

## CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY COHESION

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate  
Street, Rotherham.

Date: Monday, 26 September 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m.

### A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for Absence.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th July, 2005 (herewith). (Pages 1 - 5)
6. LGA Conference Delivering Sustainable Communities to be held at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham on 13th-15th February, 2006.  
*To consider the attendance of one Member to the above.*
7. Transfer from Chief Executive's Office to Neighbourhoods (report herewith) (Pages 6 - 9)
8. Rotherham Compact (report herewith) (Pages 10 - 13)
9. Update on Named Voluntary and Community Sector Projects (MAARI and RREC) and Community Cohesion (report herewith) (Pages 14 - 16)
10. Progress report on the Performance of the Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group (herewith) (Pages 17 - 37)
11. BME Strategy Group (report herewith) (Pages 38 - 45)
12. Draft Sustainable Development Position Statement (report herewith) (Pages 46 - 59)

13. Exclusion of the Press and Public.  
The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relates to financial assistance provided by the Council)
14. Externally Funded Projects - Succession Planning (report herewith) (Pages 60 - 70)  
Exempt under Paragraph 5 of the Act – information relates to financial assistance provided by the Council)
15. Date and Time of Next Meeting - Monday, 24th October, 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

**COMMUNITY COHESION**  
**25th July, 2005**

Present:- Councillor Robinson (in the Chair); Councillors Ali, Burton and Sangster (Policy Advisers)

**12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27TH JUNE, 2005**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion held on 27th June, 2005 be approved as a correct record.

**13. MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-GROUPS AND PANELS**

The Chairman confirmed that memberships were now finalised.

**14. NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT**

Andrew Balchin, Head of Neighbourhood Development Services, presented the submitted report detailing the recommendations of the independent Neighbourhood Management Study which had been subject to consultation with all partners.

The Study identified the scope for developing new approaches to service delivery based on neighbourhood management principles across the Borough, identified the areas of agreement and some of the barriers to be overcome, and made recommendations on the way forward.

The Rotherham Partnership Board had accepted the conclusions and recommendations at its meeting on 12th May, 2005 a summary of which was included in the report.

The key roles were as follows :-

- Develop a common definition of Neighbourhood Management and agree a set of principles around budgets; commitment/empowerment; resolving service delivery issues at a neighbourhood level; boundaries; cost effectiveness and local decision making set within the strategic context
- Develop a Neighbourhood Management model which partners can 'buy in' to and takes account of the findings of this study. For example, the future role of Area Assemblies making the link between local communities and service providers.
- Ensure all defined neighbourhoods in Rotherham develop plans for implementing Neighbourhood Management
- Monitor and update partner organisations on the progress of Neighbourhood Management, and review the long term impacts.
- Address, working with partners, the issue of longer term funding and coverage of community partnerships.

- Oversee the development of joint local intelligence systems which ensure no one partner agency is vulnerable.
- Ensure Neighbourhood Management is 'championed' across Rotherham by the Rotherham Partnership.
- Oversee the work of local current Neighbourhood Management activities receiving reports and ensuring action learning is shared and informs the development of a Neighbourhood Management model for Rotherham.

The recommendations of the Study had been supported by the Corporate Management Team and the Cabinet.

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

- Neighbourhood Management Co-ordination Group
- key roles
- role of area assemblies
- integrated services
- Community Partnerships
- working with informal networks
- community representation with community knowledge
- Children and Young People's Services
- Diversity Issues

Resolved:- (1) That the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Management Study be supported.

(2) That a progress report be submitted in three months time.

## 15. NEIGHBOURHOOD BOUNDARIES

Andrew Balchin, Head of Neighbourhood Development Services presented briefly the submitted report regarding principles to be adopted in considering and agreeing a common approach to defining the geographical basis of "neighbourhoods" in Rotherham to support the delivery of Neighbourhood Management.

The proposals had been supported by Cabinet at its meeting on 6th July, 2005.

The Neighbourhood Management Study (Minute No. 14 refers) had highlighted a lack of clarity regarding the definition of a neighbourhood. In addition, a number of stakeholders had identified the need for greater alignment between service providers working to common boundaries.

A series of draft neighbourhood boundaries had been determined through an initial assessment by the Neighbourhoods Programme Area and South Yorkshire Police. The boundaries had been presented for consultation

with partners at the Chief Executive Officers Group in April, 2005 to determine whether they provided a suitable building block for the development of partnership strategies for community planning and service delivery.

