, D. Cutts, Hague, Pitchley, Julie Turner and Whysall.

**183. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications received.

**184. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

**Resolved:-** That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**185. PETITIONS**

The Mayor reported receipt of two petitions, which had not met the threshold for consideration by Council, and would be referred to the relevant directorate for a response to be prepared:-

- Containing 177 signatures calling on the Council to reinstate the public right of way along the towpath from the town centre to Parkgate.

Mrs. Orvis addressed the Council as part of the presentation of the petition.

- Containing 23 signatures calling on the Chief Executive to write a letter to the person appointed as Interim Deputy Strategic Director of CYPs on 6 April 2015 asking her to answer six questions that adult survivors of CSE in Rotherham want answers to.

#### **186. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Legal Adviser referred to Minute No. 203 (Staffing Committee Minutes and Recommendations) confirming that those Members connected to Unison were not required to declare any interests if it was already included on their Register of Interests.

There were no Declarations of Interest to report.

#### **187. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

(1) Mr. Harron was unable to attend the meeting so would be provided with a written response to his question.

(2) Mr. Reynolds asked what was the total sum, year by year, of financial support provided by RMBC to MAGNA to date and he also asked that the total cost plus for example loans, gifts, written off debts etc., plus any interest charged, accrued or cancelled be included.

Councillor Alam confirmed there have been no new loans to Magna since 2015. The current total value of loans to Magna was £440k with the interest outstanding of £26,000.

No debts have been written off and no interest had been cancelled. There was no other financial support provided to Magna apart from the loans already mentioned.

In a supplementary question Mr. Reynolds asked of the £440k outstanding what plans were in place to recover the funds and over what period and also what penalties were in place for missed payments.

Councillor Alam confirmed an agreement was in place with Magna about what they would be repaying over the next few years. There were no cancellations of any payments.

(3) Mr. Thirlwall asked could the Leader of the Opposition and the Chair of Standards and Ethics Committee tell him what actions they have taken to encourage UKIP Councillors to stop breaking the law and properly complete their Register of Interests.

Councillor McNeely pointed out the Constitution did not allow for questions to be put to the Leader of the Opposition at Council so she, as Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee, would answer.

As previously stated in answers to questions of this nature previously it was a matter for each individual Councillor to be personally responsible for ensuring compliance with the law in respect of their Register of Interests and all Councillors have been reminded of their responsibilities in this regard in writing as part of a recent Member update.

If any individual had concerns in respect of the accuracy of a Member's Register of interest they should report their concerns to the Council's Standards and Ethics Committee or the Police for investigation. Any allegations in this regard could potentially be a criminal matter.

In a supplementary question Mr. Thirlwall expressed his confusion that the Leader of the Opposition who received an allowance of £8,000 a year could not answer questions about the members that he led.

In October, 2018 and again in January, 2019 he named a number of people that had not completed their Register of Interests. From the list one of them had completed their Register of Interest, two have been referred to the Monitoring Officer for dubious explanations of why they had not registered their properties or where they lived. Another Member had still not completed his Register of Interest at all, even though it was known he was a property owner.

As a lay person Mr. Thirlwall was not able to investigate once the nominations have closed so was unable to find out where candidates said they were living at the time of the election and after that time they were destroyed.

Mr. Thirlwall, therefore, asked if this information could be looked at and at the same time he was aware of something to do with "Common Purpose". He also asked if any of the Elected Members were members of Common Purpose should it have been included on their Register of Interests. It would also be helpful if the Chief Executive could confirm if any officers were members of Common Purpose.

Councillor McNeely reiterated that it was only when Members had a change of circumstances they were likely to amend their Register of interests. She took on board Mr. Thirlwall's comments and pointed out that should he have any concerns over any individual then there was no reason why he could not put that forward via the Complaints Procedure.

As a Parish Councillor Mr. Thirlwall was fully aware of the Code of Conduct, but Councillor McNeely would meet up with the Monitoring Officer and chase up the issues on Mr. Thirlwall's behalf.

**188. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved:-** That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, that should the Mayor deem if necessary the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that any items involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**189. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT**

The Leader wanted to offer his congratulations to firstly, Councillor Andrews as the new Mayor and on the civic parade which was the biggest civic parade seen for some years.

Secondly, Reverend Phillip Bashford had now taken over as the Vicar at Rotherham Minster and performed the Mayor's Civic Service.

Finally, Una Jennings had become the South Yorkshire Police District Commander for Rotherham.

The Leader went on to refer to the Ofsted focused visit recently which looked into permanence planning for children and young people. This was an issue that was important to Members. Ofsted were complimentary in their findings saying the Council had demonstrated a strong service which had significantly improved. The Council, of course remained committed to improve further and wished to send on congratulations and thanks to the staff who worked so hard to make that possible look after the most vulnerable children.

In the period where Members could ask questions of the Leader's statement, Councillor Sansome also offered his congratulations, but drew particular attention to the announcement and concerns about British Steel's insolvency and the feelings around this issue. He asked if the Leader would like to comment, particularly for those affected in North Lincolnshire and Teeside.

The Leader expressed his concern about the difficulties and the pain of people losing their jobs and the impact this had on communities. The impact on these people were in Rotherham's thoughts and prayers. These were worrying times for British industry and political choices needed to be made by the Government to secure those jobs before the country got into unknown territory.

**190. MINUTES OF THE CABINET**

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 18<sup>th</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2019, be received.

With regards to Minute No. 129 of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 Councillor Reeder asked if the proposed Public Space Protection Order was yet in place and was advised by Councillor Hoddinott that the decision that was made at that meeting was to go out to consultation. The consultation period had now concluded and the service were working very closely with the Ward Councillors to look at the outcomes. Over the next few weeks a report would be produced and submitted to Cabinet for a decision on whether to put the Order in place.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**191. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - ADOPTION OF SCHEDULE 3 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1982 RELATING TO 'SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUES'**

Further to Minute No. 128 of the Cabinet held on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 consideration was given to the report which outlined a proposal to adopt the amended Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 that classified lap dancing clubs and similar establishments, as 'sexual entertainment venues'.

The report set out in detail the outcome of the consultation with 77% in agreement that lap dancing clubs should be properly regulated.

By adopting these regulations the Council would be able to develop a policy which took into consideration people's concerns about locations, the number of establishments in Rotherham and about the treatment of workers.

An Equality Impact Assessment had been included which referred to gender inequality and why better regulation was important.

Various Members offered their support to the report whilst concurring with the comments for better regulation and conditions to support the welfare of the workers in the industry.

**Resolved:-** (1) That the powers contained within Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (as amended) be adopted by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

(2) That the appointed day for the provisions of Schedule 3 to come into effect be one month and one day, 24th June, 2019, from this resolution being made.

(3) That authority to discharge the adopted functions in relation to individual licences of Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 be delegated to the Licensing Board.

Mover:- Councillor Hoddinott

Seconder:- Councillor Read

**192. RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS - ADULT RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING CARE HOMES**

Consideration was given to the report which set out in detail the response to the recommendations from the scrutiny workshop undertaken in April, 2018 by the Health Select Commission to consider residential and nursing care home for adults aged over 65. The purpose of the workshop was to consider progress in bringing about improvements to safety, quality and effectiveness in the sector.

Under the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules, the Cabinet was required to respond to any recommendations made by scrutiny and this report was submitted to meet that requirement.

Councillor B. Cutts expressed his concern about the closure of homes specifically for children and young people when there was demand for the provision. However, he was advised that closure was based on the provision not being safe.

In his right to reply Councillor Roche confirmed that over the last few years the Council had not closed any adult care homes and that standards across the borough had been raised. Where there had been concerns in privately owned homes residents on placement via the Council had been moved.

**Resolved:-** That the Cabinet response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Workshop: Adult Residential and Nursing Care Homes, as set out in Appendix A, be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Seconder:- Councillor Read

**193. RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS - ROTHERHAM YOUTH CABINET'S CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER TAKEOVER CHALLENGE SPOTLIGHT REVIEW ON WORK EXPERIENCE**

Further to Minute No. 37 of the meeting of the Council held on 25th July, 2018, consideration was given to the report which set out in detail the response to the findings and recommendations from a spotlight review undertaken by Rotherham Youth Cabinet under the auspices of the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge regarding improving access to work experience opportunities for all young people in Rotherham.

