

**SPECIAL MEETING - LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SCRUTINY
PANEL**

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.**

Date: Monday, 31 January 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
3. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Questions from members of the public and the press.

FOR MONITORING

6. Budget Monitoring Report as at November, 2004 (Pete Hudson, Strategic Finance Officer) (report herewith). (Pages 1 - 3)
7. School Balances and Planned Use (Pete Hudson, Strategic Finance Officer) (report herewith). (Pages 4 - 10)

FOR INFORMATION

8. Minutes of this Scrutiny Panel held on 15th and 20th December, 2004 (copies herewith). (Pages 11 - 24)
9. Minutes of a meeting of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 17th December, 2004 (copy herewith). (Pages 25 - 30)

The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:-

PRESENTATION - FOR DECISION - EXEMPT REPORT

10. Budget 2005/2006 - Gershon Savings - Education, Culture and Leisure Services Programme Area. (report not available electronically) - Acting Executive Director, Education, Culture and Leisure Services to report.

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Monday, 21 February 2005**

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor St.John

Vice-Chairman – Councillor License

Councillors:- Barron, Burke, Cutts, Dodson, Hodgkiss, Kaye, Lee, McNeely, Swift, Thirlwall and Turner

Co-optees:- Ms. C. Cox, Rev. A. Isaacson, Mr. P. Lennighan, Mr. R. Newman, Ms. S. Underwood and Mrs. J. Williams Mr. T. Belmega, Mr. T. Brown, Ms. J. Carroll, Mr. J. Dalton, Kath Henderson, Mr. G. Lancashire, Mr. J. Lewis, Miss E. Marsh, Mr. L. Morton, Mr. S. Radford and Mr. K. Stoddart

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisors
2.	Date:	21st December 2004
3.	Title:	Budget Monitoring Report as at November 2004 (All Wards)
4.	Programme Area:	Education, Culture and Leisure Services

- 5. Summary:** This is the sixth Budget Monitoring Report for the Programme Area in 2004/05, with a current forecast to overspend against budget for the financial year by £397k (0.25%).

This relates to budget pressures in both Culture and Leisure Services (£330k) and Education Services (£67k).

- 6. Recommendations:**

Members are asked to note the forecast outturn for 2004/05 based on actual costs to 30th November and forecast costs to the end of March 2005.

7. Proposals and Details: This is the sixth routine Education, Culture and Leisure Services Budget Monitoring Report for 2004/05.

The report forecasts a £397k overspend compared to budget. This relates to budget pressures in both Culture and Leisure Services (£330k) and Education Services (£67k).

The Culture and Leisure Services overspend primarily relates to continued pressure on sport and recreational facility budgets, as experienced in previous years (£380k). This is partly offset by a saving on the Library Service budget resulting from a moratorium on procurement spending and slippage in staff recruitment (£50k).

The Education Services forecast overspend relates to the under-recovery of income on the schools' HR contract with RBT (£70k), Strategic Management costs relating to clarification of ICT support service arrangements (£137k) and increased costs from revised transport contracts (£10k). This is partly offset by slippage on the implementation of the new Greasborough PRU (£150k) due to difficulties in staff recruitment, and which will now be operational from January 2005.

The forecast outturn as at November (£397k) is unchanged from the overspend reported in October. All possible action, detailed below, is being taken with a view to returning the Programme Area budget to a balanced position by the end of the financial year.

8. Finance: The current forecast as at 30th November is for the Programme Area to overspend the budget by £397k.

9. Risks and Uncertainties: Underlying risks presently identified and under evaluation are:

- Education Transport – A number of revised contracts exceeding the level of budgeted inflation were implemented from April 2004. Current forecasts indicate that this will result in a £10k overspend for the transport service.

Work to quantify potential savings from revised modes of operation and tighter implementation of transport policy is ongoing.

- Human Resources (Schools Traded Service) – Negotiations are ongoing with RBT regarding the treatment of income from Schools under the Strategic Contract.
- Recreation and Sport (Indoor Sports) – Management actions are currently focused on reducing overall Culture and Leisure costs to mitigate the forecast overspend in Recreation and Sport.
- The Programme Area is operating a vacancy management procedure with a view to identifying further areas of possible savings.

- Procurement of goods and services is being restricted to essential items only.
- 10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:** The forecast outturn as at 30th November shows an overspend (£397k) compared to the Programme Area and Corporate financial plan for 2004/05.
- 11. Background Papers and Consultation:** This report has been discussed with the Acting Executive Director of Education, Culture and Leisure Services and the Head of Corporate Finance.

Contact Name: Pete Hudson, Strategic Finance Officer, Ext. 2550,
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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisors
2.	Date:	18th January 2005
3.	Title:	School Balances and Planned Use
4.	Programme Area:	Education, Culture and Leisure Services

- 5. Summary:** This report advises of the level of School Balances as at the end of March 2004 and how the level of balances compares with previous years, and how the 63 Rotherham Schools with surplus balances in excess of 5% at the end of 2003/2004 intend to use these balances.

The number of schools with surplus balances in excess of 5% has reduced from 86 as at the end of 2002/03 to 63 as at the end of 2003/04.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That the levels and planned use of balances be noted**
6.2 That the Schools Finance Team work closely with those schools needing support to develop their financial management skills.

7. **Proposals and Details:** Appendices 1 to 3 show the amounts and movement in School Balances.

Appendix 4 shows how the schools with surplus balances in excess of 5% have advised they plan to utilise these balances.

It should be noted that combined balances (delegated budget plus money invested in 'declared savings') of £4,643,120 as at the end of 2003/04, reduced by £178,746 (3.7%) from £4,821,866 school balances at the end of 2002/03.

Concern was raised at the end of 2002/03 that Primary school balances were considered high – these reduced by almost 23% by the end of 2003/04 to a more appropriate level.

Concern was raised at the end of 2002/03 that Secondary school balances were considered too low – these increased to a more appropriate level by the end of 2003/04.

Concern was raised that at the end of 2002/03 Special school balances were also high. These balances further increased by over 56% by the end of 2003/04.