It was vital that a common definition of neighbourhoods maximised opportunities for providing a good "fit" with existing successful local initiatives and promoted new opportunities for joined up service delivery. The success of neighbourhood management would depend on achieving buy in from all partners. The further work proposed would strengthen the development and provide the necessary time to achieve agreement with key partners.

The report set out :-

- the three main outcomes for local communities that the Chief Executive Officer Group agreed Neighbourhood Management would contribute to
- considerations towards defining neighbourhood boundaries as agreed by the Co-ordination Group
- issues to be taken forward by the Co-ordination Group relating to the neighbourhood boundaries as put forward by the Chief Executives Group

Discussion ensued and particular reference was made to discussions being held with Education representatives and headteachers the progress of which would form part of the next update report.

Resolved:- (1) That the area assembly boundaries be accepted as the starting point to take forward proposals in relation to neighbourhood management.

(2) That the proposed work of the Neighbourhood Management Co-ordination Group in relation to PCT restructuring, integrated children's services, Area Assemblies and Community Partnership, be supported.

(3) That a further report on the outcomes of this work be submitted in September, 2005.

(4) That a further report be submitted from the Neighbourhood Management Co-ordination Group on the perceived benefits of enhancing arrangements above the seven area assemblies to provide a proportionate response to the strategic planning issues from all the partner agencies.

(5) That a further report be submitted on the perceived benefits of identifying common boundaries for much smaller areas for intensive management initiatives, the provision of day to day services or data

capture purposes.

#### **16. COMMUNITY RELATIONS UPDATE**

Colin Bulger, Head of Policy and Partnerships, updated members on the present position regarding the above.

It was highlighted that, since the London bomb incidents on 7th July, 2005, the Council, together with its partners at South Yorkshire Police, the Voluntary and Community Sector and Faith Communities, had taken proactive action to reassure the community and maintain community relations. Specific actions were outlined.

It was stressed that the focus was on promoting unity, challenging racial discrimination and reprisals, and community safety.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

#### **17. UNITY CENTRE**

Colin Bulger, Head of Policy and Partnerships, updated the Members on the latest position regarding the above, indicating that, although the terms of the lease had been agreed, completion could not take place pending further work in respect of insurance for the building and an asbestos survey.

General discussion ensued regarding the St. Ann's Building and potential options for the site.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

(Councillor Sangster declared a personal interest in the above item)

#### **18. DIVERSITY FORUM/MAARI**

Colin Bulger, Head of Policy and Partnerships, reported that, following the closure of the Racial Equality Council (REC), the MAARI project had been working under the management of the Diversity Forum which was a voluntary sector project.

A new project appraisal had been completed and the SRB Management Committee, at its meeting on 14th July, 2005, had agreed for the project sponsor to be transferred formally from the REC to the Diversity Forum,

The Equalities and Diversity Manager had held meetings with the Chair of the Diversity Forum and the Accountable Body regarding the financial arrangements for MAARI.

In the short term, 2005/06 it was proposed that monies used previously to fund the core costs of the REC be used to maintain the MAARI project.

A service level agreement was being drafted and would be submitted to the next meeting for approval.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

(Councillor Ali declared a personal interest in the above item)

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Cabinet Member, Community Cohesion take place on Monday, 26th September, 2005 commencing at 10.00 a.m.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following to prevent any unnecessary delay in processing the matter referred to)

**20. 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 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (financial assistance provided by the Authority).

**21. DINNINGTON COMMUNITY CENTRE - LEGAL FEES**

Colin Bulger, Head of Policy and Partnerships, presented briefly the submitted report requesting financial assistance for the legal fees relating to the transfer of trusteeship for Dinnington Community Centre.

Resolved:- That the request for £3,697.59 from the Infrastructure and Corporate Initiatives Budget be approved for the Dinnington Community Centre legal fees.

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>26 September 2005</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Transfer of Staff from Chief Executive's Office to Neighbourhoods</b>
4.	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods</b>

**5. Summary**

The report details the transfer of existing members of staff from Chief Executives Office to Neighbourhoods and the creation of a new unit to accommodate them.

**6. Recommendations**

**THAT CABINET MEMBER IS ASKED TO NOTE THE TRANSFER OF STAFF FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S TO THE NEIGHBOURHOODS PROGRAMME AREA.**



## 7. Proposals and Details

There are currently 13 full time and 2 part time members of staff who are employed, line managed and funded through Chief Executives. All of the posts are funded using external funding from Objective 1, SRB, NRF and ODPM. All staff are employed to work directly with communities at a neighbourhood level.