The Council fully supported the Youth Cabinet to influence Government to support schools to deliver high quality work experience. In Rotherham the Council would work with partners, via the Employment and Skills Board and Rotherham Education Strategic Partnership to implement the Employment and Skills Plan and would endeavour to keep the Youth

Cabinet fully updated.

Under the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Cabinet was required to respond to any recommendations made by scrutiny and this report was submitted to meet that requirement.

**Resolved:-** That the Cabinet's response to the spotlight review of work experience under taken by the Rotherham Youth Cabinet be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Watson

Seconder:- Councillor Lelliott

**194. RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS - SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF THE OFSTED INSPECTION OF ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING**

Further to Minute No. 36 of the meeting of Council held on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2018, consideration was given to the report which set out the response to the findings and recommendations of a spotlight review undertaken by the Improving Lives Select Commission in March, 2018 which followed the Ofsted Inspection of Adult Community Learning in June 2017.

The purpose of the review was to seek assurance that there was a clear understanding of the issues leading to the inadequate judgement in June 2017; that the issues arising from the inspection have been addressed and that there were clear plans in place to ensure that adult learners have pathways to secure employment or skills training. The conclusions and recommendations made by Members were based on information gathered from the spotlight review and examination of related documentation.

Under the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Cabinet was required to respond to any recommendations made by scrutiny and the enclosed response was agreed on 15th April, 2019.

Councillor Clark thanked all those involved in this review and the support and co-operation of its key players.

**Resolved:-** That the Cabinet's response to the spotlight review following the Ofsted Inspection of Adult Community Learning and the up-to-date position be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Watson

Seconder:- Councillor Read

**195. ANNUAL REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined how good governance had been a core tenet of the Council's improvement journey in recent years. The Constitution had been subject to external review and significant changes have been made to the way in which proposals were developed by Members and officers and how decisions were made across the Authority.

As the Constitution was the document that empowered the Authority to discharge its statutory and discretionary responsibilities, it was important that its provisions were reviewed and changes made to strengthen the Council's governance and accountability arrangements.

This report, therefore, having been considered by the Constitution Working Group, was submitted to enable the Council to approve the Constitution for the 2019/20 municipal year and adopt amendments to various provisions which were set out in detail as part of the report and specifically:-

- Public questions to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board relating to items on the agenda.
- Procedure for the election of Mayor-Elect and Deputy Mayor-Elect.
- Questions on minutes reported into Council.
- Increasing the word limit for questions to Council for both Members and the public.
- Maximising the number of Member questions to Council.
- Amendments to the Petitions Scheme.
- Amendments to the Employment Procedure Rules and Officer Code of Conduct.
- Amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Employment Appeals Panel, Audit Committee, Health and Wellbeing Board, Staffing Committee and Chief Officer Disciplinary Panel.
- Delegated authority for minor amendments to the Constitution.

Members sought clarity on the number of questions and if this was as a whole to spokespersons and cabinet members/chairs and the majority supported and welcomed the amendments to the Constitution as proposed.

Councillor Carter was unable to offer his support believing the amendments stifled public debate and found the changes unacceptable.

**Resolved:-** (1) That the Constitution of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council be adopted for the 2019-20 municipal year.

(2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 14.2 be amended so as to enable public questions to be submitted to the Chairperson of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board or Select Commissions in respect of matters to be considered on the agenda for the meeting at which they are in attendance.

(3) That a new Council Procedure Rule 8(2) be inserted to establish a procedure for the designation of a Mayor-Elect and Deputy Mayor-Elect at the final meeting of the Council in a municipal year.

(4) That a new Council Procedure Rule 10(10) be inserted to establish a procedure for Members to ask questions in respect of the minutes reported to Council of meetings of the Cabinet and committees and for such questions to be responded to by the Leader of the Council, relevant Cabinet Member or Chairperson.

(5) That the word limit for general questions submitted by Members under Council Procedure Rule 11 be increased from 50 words to 60 words.

(6) That Council Procedure Rule 11(8) be amended to provide for the number of verbal questions asked under Council Procedure Rule 11 to be limited to a maximum of ten verbal questions per Member, with an equal number of supplementary questions, with written responses to be provided for all other questions submitted.

(7) That the word limit for questions submitted by members of the public under Council Procedure Rule 12 be increased from 50 words to 60 words.

(8) That the Council's Petition Scheme be amended to:-

- (a) Require that petitions be addressed to the Council, rather than specific Members or officers.
- (b) Define vexatious petitions and how a petition will be deemed vexatious by the Monitoring Officer
- (c) Remove the provision for Lead Petitioners to request the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to review responses to petitions and confirm that such requests should be referred to the Council's Complaints Procedures.

(8) That Officer Employment Procedure Rules and Officer Code of Conduct be amended, as set out in Appendix 3.

(9) That the terms of reference of the Employment Appeals Panel, Audit Committee, Health and Wellbeing Board, Staffing Committee and Chief Officer Disciplinary Panel be amended, as set out in Appendix 4.

(10) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services to make any minor consequential amendments to the Constitution arising from any changes made in the recommendations above.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Cowles

**196. MEMBERSHIP OF POLITICAL GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL, POLITICAL BALANCE AND ENTITLEMENT TO SEATS**

Consideration was given to the report which set out Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which placed on Local Authorities the duty to allocate seats to political groups and set out the

principles to be followed when determining such allocation following formal notification of the establishment of political groups in operation on the council.

There was a requirement to annually review the entitlement of the political groups to seats on the committees of the Council and the allocation of seats must follow two principles:-

- (a) Balance must be achieved across the total number of available seats on committees; and
- (b) Balance must be achieved on each individual committee or body where seats are available

There were presently two political groups in operation on the Council – the Labour Group and the UK Independence Party Group – with two non-aligned Councillors (members who are not in a political group).

There were 149 seats available on committees, boards and panels and under the calculation the Labour Group was entitled to 114 seats and the UK Independence Group entitled to 31. This left four seats which could not be given to members of the political groups and should be allocated to the two non-aligned Councillors.

The appointment of Members to committees, boards and panels, and the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs were set out on the schedule attached to the Mayor's letter.

Councillor Read proposed and Councillor Watson seconded an amendment to the schedule:-

“That approval be given to the appointment of Members to joint committees, as set out on the schedule to be tabled at the meeting, with the exception of the nomination of Cllr Brian Cutts and that the Leader of the UK Independence Party Group be invited to propose an alternative nomination from his political group to serve on the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel.”

This was based on Councillor Brian Cutts appearing before the Standards and Ethics Committee who concluded that he had been in breach of the Members' Code and nothing had since changed. On this basis, as this was not a temporary suspension, it was surprising to see him being nominated again by the Opposition.

Councillor Cowles had attended the same equalities and diversity training recommended to Councillor Cutts and believed his nomination to serve the Police and Crime Panel was appropriate as was membership of other Councillors in the Chamber.

Councillor Brian Cutts was also surprised and unsure as to why he had been removed from the Police and Crime Panel in the first place.

Councillor John Turner had listened to the comments and sympathised with his party member and voiced his own views about the law around sexuality, equal rights and free speech.

Councillor Watson was disappointed in Councillor Turner's view on the law and equal rights, but offered his full support to the amendment.

Councillor Hoddinott supported the amendment. The person appointed to the Police and Crime Panel represented all residents across Rotherham regardless of their background, their race or their sexual orientation. Residents needed to have the confidence in the person representing the Council had a full understanding of equality issues.

Councillor Carter supported the amendment and wanted to put children first. He had voted in favour of the motion to remove Councillor Cutts previously, but believed his reappointment was a little premature.

In his right to reply the Leader again referred to the recommendations from the Standards and Ethics Committee and the comments made by Councillor Cutts, which were not isolated as there had been a pattern of homophobic comments over a period of years.

Nothing had changed since Councillor Cutts was removed from the Police and Crime Panel so he urged the UKIP opposition to nominate an alternative member as it left the Police and Crime Panel unrepresented by the opposition group.