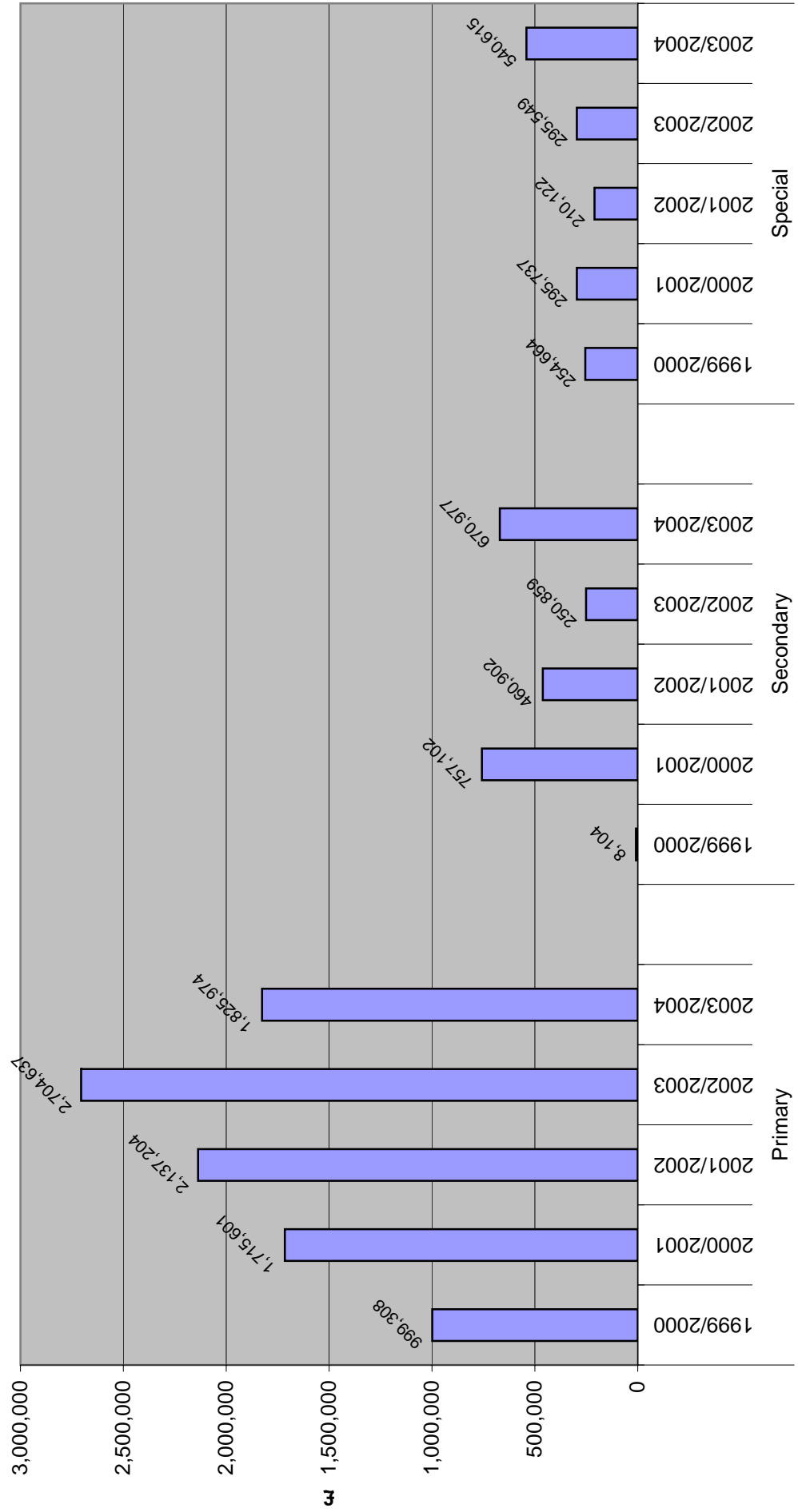
Overall balances per pupil

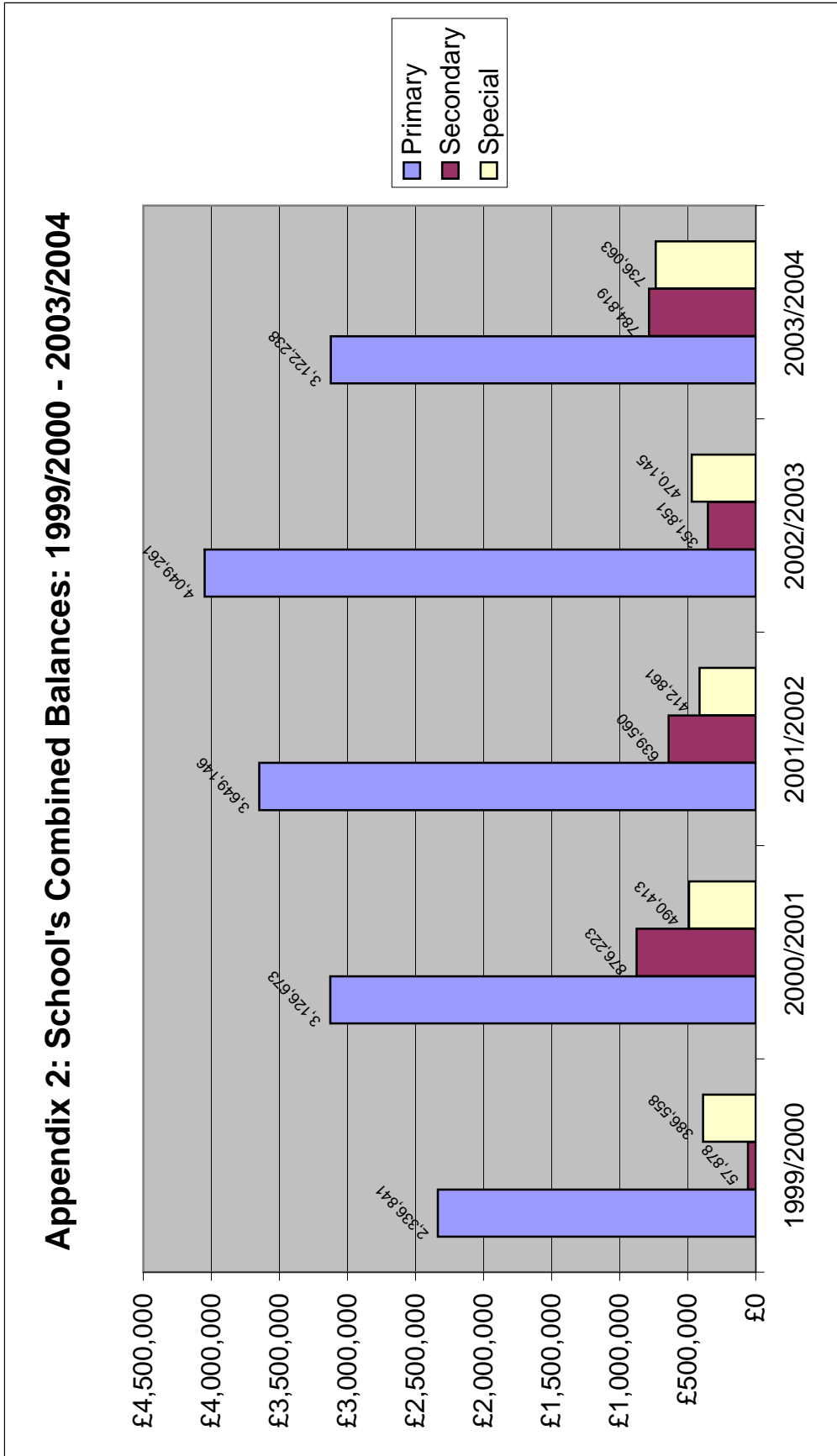
Sector	2002/03	2003/04	Change
Primary	£168	£133	-£35
Secondary	£19	£42	+£23
Special	£671	£1,060	+£389
Total	£113	£108	-£5