In order to have the most impact in terms of influencing and shaping delivery it is being proposed that staff should be employed by a programme area which is focused around service delivery rather than a having a focus on strategic management and policy development. In order to ensure maximum effectiveness of having these workers situated within Neighbourhoods, a new unit will be created to accommodate all of the existing members of staff along with the 11 full time and 8 part time workers who will be employed from September 2005 using Objective 1 funding.

All staff will be directly line managed by a new post of Community Partnerships Co-ordinator. This post has been created to oversee the development of this new unit and to contribute to the development of a model of Neighbourhood Management as proposed in the independent study carried out by the Rotherham Partnership into Neighbourhood Management (May 2005).

### Background and Rationale

In 2003 RMBC was approached by 7 Community Partnerships and Objective 1 to act as project sponsor for various staffing projects. All of the community partnerships, due to limited capacity amongst boards and management committees, were not in a position to directly employ the members of staff themselves. Consequently, Chief Executive's Office, given the urgency to spend Objective 1 funding, "stepped in" to act as the project sponsor.

The Community Partnerships asking RMBC to act as Project Sponsor were:

- Canklow Community Partnership (Boston Ward)
- DTH Community Partnership (Silverwood, Valley, Wickersley Wards)
- Eastwood and Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Pathfinder (Rotherham East)
- GMRW Community Partnership (Wingfield Ward)
- Maltby IDP Steering Group (Maltby Ward)
- Rawmarsh and Parkgate Partnership (Rawmarsh Ward)
- West Central Community Partnership (Rotherham West)

### Project Description

All of the staffing projects have been developed to help contribute to the regeneration of Objective 1 Priority 4a and 4b communities. The role of the partnerships is to help co-ordinate, promote and support activities and priorities that will help achieve the economic and social regeneration of the area. Through this project, local communities are given the opportunity to be fully involved and

properly resourced, enabling them to be active in the process of project development and delivery.

The main aims of all the staffing projects are:

- To initiate and direct the implementation of the Objective 1 endorsed community action plans
- To assist the Management Committee with the development and co-ordination of each Community Partnership.
- To help build the capacity of the organisation to become actively involved in the delivery, management and monitoring of the Community Action Plan.
- To help individuals and groups to build capacity and access opportunities both locally and regionally.
- To lead on the development and delivery of a plan for community led neighbourhood management.

The funding for the staffing projects is made up from a number of funders, these being:

- Objective 1 Priority 4a Measure 20 (Building Neighbourhood Strength) Priority 4b Measure 23 (Integrated Development Plan)
- SRB (Single Regeneration Budget)
- NRF (Neighbourhood Renewal Fund)
- ODPM – Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder

All staff are directly line-employed by RMBC reporting directly to each of the Partnerships Board of Directors. In order to ensure protection for both workers and RMBC, a Service Level Agreement is in place, which details the responsibilities of each party (see Appendix One). Once the transfer of staff has been completed it is envisaged that the Service Level Agreement will need to be amended accordingly.

### Options

Taking the above factors into consideration and the practicalities of having area based workers situated within Chief Executive's office, an options appraisal was carried out to ascertain which programme area within the Council would be best placed to employ these workers.

After careful consideration it was decided that Neighbourhoods would be the best programme area of the Council to employ these workers for the following reasons:

- **Improved Linkages with the Local Community** - The Local Authority will be able to develop better linkages with communities and to deliver and develop projects and initiatives at a neighbourhood level.
- **Management of resources at a Neighbourhood level** – By having key workers employed through the Neighbourhoods programme area,

this will provide an opportunity to tap into and utilise existing resources within communities.

- **Linkages to Area Plans/Strategies** – All of the partnership development managers employed by community partnerships are developing projects which have arisen from community action plans developed by the organisations they are working for. Clearly local community action plans have a role to play in the development of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Community Strategy.
- **Neighbourhood Management** – By having PDM's employed through Neighbourhoods this will assist with the development and implementation of the Neighbourhood Management Strategy for the Borough.

## 8. Finance

As all of the members of staff are currently employed by the Council using external funding, there will be no financial implications attached to the transferring of staff.

## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

One of the main risks associated with not transferring members of staff to Neighbourhoods would be the missed opportunity for the Local Authority to utilise the resources of community partnerships to inform and steer service delivery and implementation. In terms of working towards using Area Assemblies as a partnership vehicle capable of strengthening neighbourhood governance and community leadership, community partnerships clearly have a role to play in the emerging ideas around the Area Assembly framework.