The vote was put for the amendment and carried.

**Resolved:-** (1) That the operation of two political groups on the Council and the detail of their designated Leaders be noted:-

- (a) Labour Group – Councillor Chris Read (Leader of the Council).
- (b) UK Independence Party Group – Councillor Allen Cowles (Leader of the Majority Opposition Group).

(2) That the entitlement of the membership of the political groups be agreed and such entitlements be reflected in Council's appointments of members to committees.

(3) That the appointment of Members to committees, boards and panels, and the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs, as set out on the schedule be approved as follows:-

**EXECUTIVE**

Leader of the Council	Councillor Read
Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Neighbourhood Working	Councillor Watson
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Finance	Councillor Alam
Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener Communities	Councillor Allen
Cabinet Member for Housing	Councillor Beck
Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety	Councillor Hoddinott
Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy	Councillor Lelliott
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health	Councillor Roche

**REGULATORY BOARDS****Standards and Ethics Committee:-  
(8 Council Members)**

Councillor Clark (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Sheppard
Councillor Ireland	Councillor Short
Councillor McNeely (Chair)	Councillor Simpson
	Councillor Vjestica

***Independent Members:***

Mrs. A. Bingham	Mrs. K. Penny
Mr. P. Edler	Mrs. J. Porter
Mrs. M. Evers	

***Parish Council Representatives:***

Councillor D. Bates	Councillor R. Swann
Councillor D. Rowley	

**Licensing Board:-  
(21 Members)**

Councillor Albiston	Councillor Reeder
Councillor Beaumont (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Russell
Councillor Buckley	Councillor Sheppard
Councillor Clark	Councillor Steele
Councillor Ellis (Chair)	Councillor Taylor
Councillor Hague	Councillor Vjestica
Councillor Jones	Councillor Williams
Councillor Mallinder	Councillor Wyatt

Councillor Marriott  
 Councillor McNeely  
 Councillor Napper

(One non-aligned  
 Vacancy)

**Licensing Committee  
 (15 Members drawn from Licensing Board)**

Councillor Albiston	Councillor Napper
Councillor Beaumont (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Reeder
Councillor Buckley	Councillor Russell
Councillor Clark	Councillor Steele
Councillor Ellis (Chair)	Councillor Taylor
Councillor Hague	Councillor Vjestica
Councillor Jones	
Councillor McNeely	

(One non-aligned  
 Vacancy)\*

**Planning Board:-  
 (15 Members)**

Councillor Atkin	Councillor Steele
Councillor Bird	Councillor John Turner
Councillor D. Cutts	Councillor Tweed
Councillor M. Elliott	Councillor Walsh
Councillor Jarvis	Councillor Whysall
Councillor Sansome	Councillor Williams (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sheppard (Chair)	

(One Labour Vacancy)\*

***Substitutes***

Councillor Khan  
 Councillor Mallinder  
 Councillor Short

**Audit Committee:-  
 (5 Members)**

Councillor Cowles	Councillor Wilson
Councillor Vjestica	Councillor Wyatt (Chair)
Councillor Walsh (Vice-Chair)	Independent Member
	Mr. B. Coleman

## **SELECT COMMISSIONS**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Management Board:-**

Councillor Cowles (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Cusworth  
Councillor Jarvis  
Councillor Keenan  
Councillor Mallinder  
Councillor Napper  
Councillor Short  
Councillor Steele (Chair)  
Councillor Taylor  
Councillor Tweed  
Councillor Walsh  
Councillor Wyatt

(12 Members)

### **Health:-**

Councillor Albiston  
Councillor Andrews  
Councillor Bird  
Councillor Brookes  
Councillor Cooksey  
Councillor R. Elliott  
Councillor Ellis  
Councillor Evans  
Councillor Jarvis  
Councillor Keenan (Chair)  
Councillor Short (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor John Turner  
Councillor Vjestica  
Councillor Walsh  
Councillor Williams  
Councillor Wilson  
Councillor Yasseen  
(One Non-Aligned Vacancy)

(18 Members)

### **Improving Lives:-**

Councillor Atkin  
Councillor Beaumont  
Councillor Buckley  
Councillor Clark  
Councillor Cusworth (Chair)  
Councillor Elliot

Councillor Fenwick-Green  
 Councillor Hague  
 Councillor Ireland  
 Councillor Jarvis (Vice-Chair)  
 Councillor Khan  
 Councillor Marles  
 Councillor Marriott  
 Councillor Pitchley  
 Councillor Price  
 Councillor Senior  
 Councillor Short  
 Councillor Julie Turner

(18 Members)

**Improving Places:-**

Councillor Atkin  
 Councillor Buckley  
 Councillor B. Cutts  
 Councillor Elliot  
 Councillor Jepson  
 Councillor Jones  
 Councillor Khan  
 Councillor Mallinder (Chair)  
 Councillor McNeely  
 Councillor Reeder  
 Councillor Rushforth  
 Councillor Sansome  
 Councillor Sheppard  
 Councillor Taylor  
 Councillor Tweed (Vice-Chair)  
 Councillor Julie Turner  
 Councillor Whysall  
 Councillor Wyatt

(18 Members)

(4) That approval be given to the appointment of Members to joint committees, as set out on the schedule to be tabled at the meeting as follows:-

**SHEFFIELD CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY**

Councillor Read (Deputy – Councillor Watson)

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Councillors Buckley and Taylor

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE PENSIONS AUTHORITY**

Councillors Atkin and Yasseen

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

Councillor Sansome plus Vacancy

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Beck

**197. DESIGNATION OF MONITORING OFFICER**

Consideration was given to the report which detailed how the Council had received the resignation of the Assistant Director of Legal Services, who was also appointed as the Monitoring Officer under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

This report, therefore, recommended that the Council designate the Head of Legal Services, Bal Nahal, as the Monitoring Officer to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 until such a time as a permanent appointment was made to the post of Assistant Director of Legal Services.

**Resolved:-** (1) That in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 that the Head of Legal Services be designated as the Council's Interim Monitoring Officer until such time a permanent appointment has been made.

(2) That the functions of the Assistant Director of Legal Services detailed within the Articles of the Constitution be undertaken by the Head of Legal Services, as Interim Monitoring Officer, until such time as a permanent appointment has been made.

(3) That the thanks and very best wishes of the Council be conveyed to the former Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer by the Mayor.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Read

**198. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS**

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2018, consideration was given to the annual Ward Updates for Brinsworth and Catcliffe, Hooper and Keppel as part of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy.

The Strategy signalled a new way of working for the Council both for Members and for staff and covered every Ward in the borough delivered through Ward Plans developed with residents to address local issues and opportunities. Ward Members would be supported by the neighbourhood team and would work with officers and residents from a range of organisations to respond to residents.

Councillors Buckley, Carter and Simpson, on behalf of the Brinsworth and Catcliffe Ward, gave an update on their ward priorities.

Councillor Carter described how he and his Ward Councillors had consulted on proposals on which to use their core budget and the many events that had been attended. He was proud of the agreed priorities which residents had identified such as fly tipping hotspots and litter around the villages.

As a result anti-fly tipping cameras had been purchased through the Ward budgets and they were proving to be successful.

The Ward was also working with partner organisations such as the friends of St George's Churchyard, which had been so overgrown and neglected and had fallen into disrepair.

Councillor Carter particularly enjoyed the local Remembrance Day service and as a junior doctor himself he was proud to have been involved with partnership proposals to bring forward the installation of a new defibrillator that was installed in Catcliffe, which may help save someone's life.

The Ward had fantastic heritage and was home to the Kiln amongst other things and Members were encouraging collaboration with the Area Housing Panel to look at match funding to provide a power supply, both inside and outside of the Kiln to host community events such as the Christmas nativity.

Councillor Simpson described the fantastic local knowledge for local needs and the important community work that Councillors were involved in, such as voluntary work, listening to lonely people, suicide support and help with youth work.

He was proud to be involved in the suggested enhancements in and around the town centre along with tourism possibilities of leisure cycling and family walks to and from Rother Valley Country Park.