8. **Finance:** There are no financial implications arising from this report.
9. **Risks and Uncertainties:** Failure to challenge schools constructively on the planned use of their balances would be to abdicate a key role of the Council. Such challenge also facilitates the identification of schools in greatest need of support to improve their financial management skills.
10. **Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:** N/A
11. **Background Papers and Consultation:** Education, Culture and Leisure Services Outturn Report 2003/04 (Cabinet Member and Advisors ~ 29/6/04)

Contact Name: Pete Hudson, Strategic Finance Officer, ext 2550.
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Appendix 1: School's Delegated Budget Balances: 1999/2000 - 2003/2004

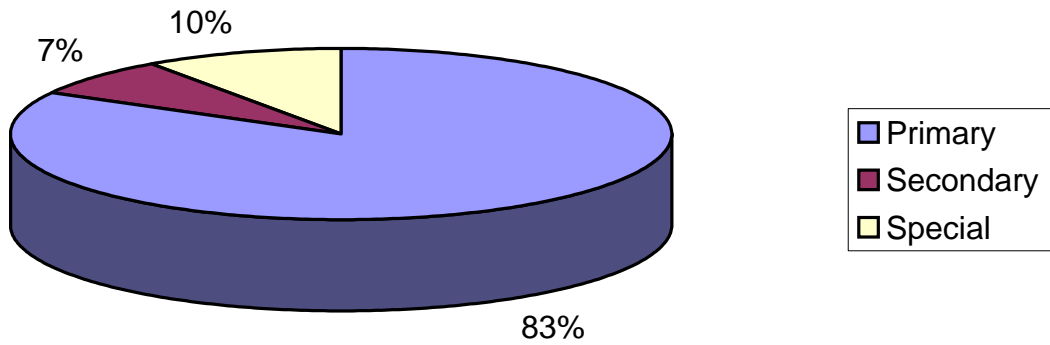




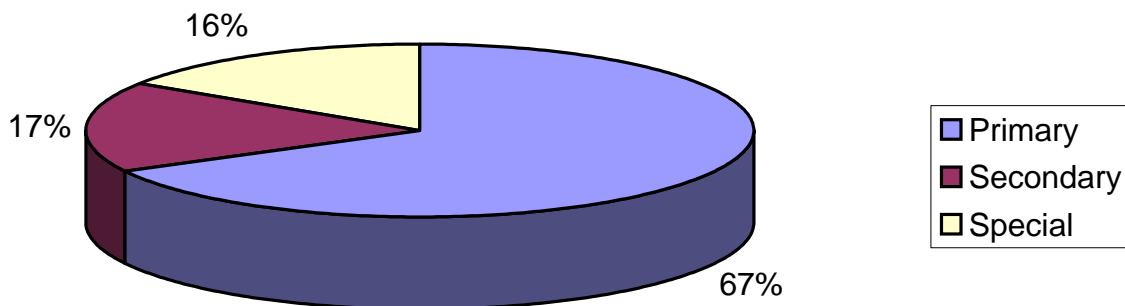
Appendix 3

Percentage Movement in Sector Combined Balances: 2002/03 to 2003/04

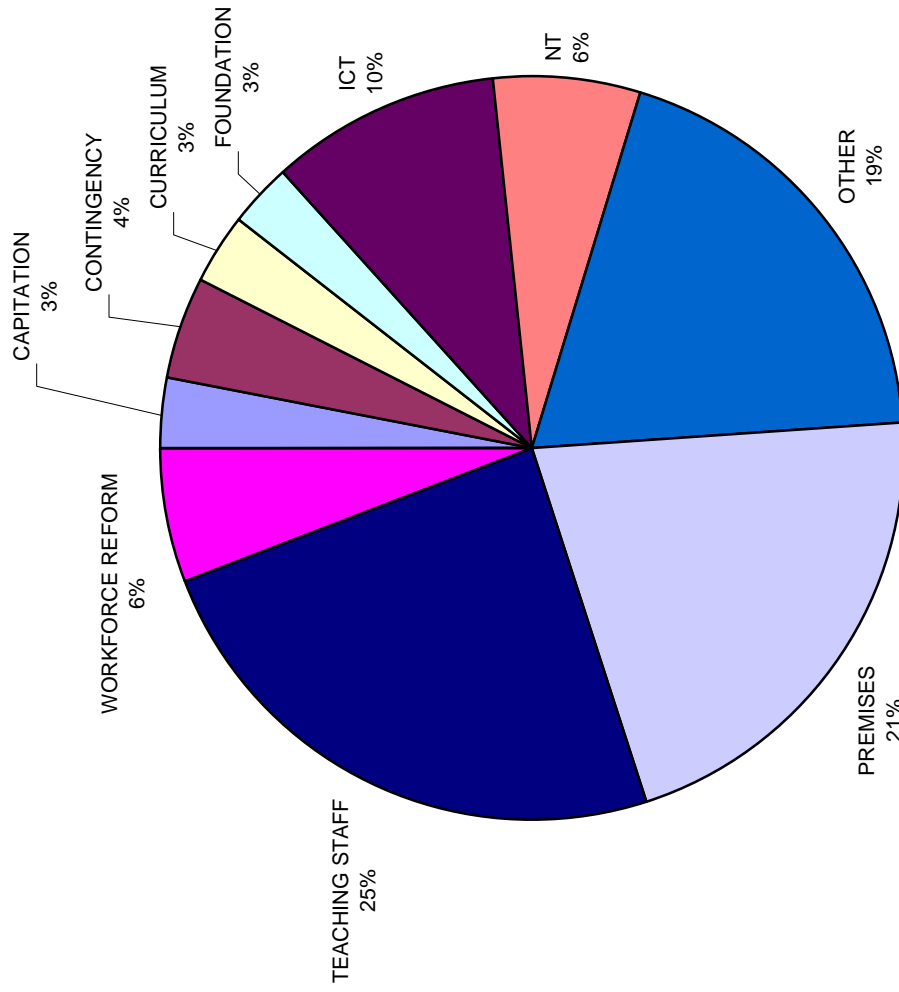
Combined School Balances: 2002/2003



Combined School Balances: 2003/2004



APPENDIX 4: ANALYSIS OF SCHOOLS INTENDED USE OF BALANCES



Area	Sum of Amount Earmarked (£)	Area												Grand Total
Schools	CAPITATION	CONTINGENCY	CURRICULUM	FOUNDATION	ICT	NT	OTHER	PREMISES	TEACHING STAFF	WORKFORCE REFORM	SEN		Grand Total	
Abbey	30,000				50,000	40,000	9,000	75,000	10,521				174,000	
Anston Park Infant													40,521	
Aston Fence J&I			4,051		21,500	10,000							35,551	
Aston Hall J&I		0						0			0	0	0	
Aughton Primary					8,000			18,100	26,000				52,100	
Badsley Moor Infant		24,454		8,697		20,000		1,900	40,000				95,051	
Badsley Moor Junior							31,161		24,985				56,146	
Bramley Grange Primary							40,000		37,000				77,000	
Brampton Cortonwood Infant					6,532	13,885							20,417	
Brampton the Ellis CE Infant								10,000	24,441				34,441	
Brampton the Ellis CE Junior								2,500		30,000			32,500	
Canklow Woods Primary			30,000				15,589	32,000					77,589	
Catcliffe Primary							25,216						25,216	
Dalton Foljambe Primary							7,000		22,000				29,000	
Ferham Primary		7,204			35,000	6,000	5,000	88,026	20,000				65,181	
Green Arbour						15,000		17,000					123,026	
Herringthorpe Junior		10,000	2,000					9,000					34,000	
High Greave Junior					23,000				22,084				54,084	
Kelford														
Kiveton Park Meadows Junior			7,000			8,000			12,000				27,000	
Laughton All Saints CE Primary							19,083						19,083	
Laughton J&I					6,000		18,000	10,100					34,100	
Listerdale (Dalton) J & I				10,000								17,428	27,428	
Maltby Craggs Infant					0		0	0	10,000				10,000	
Maltby Craggs Junior					25,000		13,000	10,000					48,000	
Maltby Hall Infant				0			0	0			0		0	
Maltby Manor Infant				31,439		14,094							45,533	