## 10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

In terms of policy and performance agenda implications, the transfer of staff will impact in a positive way in the Neighbourhoods Programme area as it will contribute to the following strategies and performance indicators:

- Neighbourhood Service Plan – Objective 11
- Community Development Strategy
- Tenant Involvement Strategy
- Customer Empowerment Strategy
- BB75 – Participation in Landlords Services

## 11. Background Papers and Consultation

A number of reports and background papers have been used to inform this report including the LSP's Independent Study - Neighbourhood Management. All of the staff and the community partnerships involved in this transfer have been consulted and made aware of the changes and implications this may have for them.

**Contact Name:** Debbie Marks, Acting Community Partnerships Co-ordinator, Extension 2667, [debbie.marks@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.marks@rotherham.gov.uk)

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	Cabinet Member (Community Cohesion) Delegated Powers Meeting
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2005
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Rotherham Compact
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	Chief Executives Department

#### **5. Summary**

The purpose of the report is to outline the consultation process that is required on the Rotherham Compact Codes of Practice.

#### **6. Recommendations**

**Note that the following actions have been agreed by CMT on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2005:**

- 1. That the time table for action has been agreed.**
- 2. Each programme area will nominate an officer who will:**
  - **Coordinate the Codes of Practice in their Programme Area.**
  - **Review the commitments within the Codes and identify which their Programme Area can or cannot adhere to.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

The Rotherham Compact is a statement of partnership between the Voluntary, Community, Statutory and Private sector partners represented in the Rotherham Partnership. It is a commitment to work together more closely and to respect each other's rights and responsibilities. It offers a new approach to partnership and a framework to develop more detailed agreements in future work. There are currently five Codes of Practice which need to go through the impact assessment stage within the Council, these are:

- Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Organisations.
- Community Groups
- Community Involvement/Consultation and Policy Appraisal
- Funding and Procurement
- Volunteering.

The Funding and Procurement Code needs further work before going to consultation. The first version of this has not been circulated by the Rotherham Partnership, this is potentially a Code where the Council needs to revisit a number of current procedures and further work with the Procurement team within the Council will need to be done. This could take longer to implement and details of implementation would be identified through the internal consultation process.

At the Rotherham Partnership Board meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2005, it was agreed that compliance with Codes from all partners will take place with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 with four of the Codes at least, if the Funding and Procurement Code is not ready. This decision was taken in order to allow the Council sufficient time to take the Codes through the internal approval processes. The consultation process would involve nominating an officer from each programme area to review and agree which commitments they can and cannot adhere to. This will enable the development of a Council Action Plan in terms of implementing the Codes. The implementation plans will be submitted in November 2005 to CMT and Cabinet to work toward launching at least 4 of the Codes in April 2006. These actions have all been timetabled into the revised timetable.

## **8. Finance**

The Funding and Procurement Code which is not yet developed will identify finance implications at a later stage.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The Rotherham Compact is a vital component in developing the relationship between RMBC and the voluntary and community sector. This will impact on the Civic Renewal agenda and the sustainability of the voluntary and community sector through funding and procurement.

The voluntary and Community Sector is important to both RMBC and the borough in terms of meeting the needs of the community. Failure to support its continued development could result in serious consequences in sustaining the sector to be able to deliver and perform.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

There is a strong commitment to working with and engaging the voluntary and community sector in the Council and amongst its partners. The Corporate Plan and Community Strategy provide a framework to work the voluntary and community sector in the further development and delivery of the vision and strategy.

It is evident that the Proud theme is addressing the Government's agenda around Civic Renewal and Sustainable Communities which require local authorities to involve the voluntary and community sector in decision making.

A Corporate Community Involvement/Consultation Framework is being developed. An External Funding Strategy is currently completing its consultation process. A Procurement Strategy has been developed. All these Council policies will include robust action plans and measures to ensure that the good practice and commitments in the local Compact and Codes can be delivered.

CPA will measure Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's proven ability to engage with and lead their communities, deliver community priorities in partnership with others and ensure continuous improvement across a range of council services. The CPA want to see that local authorities are user and citizen focussed and that reflect the needs and diversity of the communities that they serve. The council should take into consideration the needs of all sections of the community in setting priorities and consulting with communities and partners when making changes to priorities.