Councillor Buckley echoed the comments of his Ward colleagues and referred Members to the Ward Plan that had been circulated with the agenda. The Plan was succinct and was aspirational. It outlined some of the current achievements, but he wanted to reflect on the process which was working well.

Having been involved in the initial Working Party it was rewarding to hear over this year so many positive reports from Ward Members and how they were engaging more with their local communities. However, there was still room for development.

His own Ward had proactive Parish Councils, which had been welcome in moving forward a number of joint working projects. However, this had also created a number of problems as the lines of responsibility had

become blurred. He wished to point out that whilst Ward Members were active they could not always take the credit for projects such as the new centre or the proposed new library. These had been led by the Parish Councils over number of years.

Councillor Buckley liked to think that as Ward Councillors he and his colleagues could continue to address and improve conditions for constituents when it came to deciding on annual budgets.

Councillors Lelliott Roche and Steele, on behalf of the Hooper Ward, gave an update on their Ward Plan.

Councillor Lelliott referred Members back to the Plan in the agenda pack and the good work that was taking place in the Ward and the art of being a good Ward Councillor was actually about being a representative to the community and working closely, the links and partnerships that were built. Nothing could be achieved in isolation.

Councillor Lelliott described the excellent work and the mapping that had taken place with individuals and community groups during surgeries and coffee mornings. The Ward was clearly benefitting from the litter picking and the collaboration with Wath, West Melton and Brampton litter picking group who had come together as volunteers to tackle litter in both Hooper Ward and Wath Ward. Hooper Ward Councillors have funded litter picking equipment for the group. The group regularly carry out litter picks in the areas of Brampton, West Melton and Upper Haugh. Consideration was also being given as to whether to take this a little further into Swinton.

Volunteers in the area were commended for the individual work they were doing and how they were making a difference to people's lives. It was not just about giving young people opportunities it was providing the community with places to tackle issues like senior citizens' loneliness.

Councillor Lelliott was privileged and proud to have made a difference in her Ward.

Councillor Roche described his Labour Ward as diverse, but stressed the importance of consulting with local organisations and people. He was pleased to have been involved with general issues like traffic problems and the school park.

The Ward had concentrated on particular areas and consulted the community and the Parish Council to ensure issues were dealt with effectively and quickly brought to attention so support could be given wherever possible.

This had included a recent meeting with three village organisations and local residents to particularly talk about traffic issues in the area. This was ongoing and comments were awaited back from officers before this could be fed back.

The residents of Harley and Wentworth had been engaged with to agree Ward priorities. Harley Mission Rooms had also recently been acquired and refurbished by a newly established Trust. Ward Councillors were keen to help and funded equipment and fixtures to enable them to set up a new community café which was open to all the community and a variety of community activities were now hosted.

Moving forward Ward Members were conscious that due to the diversity and spread in the Ward it was not always possible to come together in a central hub, but consultation events would be spread around the Ward.

Hoover Ward was proud that it was improving the local environment, addressing social isolation and loneliness, increasing participation within the local community, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and providing more facilities and activities for young people and families and shared this through a Facebook page.

Councillor Steele echoed many of the comments from his colleagues, but described how Ward budgets were being used to support and improve the local area that had been neglected. This was a rural area, but Members were actively talking about what could be facilitated for the betterment of residents.

Traffic congestion was an issue in certain areas and discussions were taking place with the Police to make sure people were safe.

It was important to keep communication alive in the Ward and how little support could go a long way. The word about the small grants available was now spreading. Councillor Steele was proud of the work taking place.

Councillor Clark, on behalf of the Keppel Ward, referred to the Ward priorities, and was proud to present this report as she took full responsibility for its content. Over the past twelve months she had been extremely busy with more engagement with local groups as well as doing much more joint working with PCSO's.

Initially she had been wary of the new way of neighbourhood working when it was first introduced, but had seen how it had worked for her.

She referred to the report attached to the agenda and the content which had seen two Dragons' Dens events; one in Kimberworth Park and one in Thorpe Hesley where local groups pitched for community leadership funding for their projects. The first Community Awards presentation had also been hosted in this three year term. All were really well attended by representatives and supporters from the many groups in the area, who were now interacting more with one another.

The Ward Plan had supported the Millmoor Junior Football Academy with shelters and kit, which supported many young people across the borough.

Residents in a particular area of Thorpe Hesley had also asked if they could have the Father Christmas float visit children in the area. After discussions if this could be provided by the Ward, Wortley Rotary supported the request and a visit was made on Christmas Eve.

Members were also involved and lobbied to keep the redundant Thorpe Hesley aged persons building for community use. After advertising this twice the community group, Artworks, chose to take over the building. This not-for-profit creative arts organisation inspired and helped adults with learning difficulties to achieve their potential and develop important life skills through creative workshops and placements.

Artworks were an asset to the community and had drawn down grant funding to completely refurbish the property which would soon be available for community use. The banner downstairs in the John Smith Room was made by Artworks.

As a result of better neighbourhood working Ward Members had a faster and more professional way to respond to community concerns and have held a number of community meetings with PCSOs in attendance responding to public requests.

A number of Community Speed watch events and traffic counts have been held following on from issues raised by residents and a mobile illuminated speed sign had been purchased which was moved around the area.

The other Keppel Ward Members were unable to be present today and they had their own personal problems that had prevented from being as active as they may have liked. Councillor Clark wanted to pass on her best wishes and hoped they were well.

The Mayor opened up meeting to any questions other Members may have on the reports that had been provided.

Councillor Hoddinott wished to place on record her thanks actually to Councillor Clark alone and for the work she had done with Artworks reflected in the banner downstairs. Councillor Clark was a big advocate of women's rights and women Councillors and this came through in the project that was created and brought into the Town Hall with the permanent reminder of 100 years of women getting the first votes. Councillor Clark was commended for her engagement in the Ward and bringing this back into the Town Hall.

In his right to reply Councillor Watson welcomed the excellent neighbourhood working that was taking place in Wards.

Resolved:- That the Ward updates be received and the contents noted.

Mover:- Councillor Watson

Secunder:- Councillor Read

**199. STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendation and minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Ethics Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor McNeely

Secunder:- Councillor Clark

**200. AUDIT COMMITTEE**

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

Mover:- Councillor Wyatt

Secunder:- Councillor Walsh

**201. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

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

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Secunder:- Councillor Mallinder

**202. PLANNING BOARD**

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

Mover:- Councillor Sheppard

Secunder:- Councillor Williams

**203. STAFFING COMMITTEE**

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

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Secunder:- Councillor Read

**204. LICENSING**

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

Mover:- Councillor Ellis

Secunder:- Councillor Beaumont

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

**(1) Councillor R. Elliott** asked would the designated spokesperson confirm his opposition to the latest dangerous proposal from SYFR to reduce the manning of every pump from five firefighters to four and would he vehemently argue against this on the Council's behalf whilst at the same time lobbying for the return of the second pump?

Councillor Taylor confirmed back in 2012 as a member of the Fire Authority he objected vehemently to the removal of the second pump in Rotherham and Barnsley and he would continue. Once the pump had been removed from the establishment from his own experience Councillor Taylor believed this would be very difficult to return.

The only way it would be returned would be for operational necessity, which must be underpinned by robust evidence alongside sufficient funding to enable it.

If those circumstances did occur he would lobby, but regrettably over the last year he had not seen anything on the Authority that would believe that would change. Councillor Elliott referred to the proposal as dangerous, but this was another example of forced cuts being driven on an essential service and that this conflicted with what the service wanted to do.

If this was what was meant Councillor Taylor agreed that he would argue vehemently as Chair with Ministers against further funding cuts and unfair methodologies that placed South Yorkshire Fire Authority at a disadvantage.

In a supplementary question Councillor Elliott pointed out to the Chamber the possible dangers to residents if these proposals went ahead. However, what about residents were they aware what the Fire Authority wanted to inflict upon them i.e. one fire engine and four fire fighters to protect the 64,000 people on a night shift.