Maltby Manor Junior	11,609						11,000		30,904				53,513	
Meadowhall Junior							12,360	3,476				33,000	48,836	
Milton							75,757	70,000	34,000				104,000	
Newman								103,000					125,757	
Pope Pius X Catholic High School					50,000		3,505	3,000				28,282	181,282	
Rawmarsh Rosehill Junior		16,517	5,500										28,522	
Rawmarsh Ryecroft Infant		18,100			4,500				9,500				32,100	
Rawmarsh Thorogate J&I													30,000	
Redscope Infant		5,000					37,287						42,287	
Redscope Junior							46,249						46,249	
Sitwell Infant								13,863	18,270				32,133	
St Gerard's Catholic Primary (Thrybergh)						9,320							9,320	
St Mary's Catholic Primary (Herringthorpe)							39,761						39,761	
St Mary's Catholic Primary (Maltby)				7,885			24,329						32,214	
Swinton Fitzwilliam Infant					8,000		4,000	4,000	26,510				26,510	
Swinton Fitzwilliam Junior					9,000		11,690		5,000				21,000	
Swinton Queen Primary		21,577		13,500	9,000		10,000		10,008				65,775	
Thrybergh Comprehensive					12,000				120,700				142,700	
Thrybergh Fullerton CE Primary								4,500				8,000	12,500	
Thurcroft Infant	20,612	9,608											30,220	
Thurcroft Junior					11,934				22,000			30,000	63,934	
Todwick J&I		1,000				7,000		14,450	10,000				32,450	
Wath Central Junior	12,479					7,000		27,982	11,000			10,000	68,461	
Wath Victoria J&I							55,963						55,963	
Wentworth CE J&I		12,456	15,000		1,000	2,500	1,610	1,500	10,000				44,066	
West Melton J&I							28,314						28,314	
Whiston Grange			27,000						30,000				57,000	
Whiston J&I	9,976							6,515	5,000			5,000	26,491	
Wickersley Northfield Primary							73,349						73,349	
Woodsetts J&I			2,200		16,429	27,476		570	880				47,555	
Grand Total	84,676	125,916	92,751	71,521	287,895	180,275	544,874	599,831	684,780	166,710	0	0	2,839,229	

**LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
WEDNESDAY, 15TH DECEMBER, 2004**

Present:- Councillor St.John (in the Chair); Councillors Burke, License, McNeely, Swift and Thirlwall.

Also in attendance:- Mr. J. Dalton, Mr. P. Hawkrige, Mr. K. Stoddart and Mr. S. Radford

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Boyes, Cutts, Dodson and Hodgkiss, Kath Henderson, Mrs. J. Williams, Rev. A. Isaacson, Ms. C. Cox, Mr. T. Belmega and Mr. R. Newman.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest.

71. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

There were no questions from the press and public.

72. BUDGET 2005/06

The Head of Corporate Finance gave a presentation on the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2005/06. Copies of the Pressures and Growth Bids from the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the new Council Priorities were circulated for Members present.