## **7. Background Papers and Consultation**

Revised RMBC Time Table for the Compact

4 Draft Codes of Practice

Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Organisations.  
Community Groups  
Community Involvement/Consultation and Policy Appraisal  
Volunteering.

Funding and Procurement Code of Practice will follow at a later stage once it has been developed and gone through an impact assessment by all organisations.

Please note that another report will be submitted shortly requesting CMT and Cabinet to adopt the Rotherham Compact and the Codes of Practice, before they go to the LSP Board for approval.

**Contact Names:**

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Waheed Akhtar, Partnership Officer (Regeneration), Chief Executive Dept, Ext: 2795 and email [waheed.akhtar@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:waheed.akhtar@rotherham.gov.uk)

Asim Munir, Principal Community Involvement Officer, Chief Executive Dept, Ext: 2789 and email [asim.munir@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:asim.munir@rotherham.gov.uk)

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	Cabinet Member (Community Cohesion) Delegated Powers Meeting
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2005
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Update on named Voluntary and Community Sector Projects (MAARI and RREC) and Community Cohesion
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	Chief Executives Department

**5. Summary**

This report provides an overview of the latest developments on community cohesion and two names voluntary/community sector projects (MAARI and RREC).

**6. Recommendations**

To note the report.



## **7. Proposals and Details**

### **7.1 Rotherham REC**

The RREC closed its offices in April/June 2005 and since this time had not operated as a concern since.

The Council was led to believe that in line with its constitution and terms associated with its charitable status that an EGM was to be called of its membership to formally propose dissolution. However we are not aware that any such EGM took place.

The RREC is now operating its own bank account and financial management with finance officers being formally released from the accountancy and treasury management of the RREC monies and resources. Bank mandate transfer forms have been signed off by Council officers.

Monies are owed to the Council and contact has been made with the RREC Executive Officers to arrange for the repayment of monies due from their reserves. This process is ongoing and the council is confident that all monies due will be recovered.

None of the staff based at the RREC are employees of the Council and so no redundancy liability has been incurred by the Council. A specific officer has been on secondment from the Council to the RREC to provide administrative support to MAARI and she has been transferred with MAARI to the Diversity Forum.

### **7.2 MAARI**

The long term funding of MAARI is to be discussed at the next meeting of the Safer Rotherham Partnership on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2005 where a report setting out potential funding options will be tabled for initial discussion and consideration.

The outcomes of this meeting will be reported back to the delegated powers meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2005.

### **7.3 Community Cohesion**

- There have been no further reported disturbances or tensions as a result of the London bombing and things remain calm.
- An issue has arisen regarding potential community tensions from the use of migrant workers to pick fruit and this is being investigated further.
- The recent announcement by NASS Yorkshire and Humberside to introduce new arrangements to voluntarily assist or forcibly remove Iraqi Asylum Seekers may give rise to tensions in areas where Iraqi

Asylum Seekers are housed, including Rotherham. The Council together with its partners is monitoring the situation and the relevant officers have been of the new arrangements.

- The Council has continued to contribute to the delivery of the LSP Community Cohesion Strategy through:
  - the conducting of a mapping exercise identifying best practice and gaps in current service
  - completion of the Council's Community Cohesion Action Plan which sets out a series of commitments that need to be finalised by November 2005.

## **8. Finance**

None specific at this stage.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Maintaining community cohesion and promoting good community relations is a key priority for the Council and its partners.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Promoting community cohesion contributes to the following priority as set out in Rotherham's Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

None.

### **Contact Name:**

Zafar Saleem, Manager, Equalities & Diversity Unit, Ext. 2757,  
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**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	Cabinet Member (Community Cohesion) Delegated Powers Meeting
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2005
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Progress Report on the Performance of the Corporate Equality & Diversity Strategy Group
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	Chief Executives Department

**5. Summary**

To set out the Council's performance on equality and diversity issues since the establishment of the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Unit and the Corporate Equalities & Diversity Strategy Group.

**6. Recommendations**

**The draft report is noted and Members be invited to comment on the content of the report.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

The Corporate Equalities and Diversity Unit was established in January 2004 and the terms of reference for the Corporate Equalities & Diversity Strategy Group refocused in April 2004.

Following the introduction of strategic leadership and direction to the diversity agenda the Council has made significant progress in improving its performance on equality and diversity issues. These improvements are set out in further detail in the "Draft Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group Progress Report 2004-2005" attached.