The Fire Authority had started a consultation which, if you could find it, was typical of the Fire Authority. It was devoid of information and the two questions on the consultation were slanted so to give the views that the Fire Authority would like to receive. The public needed informing about this consultation and encouraged to respond in a manner that would make the Fire Authority take notice. So he asked would Councillor Taylor insist that the Fire Authority consultation was widely promoted and publicised i.e. in the local media, local radio and most of all events in public places such as Parkgate Shopping Centre and Rotherham Town Centre. Let them look residents in the face and tell them they have been short changed. He asked for a proper consultation and asked would the spokesperson get the Fire Authority in the chamber to explain to Members where their money was going.

Councillor Taylor explained about the dangers of whipping up hysteria that members of the public would be placed at greater risk. For ten years he had ridden in the back of pumps which started off with six riders and at the end of the ten years had come down to four riders. For the next ten years he was the officer in charge that predominantly rode in the front of the pumps with four riders and for the rest of his career in the car that supported pumps who still only had four or five riders.

It was not the amount of riders on the pumps that made the difference. It was what they did so from the initial call to the mobilisation and the officer in charge working out the plan and if resources were not available they would ask for them and supervise the plan. From his experience Councillor Taylor explained having four or five riders had not many any difference to the operation of the team.

Concerns over the consultation document were noted, which was available till August. The consultation had been widely advertised, but Councillor Elliott's comments would be passed back to the Communications Team to make sure they made better efforts to advertise the consultation further.

It was also noted that it was the intention of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to bring the consultation of the IRMP to a meeting.

**(2) Councillor Carter** asked how much would the failed implementation of SYFRA's Close Proximity Crewing cost the taxpayers in legal fees and compensation?

Councillor Taylor advised at the moment the compensation payments were subject to negotiation and, on that basis, it would be inappropriate to disclose any information due to confidentiality. In terms of the legal costs, given the short notice, Barnsley MBC Legal Services were not in a position to disclose information, but this could be provided at the first opportunity or at a future Council meeting.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter confirmed he would be grateful if this could be provided in writing or by email.

Councillor Taylor confirmed he would.

**(3) Councillor Carter** asked where else in the country had reducing the number of firefighters on a fire engine from five to four staff been implemented?

Councillor Taylor confirmed that from forty-seven of the other Fire Authorities in the U.K., excluding South Yorkshire, there were sixteen that rode four as part of their normal staffing arrangements. There were a further ten that rode five when this permitted. For information South Yorkshire rode four riders for 38% of the time.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter clarified that South Yorkshire was not the first to be trialling four riders. Councillor Taylor had mentioned about additional fire fighters attending not on pumps to Councillor Elliott so he asked what procedures were in place at the moment to ensure those fire fighters were available in time to be able to get to incidents that required more staff.

Councillor Taylor further explained there were no additional fire fighters that attended pumping arrangements, but that they did attend from other pumps or from other fire stations. Back up arrangements were in operation from neighbouring fire stations.

**(4) Councillor Carter** asked under the PCC's tenure, South Yorkshire Police have moved away from and now back to a neighbourhood policing model and he asked did the spokesperson agree with him that the Police and Crime Commissioner had lacked proper oversight of this vital aspect of policing?

Councillor Sansome confirmed he did not agree with Councillor Carter.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked what representations did the Police and Crime Panel make to the Police and Crime Commissioner when these initial changes were put into place.

Councillor Sansome explained the decision to absorb neighbourhood police officers into response teams was an operational decision of the previous Chief Constable and his senior command team.

It was taken before the present Police and Crime Commissioner became Commissioner. When the present Police and Crime Commissioner appointed the current Chief constable he asked him to restore full neighbourhood policing – police officers and PCSOs - which he had been doing. The overall number of police officers in South Yorkshire would be increased this year by fifty-five of whom forty would go into neighbourhood teams. This was the first increase since 2010. This was a good record of oversight.

Concerning the functions of the Police and Crime Panel, those representatives on it would confirm Members currently consistently held the Police and Crime Commissioner to account on neighbourhood policing. This was why the Panel rejected the precept and the reason why the Panel wanted more policing to see safer neighbourhoods. This was the first increase since 2010.

**(5) Councillor Carter** asked how much money had been spent on the failed 101 service implementation?

Councillor Sansome explained the 101 system had been in place nationally since 2013. Since that time, the number of calls received each day had escalated. Many of these calls were nothing to do with either

crime or anti-social behaviour and they were clogging the system, especially at busy times of the day. This was the issue that now faced all police forces.

It was not systems, but the sheer number of calls that, at certain times, could be almost overwhelming and had to be reduced. Everyone had a part to play in educating the public about the appropriate use of 101 and 999.

South Yorkshire Police had now replaced its outdated equipment and operating systems. 'Connect' was a system for Police and other parts of the justice system to exchange information. This went live last year and was fully functional. 'Smart Contact' – which included improvements to 101 - was in place, but some functions were still being worked on. Both systems have been developed jointly with Humberside Police.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked with regards to the 101 service what were the current waiting times.

Councillor Sansome was unable to provide this information, but would seek to get this answer and provide in writing.

**(6) Councillor Carter** asked when the new 101 service was introduced, was the new technology fully accessible for disabled staff to use?

Councillor Sansome confirmed employers such as South Yorkshire Police were required to make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities. As there were many different types of disability this may mean making adjustments on an individual basis.

The new technology had been designed with different disabilities in mind, such as colour blindness.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter clarified that when the new 101 telephone service was introduced it was not fully accessible for staff and adjustments had to be made when this came into place. He asked had this resulted in any staff being unable to perform their role.

Councillor Sansome was unable to provide this information, but would seek to get this answer and provide in writing.

## **206. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN**

**(1) Councillor Fenwick-Green** was aware it was reported recently that sales of electric cars were up a third compared to this time last year so asked what was the Council doing to make it easier for drivers of electric vehicles to charge their cars in Rotherham?

Councillor Lelliott explained the Council had been successful in securing funding from the Government as part of the work on the Clean Air Zone,

some of this funding was being used to proactively encourage electric vehicle use by installing more charging points for electric vehicles.

Work was currently on-going across a number of sites around the borough and the total number of charging points that would be installed would depend on those works. However, it was estimated that around fourteen public charging points would be installed across the borough, plus as many as twenty in the town centre and at Riverside. A further ten chargers would be installed at Hellaby depot to allow the Council to develop its electric vehicle fleet in years to come.

The work was expected to be completed by the end of June.

In a supplementary question Councillor Fenwick-Green was aware that problems that drivers with electric cars faced when they came to a charging point was they could not plug a car in because it had iced up. This was not the case for cars with an internal combustion engine so asked if there were any plans to prevent charging point blocking to allow electric car drivers to charge their vehicles when they needed to.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed there were no plans, but the position would be monitored via enforcement officers to ensure it was not being abused.

**(2) Councillor Carter** asked what plans were there currently to resurface roads such as High Hazel Road and Treeton Lane in Treeton?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed if Councillor Carter had spoken to the Ward Councillor for Treeton he would have found out the Ward Members representing Treeton have already picked up the concerns of local residents, and as a result High Hazel Road, Treeton and Treeton Lane, Treeton have been included on the Highway Repair Programme for 2019/20.

The two roads would, therefore, be resurfaced this financial year.

**(3) Councillor M. Elliott** referred to the annual gardening competition being recently announced and asked why was it only applicable to Council tenants?

Councillor Beck explained this recognised the green figured tenants and those taking pride in their own Council home. It was recognised that many of the housing estates were mixed tenure. This was something the Council were looking at, but logistically extending the competition to 100,000 homes would make this a challenge.

Councillor Elliott took on board Councillor Beck's comments, but the right to buy made a lot of private householders on Council estates. He believed the present scheme was discriminatory and hoped the service would look at it again for next year.

Councillor Beck shared the spirit in which Councillor Elliott's question intended, but the staff who worked on this annual competition were all funded from the tenants themselves and the rents collected. The Council must be careful not to run a project potentially funded by Council tenants for the benefit of others as there were strict regulations around the HRA. However, consideration would be given as to whether this project could be extended.

**(4) Councillor Carter** asked were libraries in communities such as Wickersley and Brinsworth at risk of closure under the upcoming review of the library service?