The presentation focused on:-

- The Context of the Budget 2005/06
- Revenue Budget 2004/05 – A reminder
- Budget 2004/05 by Programme Area – A Reminder
- One Off Grant and Savings
- Revenue Budget 2005/06
- Priorities for Expenditure
- “A” List Growth Bids/Unavoidable Pressures
- “B” List Growth Bids
- “C” List Growth Bids
- Other Bids/Pressures/Uncertainties
- Options to Bridge the Gap
- Programme Area Gershon Proposals
- Medium Term Financial Strategy 2006/07 Projections
- Medium Term Financial Strategy 2007/08 Projections

The Scrutiny Panel asked a range of questions, several being around the efficiency proposals arising from Sir Peter Gershon's review of public sector efficiency (that has identified approximately £6½billion of savings

that could be made in back office, procurement, transaction service and policy-making functions). Members were concerned that it was not appropriate to apply a blanket savings target of 2.5% - particularly in Leisure Services areas, where there was a relatively small back office function and therefore less opportunity for savings.

Other questions/comments were in respect of:-

- (a) Collection Fund Surplus (currently at £2.4 m) – what has been the 5 year trend?
- (b) Contingency funds/reserves – how much is held in the various accounts?

The District Auditor requires the Council to risk assess the reserve fund. By the same token, contingency funds (including the new one proposed by the Chief Executive) should be risk-assessed. Who will be doing this?

- (c) Motorcycle nuisance post – is funding for this on the “A”, “B” or “C” list of Economic and Development Services?
- (d) Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) – how much is the Council expecting to receive this year in terms of reward grant?
- (e) Corporate IT Strategy – will this deliver the required Gershon savings with respect to computerising back office functions?
- (f) Gershon Savings – Members are not happy with the 2.5% top-slicing approach. Culture and Leisure does not have sufficient back office functions to make these efficiency savings. Members are concerned that front line services will be hit.
- (g) Gershon guidance/criteria – when does the Council expect to receive this?
- (h) Gordon Brown’s £1 billion to keep council tax down (RMBC share = £3 m) – Members are concerned that if this is a one-off, council tax will have to rise even more in 2006/07.
- (i) FSS (Formula Spending Share) – Members requested a breakdown by programme area.

In response to a query regarding the passporting of budgets directly through to schools, it was confirmed that this course of action was likely to be recommended to the Council by Cabinet.

Resolved:- (1) That the Head of Corporate Finance be thanked for his presentation.

(2) That a further report be submitted to the January 2005 meeting of this Scrutiny Panel with more detailed proposals on the ECALS budget for 2005/06.

(3) That Scrutiny be involved in budget planning at an earlier stage next year, for example, debating the priorities for the 2006/07 budget and working with estimated figures, prior to receiving the official settlement figure.

73. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE CABINET MEMBER, EDUCATION, CULTURE AND LEISURE SERVICES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings concerning decisions made by the Cabinet Member for Education, Culture and Leisure Services, held on the following dates, be received:-

- (a) 12th October, 2004
- (b) 19th October, 2004
- (c) 26th October, 2004
- (d) 2nd November, 2004
- (e) 9th November, 2004
- (f) 16th November, 2004
- (g) 30th November, 2004

74. MINUTES OF THE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

Resolved:- That the minutes of a meeting of this Scrutiny Panel held on 25th October, 2004 be received and accepted as a true record.

75. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 8th and 22nd October, and 12th November, 2004.

76. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEISURE/JOINT SERVICE CENTRE PROJECT BOARD

The Panel noted the content of the minutes of a meeting of the above Committee held on 14th October, 2004.

**LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
MONDAY, 20TH DECEMBER, 2004**

Present:- Councillor St.John (in the Chair); Councillors Cutts, Dodson, McNeely, Swift, Thirlwall and Turner.

Mr. R. Newman and Mrs. J. Williams Ms. J. Carroll, Mr. J. Dalton, Miss E. Marsh, Mr. S. Radford and Mr. K. Stoddart

Councillor Boyes was in attendance at the invitation of the Chairman.

David Hargreaves, Broom Allotment Society was invited to attend in relation to Item 8 (Allotments Review Progress Update).

Apologies were received from Councillors Hodgkiss, License and Kaye, Rev. A. Isaacson, Ms. K. Henderson and Mr. T. Belmega.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

78. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

79. BETTER LEARNING: BETTER LIFE

Mr. A. Bedford, Acting Executive Director, Education, Culture and Leisure Services, outlined the context and background to "Better Learning, Better Life" – the DfES 5 year Strategy for Children and Learners.

The presentation included a summary of the DfES document published this year and included information on the following aspects:-

- Raising achievement
- Inclusive learning communities
- Enjoyment and personal development
- Innovation and integration
- Excellence through partnership having regard to the diversity of learners and providers
- Relationships with schools
- Development of the Children & Young Peoples' Services
- Strengthening joint LEA/LSC working
- Designing and building the future together with emphasis on skills for life
- "All of us matter in Rotherham"

The main aim of the initiative was to raise achievements through inclusive

learning communities in order for people to attain enjoyment and achieve personal development.

The Learning & Skills Council is working closely with Rotherham Council and is of the opinion that partnership and collaboration across post-16 providers represents the best way forward for Rotherham rather than further structural change.

The presentation included the following examples of recent achievements:-

- Clifton Dance Studio/Music Work Stations
- CENT@Magna CAD/CAM
- Ferham Centre – Surestart and Helen Billington Sports and Arts Hall
- Bramley Grange Foundation Unit

The meeting raised the following issues:-

- need to publicise achievements in schools to the general public
- need for schools to continue to serve Rotherham as a whole despite the process of autonomy
- access to a broader curriculum
- role of Enterprise activity in helping children to exploit opportunities and in creating a better skilled workforce

Resolved:- (1) That the information contained in the presentation be received and noted.

(2) That the Scrutiny Adviser and Councillor Dodson liaise regarding arrangements for a visit to Clifton Comprehensive School by Scrutiny Panel members.

80. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT AS AT OCTOBER, 2004

Consideration was given to a budget monitoring report, as at October, 2004, submitted by Pete Hudson, Strategic Finance Officer.

This is the fifth Budget Monitoring Report for the Programme Area in 2004/05, with a current forecast to overspend against budget for the financial year by £397k (0.25%), a position which has not changed significantly from the previous month.

This relates to budget pressures in both Culture and Leisure Services (£330k) and Education Services (£67k).

The report gave details of budget pressures which primarily relate to continued pressure on sport and recreational facility budgets in Culture and Leisure Services and the under-recovery of income on the schools'

3C LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - 20/12/04

HR contract with RBT in the Education Services.

The situation was symptomatic of the underlying budget pressures and difficulties in managing the current budget limit with the present facilities.

All necessary steps were being taken in order to attain an outturn balance this year.

The Chairman commented on the need for this Scrutiny Panel to be fully aware of the budgetary position at the beginning of the new financial year.