Particular areas of notable performance include:

- The achievement of Level Two of the Equality Standard for Local Government
- The refresh of the Race Equality Scheme
- A new approach to recording and reporting racial incidents

The Council is now at the stage where it is reaching top quartile performance across the range of equality PIs mainly due to the introduction on new policies and robust performance management systems. The ongoing challenge is to turn these new and excellent policies into practice, so that both our workforce and the recipients of our services feel valued and respected regardless of their own particular circumstances.

## **8. Finance**

None

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The next 18 months will continue to present challenges and opportunities through policy changes and new legislation.

- The Government is intending to introduce legislation on age that will give protection against discrimination to older people. The regulations are likely to become law in October 2006.
- There will be a requirement on all relevant public bodies to produce disability equality schemes to promote equality for disabled people by March 2006.
- New guidance on the Equality Standard for Local Government is expected in autumn with the equality strands covered extended to include sexuality, religion and belief. Also as the Council approaches declaring at Level 4 of the Standard external verification becomes a mandatory requirement.
- The need to maintain Community Cohesion and good community relations within the Borough.

It is crucial that the Council maintains its momentum on equality and diversity issues and continues to deliver improved performance.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Meeting the needs of the diverse communities of Rotherham and recruiting a representative workforce are key measures within the new CPA regime. The framework places stronger emphasis on reducing inequalities and ensuring that equality is central to service delivery. It is expected that the focus should at all times be on meeting the needs of everyone, with special efforts for those most in need and in danger of being marginalised. The Council will have to demonstrate through audit and inspection that its services are user led and customer focussed. Mechanism will have to put in place to monitor take up, measure value added benefit, and fundamentally challenge the effectiveness of our consultation, engagement, and involvement processes.

The Community Strategy themes of Fair, Proud and Safe commit the Council to work with its partners to make a real difference to lives of the different communities of Rotherham through the achievement of key equality and diversity milestones and targets.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Draft Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group Progress Report 2004-2005.  
Notes of Corporate Equalities and Diversity Steering Group 7<sup>th</sup> September 2005.

### **Contact Name :**

*Zafar Saleem, Manager Equalities, Community Cohesion, and Inclusion, Ext. 2757  
and email: [zafar.saleem@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:zafar.saleem@rotherham.gov.uk)*

**DRAFT**

**Corporate Equality & Diversity  
Strategy Group**

**Progress Report  
2004-2005**

**Produced by the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Unit  
September 2005**

## **Content**

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- 8. Acknowledgements**
- 9. Appendices**
  - A. Membership of Corporate Equality & Diversity Strategy Group.**
  - B. Terms of reference for the Corporate Equality & Diversity Strategy Group.**
  - C. Equality & diversity Performance Indicators**

## 1. Foreword

It is with much pride and pleasure that I present this progress report on our Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group's achievements in delivering the equality agenda.

What follows in the report is the result of a great deal of work by the Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group, internal and external partners, the Programme Area Equality Steering Groups, the Task and Finish Groups, and dedicated members of staff in all Programme Areas.

The highlight of our work must be the achievement of Level Two of the Equality Standard for Local Government, but this of course is only the beginning; we have much more to do before Level Five is achieved. Mention must also be made of the publication of the refreshed Race Equality Scheme which is now being implemented through the associated Race Equality Action Plan, and the introduction of a new approach to recording and reporting racial incidents.

The task of the Strategy Group is to turn these excellent policies into practice, so that both our workforce and the recipients of our services feel valued and respected regardless of their own particular circumstances.

I hope that we are never complacent about how much more needs to be done. It is therefore vital that we receive feedback about our work and where it needs to improve further.

Comments on the report will therefore be extremely welcome.

Please send them to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk).

**Cllr Glyn Robinson**  
**Cabinet Lead Member (Community Cohesion)**



## **2. Introduction.**

Rotherham Borough Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity, challenging unlawful discrimination, and promoting community cohesion.

Our Vision for Fairness as set out in the refreshed Community Strategy for Rotherham and the Council's Corporate Plan is that:

"All individuals in Rotherham will have equality of opportunity and choice. Rotherham will provide open and accessible services. We will treat each other with fairness and respect, our diverse needs and strengths will be understood and valued. Rotherham will actively challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination and ensure that all the priorities encompass an equalities approach." (Rotherham's Community Strategy)

This progress report sets out how over the last 18 months the Council has strived to turn this vision into reality through a refreshed and refocused approach to equality and diversity with an emphasis on:

- Defining and clarifying the strategic approach to the equalities agenda
- Improving coordination between the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Unit and Programme Areas
- Increasing capacity and understanding of the moral, legal, and business case for equality of opportunity
- Performance managing key equality indicators to show continuous improvement
- Mainstreaming equality and diversity

This report explains how equality and diversity issues are managed within the Council, how we are performing across a range of indicators including workforce representation, the legislative context to the agenda, and concludes by setting out the work ahead and future challenges over the next 18 months.