Councillor Allen explained that as Councillor Carter would know the new improved library provision developed by the Parish Council at the Brinsworth Community Hub would be available from the 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2019. This would be delivered using a Section 106 contribution of £124,800 along with an allocation of £148,401 the Council's capital programme – which Councillor Carter voted against.

There were no plans to close libraries, but the service would listen carefully to consultation on developing a new Library Strategy that was approved by the Cabinet.

The existing service for the first time in ten years had reversed the trend in terms of usage and it was now going upwards. It was also recording for the end of 2018/19 99.08% satisfaction ratings from users. The service wanted to maintain and improve on that service delivery and keep those standards already reached and applicable which was why residents were being asked for their views. Members would need to remember there were authorities like East Sussex who were currently closing a third of their libraries without any consultation purely as a savings exercise. Here in Rotherham the Council was rightly proud and not only keeping libraries open, but statistics showed they were thriving.

**(5) Councillor Carter** asked did RMBC employ directly or indirectly any staff on zero hour contracts?

Councillor Alam explained the Council did not employ staff on zero hours contracts, either directly or indirectly.

**(6) Councillor Fenwick-Green** pointed out that since the last Council meeting CYPS have had an Ofsted focused visit to review the permanence planning arrangements for looked after children and asked could the Cabinet Member tell the Chamber what were the conclusions.

Councillor Watson confirmed Ofsted carried out a focused visit on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2019 to look at the Council's arrangements for permanence planning, including early permanence for children looked after. The Inspectors looked at a range of evidence, including case discussions with social workers. They also looked at Local Authority

performance management and quality assurance information, and reviewed children's case records.

Ofsted said that children looked after by Rotherham Borough Council who needed permanence in their lives were receiving a strong service. They saw that the Council had made progress since the last inspection in 2017, when services for children looked after were judged to require improvement.

The inspectors reported that effective strategic planning by senior leaders had significantly improved permanence planning for children in care. They said that senior leaders have successfully made use of the Council's existing strengths, such as performance reporting, together with increased management oversight of children's individual circumstances, to achieve sustained improvement.

The published report said that significant partners, such as the Child and Family Courts Advisory Service (CAFCAS) and the courts, reported an increasing amount of good-quality social work. Inspectors reported that social workers described their plans for children in care clearly and that they saw children regularly and know them very well.

Inspectors found that all children in care whose cases were reviewed by inspectors had a plan for permanence firmly in place. This meant that there was a real focus on securing their long-term future including finding a variety of places for them to live.

As with all inspections a small number of areas were identified for further development. Firstly, the quality and consistency of written planning needs to match up to social workers' verbal accounts of their plans. Secondly, the Council needed to increase the number of in-house placements, to avoid the use of unregulated placements options when finding places for children in care to live. Finally assessments needed to be of a consistent quality, where risk had potential implications for stability in the lives of children in care.

As ever, the Council would take on board the feedback from the inspection to continue to improve the services for our Looked After Children.

**(7) Councillor Carter** asked had the Council supported convictions of homeless people under the Victorian era Vagrancy Act in the past five years?

Councillor Beck explained the Council's thoughts were with anyone who found themselves in a situation where they or their family were homeless or sleeping rough.

This type of enforcement was undertaken by the Police, who were not required to consult with the Council before they took such action. Neither

the Police nor the Council were at liberty to pick and choose which laws were enforced.

Councillor Beck understood that the Police were sometimes required to use these powers after interventions from the Council or the Police have not been successful. When this action was taken, it was not in order to convict people for being homeless. The powers were only used as a last resort in cases where individuals were found to be persistently begging and causing a significant nuisance, after every effort had been made to support the individual off the streets. It should be noted that persistent begging was not necessarily confined to people who were homeless and sadly it was known that many individuals found to be begging were not homeless at all.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked over the past five years were there any residents involved with the Council as described being convicted under the Vagrancy Act.

Councillor Beck referred back to his original response that this was a matter for the Police. The Council did not prosecute anyone under the Act. The Council did in fact work in partnership with the Police, the Health Service and other organisations, but it was Labour Party policy to repeal the Vagrancy Act if the Labour Party came into power.

**(8) Councillor Carter** asked what was the administration's view on combining the roles of City Region Mayor and Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Leader confirmed there was no such proposal in South Yorkshire so the Council had not formed a view about it. The priority was for the Metro Mayor to do his job and the task of delivering a devolution deal before coming to other reforms.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked would the administration support the combining of the role of the Fire Authority with those of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Leader was not aware of a proposal to do this at the moment so a decision would lay with the Police and Crime Commissioner and he would need to persuade Councils to do this. If a proposal came forward in the future the Council would then consider it seriously.

**(9) Councillor Reeder** asked the Cabinet Member for a cleaner safer place to live. Under this new neighbourhood scheme had there been any improvement in Rotherham town centre and surrounding area and did the Cabinet Member ever walk around town and was anyone bothered.

Councillor Allen was aware Councillor Reeder had also asked this question at the Streetpride Members Group last week and a long discussion took place about recent walkabouts in Wellgate. The Cabinet

Member was still working with officers to come to a resolution on them.

At the meeting all the Members gave assurance that they were bothered and today everyone in this Chamber would give reassurance with confidence that they too were bothered.

Councillor Reeder had referenced what improvements in the town centre had taken place with the new ward based working and examples of tangible improvement were in Rotherham East Councillors have supported community litter picks, clean up events and improvements to the subways, including the creation of new murals. In addition there had been significant multi-agency working in Eastwood that had had an impact on reducing anti-social behavior and improved the environment.

In Rotherham West Councillors have tackled fly tipping through installation of CCTV, organised community clean-ups, removed graffiti and encouraged reassurance campaigns.

Boston Castle Councillors have initiated activity to improve community safety on the Duke of Norfolk estate with the installation of CCTV, installation of barriers and general public reassurance.

Through the Streetpride Working Group Councillor Reeder would be aware the Council was looking to focus on some new ways of working with more flexible zonal based cleaning teams. The Council were keen to increase and support volunteering and looking at better ways to engage with Members and residents in identifying local issues.

It was acknowledged that there were still places in the Borough that were not as clean as they could be and the Cabinet Member was working with officers through the Streetpride Working Group, with other Members and communities to improve things.

In a supplementary question Councillor Reeder's main concern was around the Howard Building and its condition. The residents were asking her what they were paying their Council Tax for as the roads were a mess, the town centre was a mess and no one cared. Residents had to do their own recycling instead of the Council. There was no enforcement, mattresses and large items were just chucked out onto the pavement and the streets along Wellgate just looked Romania with rats on the Henley site. The play area in that area had been given over to the alcoholics and the drug addicts as the Council was failing in its duty to maintain it. Councillor Reeder was not talking about Wickersley and Ravefield, but why should the Council estates be any different for the people that lived on them. These residents were not second class citizens, but were living in third world conditions and it was Council tax payers who were paying wages of staff who were supposed to be delivering services.

Councillor Allen was not aware of the question in the above, but commented that many Members were distressed by what Councillor

Reeder had said. With regards to some of the specifics Councillor Reeder had an open door to the Cabinet Member and the Streepride Working Group to get answers to her concerns.

**(10) Councillor Carter** asked would the Council commit to becoming single-use plastic free in all Council owned buildings in the next 3 years?

Councillor Hoddinott was pleased to report that she had already tasked staff with investigating whether this was practicable.

**(11) Councillor Carter** asked given recent changes in Government policy towards tackling period poverty in school, would the Cabinet Member please outline the Council's next steps in ensuring freely available sanitary wear would be available in all Rotherham's secondary schools?

Councillor Watson confirmed the Government had followed the Scottish Government that they were going to provide free sanitary products in all English secondary schools and colleges, but they had missed a turn and not included the top end of primary schools, which needed to be addressed.

The Government plan was to commence in the next financial year when they planned to make Councils responsible, but would passport the money through Councils, although some cynics would realise that it was likely money would come in ring-fenced and then in a few years this was likely to be withdrawn and it then became a problem for Councils to fund.