One member referred to two issues regarding virement and the secondment of a member of staff appointed to deal with off road motor cycling.

The Acting Executive Director gave an assurance that the rules on virement had been fully adhered to.

In terms of the Greasborough Pupil Referral Unit, delays had not been due to budget considerations but to difficulties in recruitment and drainage problems. The earliest time the facility could have opened was the start of next term.

Resolved:- That the report be received and noted.

81. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS REPORT

Consideration was given to the Monitoring Report and Consolidated Action Plan which set out performance at the end of the 2nd quarter against 2004/05 targets, comparing performance against 2003/04 actuals and 2002/03 All England top quartile authorities.

Appendix A outlined the performance at the end of the 2nd quarter and gave an accumulative position where possible. Appendix B gave an updated summary of information regarding action being taken to address performance in areas where there is a significant shortfall against targets.

Risk categories were shown as low, medium and high.

Particular discussion took place on the following issue:-

- **Permanent Exclusions**

The Acting Head Inclusion Support Service reported that there had been eighteen exclusions this term to date. In comparison to last year it is slightly below figures. A great deal of work continued to be carried out to help Schools minimise exclusion.

One member expressed concern regarding variances in exclusion policy from school to school and therefore of a need for standard rules across the Authority. For example, a situation could arise whereby a

child is excluded and sent to another school who adopt a more lenient exclusion policy. In addition, early intervention was very important and the problem should be seen in a wider picture.

The meeting recognised the impact on society and was of the view that these children must be educated and offered help.

The Acting Head of Inclusion Support Services reported that following the review day with Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Group in November 2004, training sessions will be run for governors on the strategies available to schools to support inclusion and the role of the governors in the discipline committee meetings. A working group is also being drawn together to look at creating greater consistency between schools in their use of exclusion.

Resolved:- That the Performance Reports and Action Plans be received.

82. ALLOTMENTS REVIEW PROGRESS UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Allotments Officer, Green Spaces on progress to date since 23rd February, 2004 on issues covered by recommendations of the Allotments Review Sub-Group in 2002. This followed a period of increased contact with allotment associations and individual plot holders, and many of the actions described have been in response to matters arising.

Early indications are that recent efforts to improve the management and promotion of allotments are slowing down or reversing decline in usage. However, careful monitoring is required to establish whether such trends are sustained.

Accurate information was now available with regard to the extent of sites throughout the Borough.

The report set out the following issues:-

- allotment site repair and maintenance
- site security improvements
- development and partnership working
- audit and strategy
- marketing and promotion
- organisation and resources
- lettings

A debate took place and the following issues/questions were raised:-

1. How will partnerships affect the statutory rights of allotment holders in terms of change of use?

The Council was looking to protecting allotment holders by

introducing another site into the fold. Various organisations have interpreted it as allotments under standard tenancy agreement and not as a change in the use.

Grazing had been introduced on several sites over a period of thirteen years. In a situation where there is massive under-use of a site, the Council was looking to achieve maintenance of that land and generate separate funding streams.

2. Material left by PCT after working on Clifton site and the need for security fencing. It was essential that the land be re-let as it was a re-designated allotment site.

There was a fundamental issue and this was being addressed.

It was agreed that Councillor Dodson and the reporting officer liaise on this matter.

David Hargreaves thanked officers for the dedication and hard work they have undertaken both on the Green Spaces Review and allotments review and for the substantial improvement over the last few months. David looked forward with confidence to the future development of allotments in Rotherham.

David Hargreaves felt it was a good time for the Scrutiny Panel to focus on the allotment strategy on a wider basis in view of the present demand to maintain space.

David Hargreaves raised an issue regarding land at Dalton Lane and whether this Scrutiny Panel had been involved in the disposal of the allotments and scrutiny of this matter. A comparison was made with the disposal of the Broom allotments several years ago and a legal procedure to be complied with in terms of where the money from the sale of such land should go. Minutes of a meeting of the Property Board held on 12th May, 2004 had not discussed this issue.

The Green Spaces Manager pointed out that the Broom allotments had been classed as a statutory allotment which he believed was not the case at Dalton. If this is correct, and in accordance with the 1908 Allotment Act and Government criteria, there would be no legal obligation for any income generated through the sale of land at Dalton to be put back into the allotment.

It was suggested that this matter be discussed at a later meeting when facts had been established.

One member suggested that the outcome of the allotment scrutiny review which had recommended a strategy, be pursued through Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee, Cabinet and ultimately the budget process.

Resolved:- (1) That the Chair of this Scrutiny Panel liaise with the Green Spaces Manager on the process of referring this matter to the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee.

(2) That the Libraries, Museums and Art Manager, in conjunction with the Green Spaces Manager, raise awareness of the correct procedure for use of receipts from disposal of allotment land at the relevant internal meeting, prior to consideration by the Property Board.

83. SCHOOLS PFI PROJECT UPDATE: AUTUMN TERM 04

The meeting considered an update report of the Strategic Leader Resources and Information on the current situation with regard to the PFI Project.

The contract is progressing extremely well and includes the rebuilding/refurbishment of 15 schools and their facilities management for a period of 30 years from 1st April 2004.

By December 2006, there will be new schools for Coleridge, Ferham, Kimberworth, Maltby Craggs Infant, Maltby Craggs Junior, Meadowhall and Thornhill Primaries; and Winterhill, Wingfield and Wath Secondaries.

Additionally, through the amalgamation of other funding, new key Young Person's Centres will be provided at Thornhill Primary and Wath Secondary; and significantly refurbished centres at Wingfield, Clifton, Thrybergh and Winterhill Secondary Schools.

The Council had been awarded £71.4m of PFI credits from the DfES as a contribution towards the cost of the scheme. In real terms, the figures reflect an overall benefit of 20% to the pupils of Rotherham schools.

Work was presently twenty months into the programme and the capital expenditure at the end of last month was £54 million. All work is on programme or ahead of schedule.

A question and answer session ensued regarding the nature of work on individual sites and its completion.

Particular discussion took place regarding the lack of library facilities at Thorpe Hesley and Wickersley.

It was confirmed that a library would not be built at Wickersley from the PFI scheme. However, the use of other buildings in Wickersley was being considered and would form the basis for future consideration, as and when funding is available within the capital fund. Funding would then have to be identified for additional revenue costs.

Members of the Scrutiny Panel raised the following question in particular

with regard to a library in Wickersley:-

- Was it possible to include a public library as part of the PFI scheme at Wickersley school?