## **3. Membership and Ways of working.**

Membership of the Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group is drawn from a wide range of stakeholders including all Programme Area Equality and Diversity Officers, the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Unit, worker representative groups, Rotherham Partnership, Rotherham PCT, trade unions, Programme Area Equality Champions at Head of Service level, and Elected Members. Strategic leadership and commitment is provided by the Assistant Chief Executive who acts as Chair and the Cabinet Lead for Community Cohesion.

A full list of current members is set out in Appendix A.

The focus and purpose of the Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group was reviewed in March 2004 to give the Group more direction and strategic leadership. It refreshed its terms of reference; defined key roles carried out by members of the Group and clarified arrangements for support and accountability.

The revised Terms of Reference for the Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group are set out in Appendix B.

The Group has met every six weeks since January 2004 and is serviced by the Chief Executive's Department. The agenda is agreed through consultation with the membership and is based on performance managing the strategic equality agenda and acting as key policy making and advisory body to the Council. Each Programme Area is expected to contribute to the work programme and reports progress back to the Group on a rotational basis with each Programme Area delivering a presentation on their performance.

#### **4. Overview of performance.**

##### **Corporate Equality Strategy and Action Plan**

The first RMBC Corporate Equality Strategy covering both service delivery and employment matters was approved by CMT and Cabinet in October 2004. Following this, each Programme Area has developed an Equality and Diversity Action Plan that supports the implementation of the Corporate Equality Strategy and the Equality Standard for Local Government.

The Corporate Equality Strategy was aligned to the new Community Strategy themes in June 2005 and an action plan added. The action plan collates the equality and diversity elements of the corporate plan with the common themes from the Programme Area Equality and Diversity Action Plans.

##### **Equality Standard for Local Government**

The Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group played a key role in enabling the Council to achieve Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government in June 2005. All the Council's Programme Areas were engaged in work to meet the Standard which included laying important foundations for future progress to Level 5 by 2007. The Council should feel proud of its achievement in making such a significant improvement in its performance.

Achievement of level 2 is based on the following actions:

- The new Community Strategy includes a shared vision on Fairness.
- The Corporate Equality Strategy has been aligned to the Community Strategy themes and an implementation action plan added.
- All Programme Areas have developed Equality and Diversity Action Plans that set equality objectives and targets under the four key areas of the

Equality Standard. These are leadership, consultation, service delivery (including monitoring) and employment.

- A revised Race Equality Scheme and action plan has been published.
- A 3-year schedule of equality impact assessment has commenced.
- Strategic HR are making good progress to meet equal pay and employment monitoring requirements, they have reviewed the recruitment and selection procedure and are developing initiatives to improve workforce representation.
- Other achievements include training for managers, implementation of the new racist incident procedure, service monitoring guidelines and community involvement work.

To achieve levels 3 to 5, progress needs to continue on the Corporate Equality Strategy and Action Plan and in particular, further work needs to be done in relation to community involvement and consultation, including building the capacity of communities of interest, embedding equality in procurement, equality training for RMBC employees, mainstreaming equality in service planning and improving the representation of disabled people in the workforce.

### **Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and Race Equality Scheme**

The Council is now in compliance with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.

We reviewed and updated our Race Equality Scheme this year and published the new version in April 2005. The Scheme includes a three year action plan and a fully revised list of functions and policies which are relevant to race equality. Summary leaflets about the scheme are available in six languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, Farsi, French and Urdu) on the Council website.

We have improved our performance against a list of 19 criteria which comprise the Best Value Performance Indicator BV2b, the duty to promote race equality, from 37% in 2003-4 to 63.2% in 2004-5.

Much of the work that we have been doing this year has involved establishing systems and structures to give a solid base from which to take forward our work on race equality, within the framework of the Equality Standard for Local Government. To this end we have:

- written new guidance on equality monitoring to improve the quality of our management information, which will lead to improved services and employment practices
- set up council-wide identity codes for accessing phone line interpretation services to improve our ability to communicate with people
- started to develop a new consultation and community involvement strategy that will be inclusive for all communities in Rotherham

## **Racial Incident Reporting and Recording**

The Council Policy has been reviewed and a new Procedure has been established. A new simplified reporting form has been produced for staff and members of the public to use.