In the interim before the Government funding was provided one local charity that had previously supported local secondary schools to further address and enhance this provision had enough funds to support three secondary schools in the borough with sanitary products and were currently talking to Heads which were the most appropriate. However, it was noted all schools did have a small delegated budget which included an amount allocated to address health, safety and welfare issues.

**(12) Councillor Carter** asked for the financial year 2018/19 how many people were employed and what was the cost to the taxpayer of staff employed for the purposes of trade union work?

Councillor Alam explained the latest available data for trade union facility time and associated costs was for the 2017/2018 financial year. Data for 2018/2019 was currently being collated and would be published by 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2019.

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there were six full time trade union convenors employed in the Council. The total cost to the Council for trade union activity was £192,797; equivalent to 0.1% of the combined school and non-school pay bill.

The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Carter that the Council valued strong workplace representation for its workforce and unlike some members of the Conservative Party the Council would not want to undermine that representation and the benefits it brought.

(13) Councillor Carter referred to reports which had seen a new bus shelter being installed in Maltby where no buses now run due to recent cuts. He, therefore, asked would the Cabinet Member make representations to SYPTE to move this redundant bus shelter to Bawtry Road in Brinsworth to replace the ones destroyed in accidents.

Councillor Lelliott explained the bus stop in question was paid for by the developer as part of the planning approval for the new Home Bargains store, which cited improvements to the bus stop on Tickhill Road when the bus route was in operation.

It was SYPTE, who installed and maintained bus stops, (not the Council), and who would contact Councillor Carter to discuss further.

**(14) Councillor Carter** asked what was the preferred option of the administration for the location and provision of a central library?

Councillor Allen reported the Council had been consulting on an option to move the Central Library to the Guardian Centre in the markets complex.

**(15) Councillor Cowles** referred on a visit to Eastwood he saw a mini bus touring the area at 10:00 a.m. with the driver knocking on doors. He asked him what he was doing and he said he was from a local school and had come to collect children who had failed to arrive at the expected time. He asked was the Cabinet Member aware of this practice?

Councillor Watson was not aware about the specific bus that Councillor Cowles saw, but he could confirm that schools all have staff members who routinely monitored attendance levels.

Where non-school attendance was an issue with for example a particular pupil or cohort of pupils in a school, the attendance leads would make home visits if for example a child had failed to report for school and the absence had not been reported by a parent/carer.

The home visit was to establish firstly that the child was safe and well and where persistent absenteeism was an issue, to challenge non-school attendance. In some cases as part of support strategies to improve the educational engagement and attendance of a small minority of pupils, this may include collecting them from home if they failed to report for school at the start of the school day. The Cabinet Member would prefer this rather than just giving in and encourage pupils to attend on a regular basis.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles referred to a number of children in his ward that attended Brinsworth School three miles away and

who would at the end of this year lose their free bus pass. Parents would be expected to pay for the journey or their children would be expected to walk. This action was due to a new crossing that had been installed near to Canklow on the A631. At this point if they walked they would have crossed this road three times, yet there was still the Canklow Bridge and Brinsworth Lane to navigate. The route was both unhealthy and unsafe and in response to the unsafe request parents were expected to take their children to school and bring them home and still go to work.

From the ages of 11 to 16 parents were not able to pay for bus fare to cover 12 miles a day to take their children to school along the A631 so chances of children crossing where they were expected to do was unlikely to take place. He asked, therefore, if it was possible to take children to school from Eastwood then they could be taken from Whiston. He asked that one, the bus passes be restored or two that Brinsworth School be asked to put on a bus at 7.45 a.m. to get children to school on time. Would the Cabinet Member respond to this issue?

Councillor Watson believed Councillor Cowles' point was that the journey for the children in his ward was an unsafe walking journey to school and was not for personal safety as was the law. The important thing was it was safe as a pedestrian. It was for parents to decide if on a personal basis it was safe for their child to walk.

If it was possible to have all the free school buses returned that the Government had removed, Councillor Watson would welcome this. However, the Council had to apply national guidelines as this was the policy of this Council.

**(16) Councillor Carter** asked how much had the Council spent in the last five years on travel by flights for staff and Councillors and if this could be provided in a list by year, and also the amount for any business class fares and their destinations.

Councillor Alam confirmed there had been three occasions of travel by flights in the last five years that the Council had paid for. The total cost was £1,548 broken down by year as follows:-

2017 - £728  
2018 - £758  
2018 - £62

These flights were taken by officers. No Councillors have been on any flights. None of them were business class flights and all were economy.

**(17) Councillor Cowles** confirmed he had received four complaints about rodents in back gardens in Sitwell and it was becoming a borough wide problem. Issues at Eastwood and Masbrough were known, but it was now around the library area in Wath and at the back of this building across the Narrow Twitchell. He held the Cabinet Member responsible

and asked what was she going to do about it?

Councillor Allen responded and confirmed there had been no increase in the number of requests for rodent treatments over the last three years and there was no evidence of an increase in rat problems across the Borough.

Rodents generally wanted shelter, food and water, so simple things like making sure any rubbish was contained in wheelie bins, or keeping gardens free of clutter would help.

In 2018/19 the Council issued fifty legal notices under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act to specifically require owners/occupiers to clear areas that were harbouring rats. In the same period the enforcement team dealt with nearly 1,300 issues with domestic waste, most of which were resolved informally, with the owner clearing up before action was taken.

If residents were experiencing rodent problems an appointment could be made by contacting the Council.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles described how on Monday night at the Parish Council meeting a gentleman described his property in Maltby where rats had come along the sewer and burrowed up through the floorboards. This showed the problem was increasing and the problem moved about.

The issue was when residents called pest control officers they were expected to pay for the removal of the rodents when they were not their rodents. It was hardly surprising there was a problem when you walked around with the wheelie bins being crammed full, the lids not closed properly and on some the lids were gnawed. The problem would not be controlled while this was happening. Rodents posed a health threat so it was suggested something needed doing and for it to be treated with the seriousness it deserved rather than having to put up with it.

Councillor Allen understood from her own perspective that no-one was more than six foot away from a rat. In terms of charges for rodent services there was a charge in private properties, but Council tenants were entitled to services free.

In terms of the concerns raised at the Parish Council meeting Councillor Allen asked if this had been reported and urged anyone that if there was an issue to contact the Authority to report it.

In a point of information Councillor Ireland sought clarification on the restriction on the number of questions that could be asked and was advised that this would come into effect from the next meeting in July, 2019.

**(18) Councillor Carter** asked how did the Council intend to encourage Rotherham's big businesses (such as those on the Advanced Manufacturing Park) to help address the fall in attainment below the national average between KS1 and KS5?

Councillor Watson explained the Council encouraged all schools work closely with a range of businesses including those on Advanced Manufacturing Park, which included:-

1. The Gatsby Benchmarks.
2. Rotherham Schools have now all got a link Careers advisor to support the development of business links as part of these benchmarks.
3. South Yorkshire Futures (a partnership of Hallam Institute of Education) was now working in partnership with business leaders to work more closely with schools and enable business leaders to speak, mentor and inspire school children.
4. The Advanced Manufacturing Park have excellent links with Rotherham schools and have offered a range of outreach events and opportunities for schools to gain both professional development for teachers and inspiration for their students and careers and apprenticeship advice for older students.

On a more practical level, the Council was engaged in delivering a number of funded and non-funded projects such as:-

- Linking schools with STEM ambassadors from the AMRC and its partners on the AMP and Waverley to increase student visits to the site.
- Working in partnership with businesses, schools and Well North (Rotherham) to develop and roll out a science summer school.
- Linking local businesses to schools, to help raise the aspirations of students by increasing employer encounters and experience of the workplace through career speed networking, mock interviews and other career related activities.
- Forging links between head teachers and businesses leaders, to help deliver skills and economic growth for Rotherham.
- Working with inward investors such as Gulliver's and education partners, to raise awareness of careers and progression pathways in primary/secondary schools.
- Facilitating meetings with careers leaders to promote the roll out of the Gatsby Benchmarks for good careers guidance and duties under the statutory guidance for careers.
- Promoting the use of Industry Champions in schools and roll out of the SYF Talent Bank – Inspiring the Future.
- Listening and supporting the views of young people to encourage schools to roll out a quality work experience model across

Rotherham.