Security was an issue on school sites. An ideal solution would be a purpose-built library at Wickersley and Thorpe Hesley.

One member praised the present system of shared community funding for a library at Aston which was working well and was a good model for the future.

- Was it possible to obtain Government funding?

Despite the tremendous progress with PFI funding in schools, new libraries would not be achieved through such funding as the projects are too small.

In terms of the National picture on PFI allocation, the initiative continues to roll out but is now linked to the DfES' Building Schools for the Future. An announcement regarding the second and third waves of this initiative had recently been made. Rotherham Council was hoping to be in one of these waves, but is not and therefore it is likely that Rotherham will join the scheme in 2009/2010. The intention being to rebuild or significantly refurbish every Secondary School in the country within the next fifteen years.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That the Libraries, Museums and Arts Manager submit a report to a future meeting on work presently taking place to identify funding opportunities for new libraries.

84. LONGDENDALE UPDATE

The meeting considered a report compiled by Rod Norton, Young People's Services Manager, on the current situation with regard to Longdendale Outdoor Education Centre.

The report set out the time scale for rebuilding of the Centre since the fire in 2002, which would require a start in April 2005 for a completion date of August, 2005.

The report explained that residential provision has been accommodated at Crowden Youth Hostel since the fire. Crowden Youth Hostel has not been popular with some of the traditional users and as a result they have not booked the Longdendale centre.

The report outlined the position with regard to user groups, the cost to RMBC and projected costs for 2005 onwards.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That a further report be submitted in six months time.

85. HABERSHON HOUSE UPDATE

The meeting considered a report compiled by Rod Norton, Young People's Services Manager on the current situation with regard to Habershon House.

The report set out information regarding the following:-

History
Facilities Provided
Usage
Cost to RMBC

A discussion took place on the following issues:-

- schools' preference for private hotels rather than Habershon House/threat this poses for the facility
It was hoped that the update to the building would put Habershon in a stronger competitive position. Prices were fairly competitive with other provision in the region. Wider age groups use the facility and external groups book the House over holiday periods.
- need to look at incentives to encourage schools to use facilities more and assess the facility in terms of its viability
- to market the safe environment provided by the facility
- timing of the refurbishing work during a busy period

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and noted.

(2) That a further update report be submitted in six months time outlining the long term usage and viability of Habershon House, and how much the facility is being used each season, once the House is operating normally after recent extensive building works.

86. USE OF FREWARE/SHAREWARE IN LIBRARIES

Consideration was given to a report of the Libraries, Museums and Arts Manager on the use of freeware and shareware on the People's Network of computers in libraries.

Such software can be downloaded onto portable disks through the Network, but not onto the hard-drives of the computers. This is to ensure that the network is not compromised through the downloading of

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inappropriate material or viruses.

With regard to the software installed on the People's Network computers, the Library Service has followed the corporate guidance that requires the use of Microsoft products. In terms of licensing, a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement had been entered into and RBT staff are trained to provide support to Microsoft products and there are additional charges to any Service wanting support for 'non-standard' products. The agreement with Microsoft ensures a 70% discount on software to users within the ECALS Programme Area due to its educational activity.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

87. CULTURE, LEISURE AND LIFELONG LEARNING IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Consideration was given to an update report on the progress made by Cultural Services following the Regular Performance Assessment (RPA) carried out by the Audit Commission in January 2004.

The RPA inspection of Cultural Services identified a broad range of achievements and successes, it also highlighted a number of areas the service should focus on in order to sustain the goal of continuous improvement. A table contained within the report identifies the areas for improvement and the progress made to date.

An improvement plan was established in January 2004 and is currently in its 11th month of implementation. In line with changes in corporate priorities, work was devolving and significant progress is being made on all of the areas identified by the inspection.

Regular meetings would continue to take place with representatives of the Audit Commission to ensure that future inspections are deemed to be robust.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

88. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Resolved:- That the minutes of a meeting of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 26th November, 2003 be received.

(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN ORDER TO ALLOW THE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO BE TAKEN ON THE MATTER WITHOUT DELAY)

89. ROTHERHAM SHOW

An issue was raised regarding a degree of negative press coverage following the Rotherham Show in September regarding the cost of subscriptions to exhibitions.

One member believed the problem had been that as some exhibitors did not know what they were going to exhibit until the actual day of the Show, this had then meant an expectation to pay double under the terms of this year's policy.

Resolved:- That the Festivities and Activities Officer, Culture, Leisure and Lifelong Learning be asked to submit a report to a future meeting on this matter.

90. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (contains details on the amount of expenditure proposed to be incurred).

91. SCHOOLS MUSIC SERVICE UPDATE

In accordance with Minute No. 151 of a meeting of this Scrutiny Panel held on 22nd March 2004, consideration was given to an update report of the Libraries, Museums and Arts Manager on the work of the Schools Music Service.

The report explained that usage has stabilised at approximately 2150 children (a drop from a peak of 2593 in December 2002). There are 93 schools using the Service. The details of the schools and the proportion of fees covered by schools/parents is contained in Appendix 1.

One member praised the music facilities at Thurcroft and the standard of performance by the children present at a recent visit, and raised a point regarding whether under-privileged children were precluded from using the music service due to the costs. If this was the case, it was hoped that costs could be further considered at the point of budget monitoring in future.

The Libraries, Museums and Arts Manager referred to an Awards for All initiative which enabled bids to be submitted towards the cost of instruments for local brass bands.

For one group of musicians this had enabled older instruments to be used by a training band.

One member made reference to a recent television programme which had highlighted a resurgence of music in schools. A great deal of the

instruments were funded by the National Lottery.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

(Exempt under Paragraph 8 of the Act – amount of expenditure proposed to be incurred under any particular contract for the supply of goods or services).

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
17th December, 2004

Present:- Councillor Stonebridge (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Clarke, Doyle, Hall, Hussain, R. S. Russell, St.John, Sangster and Whelbourn.

Also in attendance were Councillors Ali, Binnie, Havenhand, Jack and Walker for item 77 below.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors License and G. A. Russell and also from Councillors Darby and Kirk for item 77 below.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

77. FUTURE PLANNING MODEL FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

John Gomersall, Executive Director, Social Services, presented the submitted report relating to the above which had been considered by the Cabinet Member for Social Services at a meeting on 26th November, 2004.

The report set out proposals for changes to the existing planning structure in order to simplify and improve decision making across Health and Social Care.

Following the review of Rotherham's Mental Health Services it was recommended that the commissioning process be looked at as it had developed into a confusing mix of provider and commissioning arrangements.

At the Health and Social Services away day last year, a new planning structure was discussed which was based on the Children and Young Peoples model. This model was broadly supported with a few suggested amendments. The amended model was submitted with the report.

It was necessary to consider the impact on the PCT and Social Services as they were both commissioner and provider of services. Clear structures and reporting mechanisms needed to be established. Effective performance management needed to be embedded into any future planning structure.

John Gomersall outlined the make up, terms of reference and role of the following :-

- Executive Groups for the Boards
- Adults Board
- Learning Disability Board
- Mental Health Board

- Health Service Capacity Board
- Task Groups
- Chair and Chief Officers' Group
- Health and Social Well-being Partnership
- Rotherham Children and Young People's Board

A question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered :-

- Elected Member input
- Young persons perspective
- Board memberships
- Powers of the Boards
- Selection criteria for Board memberships
- Co-optees
- Government's relationship and arrangements
- Budgets
- Frequency of, and venues for, meetings
- Need for an all Member seminar
- Induction training

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted and the proposals be welcomed particularly for the clarification of issues/arrangements for health.

(2) That further reports be submitted when budget issues arise.

78. BUDGET PROCESS PRESENTATION

The Chairman referred to the presentations on the budget process that had been given to each of the individual scrutiny panels and invited the Head of Corporate Finance to update the Committee on any developments since the preparation of the presentation.

The Head of Corporate Finance outlined developments and referred to :-

- CMT away day and Gershon savings when the rules were not known. Need to review and re-visit in the light of receipt of the rules
- allocation of pay and price increases to programme areas
- schools budgets
- 2½% savings
- final settlement was due in mid January
- issue of population changes was not in the original settlement

- issues subject to further negotiation
- implications of the employer's increased pension contribution
- risks of building extra monies into the base budget
- best known position had been reported to Cabinet/ CMT on 13th December, 2004

The Chairman and respective chairs of the Scrutiny Panels outlined the issues that had arisen out of the budget presentations at their meetings.

Many common themes had arisen out of the respective discussions at the Scrutiny Panel meetings and the detailed lists were to be analysed and pulled together in one over arching report of issues for further consideration.

The Head of Corporate Finance responded to issues raised.

Particular reference was made to the following :-

- budget timetable/timescale issues for comment
- scrutiny suggestions/recommendations not taken on board
- Commutation Adjustment Reserve
- Invest to Save Bids
- Gerson Savings and rules
- use of savings from closure of swimming pools
- closing down of accounts
- performance
- establishment of post of Parish Council Liaison Officer
- Domestic Violence Co-ordinator posts and safety issues
- Funding for the Off Road Motorcycling Prevention Officer

The Head of Corporate Finance undertook to work through the lists and liaise with Corporate Management Team.

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted.

(2) That Cath Saltis prepare a comprehensive report on the issues raised in the Scrutiny Panels with a view to reporting back to Corporate

Management Team and Cabinet. Such report to include a request for further funding to facilitate the post of Off Road Motorcycling Prevention Officer being made a permanent post.

79. CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

Further to Minute No. 178 of the meeting of this Committee held on 26th March, 2004, the Committee considered the half yearly progress report on the above as submitted and presented by Michael Walker, Planning and Quality Principal Officer. Also in attendance was John Mansergh, Performance and Development Officer, Neighbourhoods who elaborated on issues relating to Neighbourhoods.

It was also noted that the report covered the first half of 2004/05 and performance on handling complaints across the Council had risen markedly. Serious consideration was being given to the lessons learnt from the complaints received and a summary of both performance and improvements made was detailed in the report. Also summarised in the report were a number of developments to improve the Council's approach to complaints which had been progressed through the Complaints Officer Forum.

The report covered :-

- key points arising
 - (a) the overall number of complaints received were marginally less than last year
 - (b) handling of complaints had improved
 - (c) types of complaints received were spread across categories
- lessons learnt from the complaints received
- learning from suggestions received through the Corporate Suggestions procedure
- other developments including recommendations acted upon

A question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered :-

- Neighbourhoods best practice
- Audit trails
- CPA assessment

- Access to services inspection
- surgery system

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted.

(2) That the concerns regarding the surgery system be taken on board.

(3) That support be given to the proposal that further work needs to be taken forward by Complaints Officers and RBT, as follows:-

(a) to ensure an effective approach to handling complaints following the establishment of a One-Stop Shop

(b) to assess any issues involved in Social Services difficulties in processing Stage 1 Complaints

(4) That support be given to the proposal that a corporate 'Learning from Customers' workshop be held with managers and staff from all programme areas in early 2005, building on the process used within the Neighbourhoods Programme Area and including renewed consideration of how we use customer suggestions.

80. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th November, 2004 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

81. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported on the following issues :-

(a) Councillor St. John reported on a very good one day scrutiny session by the Lifelong Learning Opportunities Scrutiny Panel regarding Education exclusions

(b) Councillor Atkin reported :-

- that the review of wardens and caretakers was ongoing
- that the review of bereavement services was to commence in the next two months
- that there was to be a presentation on the Waste Management Strategy to the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 27th January, 2005

(c) Councillor Doyle reported that the Working Party on Learning Disabilities would not be meeting until the new year.

(d) Councillor R. S. Russell reported :

- that there was to be an update in the new year on off road motorcycling
- that the benefits take up review was to commence in January, 2005

(e) Councillor Sangster reported :

- that a questionnaire was to be sent to tenants at the end of February, 2005 as part of the Housing Estates review
- that the next meeting of the Health Services Working Group was scheduled for 14th January, 2005
- that the Health Services Working Group had examined the proposals to utilise the former medical centre at St. Ann's as a drug treatment centre, including analysing the petition received. It was found that health officials had done everything they should have and that a large proportion of the names included in the petition were not from the area. The Working Group had found no grounds to oppose the proposals. A liaison group was to be formed.

(f) Councillor Stonebridge reported:

- briefly on the Cabinet/CMT away day held on 14th December, 2004 which overall had been useful. However there were issues regarding the scrutiny function and the need for this Committee to meet Cabinet/CMT was reiterated.
- that issues had been identified from a further meeting of the LSP Review Group
- that there was a potential need in the new year to look at the use of consultants following concerns regarding the quality of service provided

82. CALL-IN

There were no formal call in requests.