- Supporting the annual Get Up to Speed with STEM and LEAF job and careers fairs held at Magna.

These issues were continually going on and it was important they were reinforced so children could see the career opportunities. This would be forwarded onto Councillor Carter so he could study in more detail.

**(19) Councillor Cowles** was aware that around the country parents were campaigning for 'school streets' which were closed to through traffic for 45 minutes when children were arriving and leaving and, for pollution monitoring. In a number of cases enlightened local authorities have made it happen and asked when would the Council decide to do this?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed officers were already working on a trial for the autumn term for a school street, Poor air quality was a significant concern for the Council, especially where there was exposure for vulnerable sections of society, such as around schools where children and young people are present. However, the Cabinet Member was happy to share any detail and evaluation of the trial with Councillor Cowles.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles had been informed and had some medical expertise that dirty air had the maximum impact on children as their lungs were growing. The single biggest congregation of children was directly outside schools in a morning and in the afternoon so would have real results. Parents of private schools were fearful of competition and the Council owed it to children to give them the best possible start in life. The Council needed to get on with this and explain to schools and parents why action was needed.

Councillor Hoddinott had no response to the comment above.

**(20) Councillor Cowles** referred to teachers facing increased verbal and physical abuse. He had checked the figures nationally and there had been a steady year on year increase. Schools could not be expected to deal with everything for children whose families fail them so asked what was the situation locally.

Councillor Watson explained incidents in the borough have remained broadly at a consistent level and the Council had not noticed any sustained significant increase in the number of incidents being reported on a termly basis. It appeared as though there would be fewer incidents this year than there was last year.

The Local Authority actively encouraged all schools and academies to report violent and aggressive incidents to the health and safety team to enable accurate recording to be maintained.

Violent and aggressive incidents were collated and reported to relevant Council departments to enable the escalation of support strategies where they were necessary. Violent and aggressive incidents tended to come from a place of fear on behalf of the student and so by offering to support social, emotional and mental health issues the Council could support such incidents happening again.

The Council was not being complacent although as it was not following the national upward trend with figures lower than last year. Situations were being closely monitored and appropriate action taken.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles described how a former teacher had returned to teaching and when asked a student to stop doing something was told what the student thought. He was not sure the figures substantiated the views of Councillor Watson and when he checked there were no statistical information or mechanics in place. He was not sure if Councillor Watson's view was correct or not, but had sought clarification.

Councillor Watson had received this from the monitoring department so would send on to Councillor Cowles.

**(21) Councillor Carter** asked how did the Council currently support disabled children in accessing Council swimming facilities.

Councillor Allen explained there were a range of measures in place at the Council's leisure centres to support access for disabled children to access swimming facilities included:-

- The availability of pool hoists at each site, along with hoists within specific changing rooms to assist disabled users.
- 1-1 swimming lessons are offered across the leisure centres and these were accessed by many young people with disabilities.
- Swimming teachers were upskilled to be able to differentiate in their lessons in order to respond to the ability and needs of the participants.
- The leisure centres facilitated group bookings for disabled users.
- Reduced cost of casual swimming and swimming lessons for individuals who qualified for a Rothercard.
- Disabled users could access discounted swims using the 1:1 cards and carers were free of charge.
- Family changing areas at all our facilities.
- All children on the swimming lesson programme up to the age of eight could access casual swimming sessions for free.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked if the Cabinet Member would the Council consider having specific swimming sessions for disabled children.

Councillor Allen confirmed the Rotherham Activity Partnership and other partners were focused on improving access and meeting the needs of a

wide range of adults and young people including those with oral disabilities and those on the autistic spectrum.

**(22) Councillor Carter** asked what actions have RMBC taken to tackle anti-social behaviour that was taking place along Wellgate, particularly late at night?

Councillor Hoddinott explained about the hard work taking place by Ward Members through the neighbourhood working with meetings with the Police. Councillors Alam, McNeely and Yasseen were actively discussing this with the Police and Officers to address the issues.

Increased patrols in the area were taking place to try to identify those responsible. Identifying an individual allowed officers to jointly address any offending, or anti-social behaviour. The mobile CCTV Camera for this Ward would also be redeployed to this area, with the agreement of Ward Councillors, in order to help identify individuals who were causing problems.

**(23) Councillor Carter** asked how much had the Council spent in the last five years on hotel stays by Council officers and Councillors, broken down by year and the amount spent?

Councillor Alam confirmed the Council's expenditure on hotels had fallen by 17% over the period:-

2018/19	£16,204
2017/18	£16,648
2016/17	£23,436
2015/16	£22,284
2014/15	£19,682

**(24) Councillor Carter** asked how did the Council currently support enabling those with learning disabilities such as autistic spectrum disorders from accessing Council swimming facilities.

Councillor Allen alluded to a previous answer, but in addition to enable those with learning disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorders, to access the Council's swimming facilities a number of provisions were provided. These included:-

- 1-1 swimming lessons are offered across the leisure centres and these could be accessed by adults and young people with learning disabilities.
- Where appropriate children with a learning disability were supported to access mainstream swimming lessons.
- Special Educational Needs classes were provided for young people across the leisure centres. There was a swimming teacher on poolside directing the class and a 2<sup>nd</sup> swimming teacher in the water to support the needs and development of the participants. The

classes were restricted to six students at any one time to maintain the quality of the lesson.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked whether the Council considered reducing the water temperature to make it easier for those with disabilities and sensory problems to access the pool.

Councillor Allen had never considered the water temperature, but would go and talk to the service and provide Councillor Carter with an answer in writing.

**(25) Councillor Carter** asked how much over the last five years broken down by year has the Council spent on external consultants.

Councillor Alam confirmed expenditure of external consultants had fallen by nearly 40% from its height in 2015/16.

Councillors Steele, Cowles, Albiston and Mallinder undertook a scrutiny review of the use of consultants and agency staff which reported in February last year. As part of this review, the definitions for agency, interim and consultancy staff have been established. The outcome from the review had determined the definition for Consultancy/Independent Contractors which was used by the Council to accurately monitor spend for these services.

Based on these definitions the amounts spent in the last two financial years were:-

2018/19 - £1,100,276  
2017/18 - £1,159,699

Information recorded for previous years may not in some cases correspond with the definitions now agreed, but were:-

2015/16 - £1,828,000  
2014/15 - £636,000

**(26) Councillor Carter** asked were there any Council imposed limits on Rotherham residents taking their own personal household waste to RMBC household waste recycling centres, such as limits to the amount of soil from their own garden that could be taken over a defined time period?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed Household Waste Recycling Centres were provided for residents to dispose of their Household Waste. Household Waste was best described as "items that you would take with you if you were moving house, or could already be disposed of during normal waste collections."

In addition to Household Waste disposal, the Council offered residents the ability to dispose small amounts of non-household waste and these were

detailed on the Council's web site. The A-Z of waste covered all items on the Council's website.

In terms of soil, because it did not meet the definition of Household Waste, the amount was restricted that could be brought to Household Waste Recycling Centres to five 25kg bags, every six months.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter understood that provided waste was not in a commercial vehicle, but in a personal or private vehicles how effectively were officers monitoring the usage of household or DIY waste.

Councillor Hoddinott referred Councillor Carter again to the A-Z of waste on the Council's website as it clearly set out and advised about the different waste. Whilst people would be assisted with small amounts, those undertaking large jobs would be expected to dispose of their waste via a skip.

**(27) Councillor Carter** asked how much had the Council spent in each of the last five years on catering and hospitality and asked this be listed by year, and also broken down with internal catering and hospitality, and external hospitality.

Councillor Alam explained details of expenditure for the cost code 'hospitality' had fallen by a third and were provided for each of the last five years below:-

2018/19	-	£55,741	Internal	-	£47,697	External	-	£8,044
2017/18	-	£55,465	Internal	-	£52,504	External	-	£2,961
2016/17	-	£66,342	Internal	-	£62,156	External	-	£4,186
2015/16	-	£89,185	Internal	-	£76,598	External	-	£12,587
2014/15	-	£82,084	Internal	-	£69,514	External	-	£12,570