Each Programme Area has identified a lead officer(s) as a racist incident coordinator to advise and support managers to take the appropriate action. They have all also established a Racist Incident Monitoring Group to assume the quality control of all incidents reported to them.

The Equality Policy and Performance Group (a sub-group of Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group) have taken on the role of Racist Incidents Task Group to oversee the performance management of BVPI 174 and 175.

Training on the new procedure has been delivered to relevant officers in each Programme Area. So far, around 70 members of staff have been trained and 10 sessions delivered.

Racist Graffiti reported and removed by Streetpride is now consistently reported internally and added to the BVPI 174/175.

An audit inspection of BVPI 174 and 175 was held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2005 and the initial feedback from the auditors indicates that there are no longer any issues with this BVPI.

## **Community Cohesion**

The importance of Community Cohesion to a strong and healthy society was recognised following the 2001 disturbances in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford. Reports into the disorder identified a common theme of a lack of interaction between individuals of different cultural, religious and racial backgrounds in society.

Community Cohesion was seen as crucial to promoting greater knowledge, respect and contact between various cultures, and to establish a greater sense of citizenship.

A cohesive community is one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

The Council has been proactively engaged in the development, promotion, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of a strategic framework for Community Cohesion in the Borough.

Specific actions have included:

- Supporting the Cohesive Communities Partnership through the Equalities and Diversity Unit.
- Identifying good practice within the Council on Community Cohesion.
- Ensuring good community relations post 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005.

### **Community Engagement**

We have continued to develop and strengthen our relationships with voluntary and community organisations that play a vital role in improving our policy and practice.

This has included:

- Developing an Older People's Strategy with the Policy and Partnership Team, CXD and other stakeholders.
- Working with REMA, SY Police, Rotherham PCT, and other stakeholders within all Programme Areas to establish a Mosque Liaison Group and then to address the needs of the Muslim community through thematic discussion of key issues of importance to them.
- Participating in work to address the needs of the LGBT community and maintaining contact with the LGBT Inter-Agency Forum and Rotherham LGBT Group.
- Identifying the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community through the establishment of a Programme Area officer working party and Rotherham PCT and Rotherham Partnership.
- Establishment of a BME Strategy Group to develop a BME Strategy for the Borough.
- Supporting the annual Disability Awareness Day last December and involvement with the strategy sub-group from the Access Liaison Group.
- Convening a Borough wide group of stakeholders to develop a Women's Strategy.

A summary of the Council's performance indicators and measures is set out in Appendix C.

## 5. Legislative Framework

During the last 18 months we have seen the introduction of new and forthcoming legislation that:

- Prohibits discrimination in employment and training on the grounds of sexual orientation and religion. The legislation provides protections similar to those already provided on grounds of sex, race and disability.
- Incorporates the EU race directive which covers employment, training, education, access to and supply of goods and services into UK law.
- Will extend the right not to be discriminated against on the grounds of disability to people with cancer, HIV and MS and amongst other things, places a positive duty on public authorities to promote disability equality which will parallel race.
- Introduces a new criminal offence of incitement to religious hatred that applied to all faith communities.

## 6. Workforce Representation.

The female workforce comprises predominantly part-time workers in permanent positions with around 64% earning up to £13,701 per annum. The Council has undertaken work related to helping women to progress through the organisation and access employment. The development of a range of flexible working options to promote work-life balance benefits all employees, but may particularly benefit women and carers.

In relation to ethnicity the profiles indicate that Black and Minority Ethnic employees (BME) are more likely to be employed on a temporary basis when compared to the generic workforce, 71% of BME employees are aged 16 to 39 compared to the generic profile of 36.5%. With regards to length of service 67% of BME employees have less than 4 years service. Taking these two factors into consideration with an overall increase in BME representation would indicate there has been some success in attracting new BME workers to the Council. Although this is positive the representation of BME workers in the Council still falls short of the BME community population in Rotherham as a whole as demonstrated in the section on Best Value performance Indicators. Further positive action to address this includes the launch of Equip, a training scheme aimed at Rotherham's BME communities.

The majority of disabled workers within the Council (81%) are aged 40 to 64. Disabled workers are more likely to be in permanent positions than temporary when compared to the generic profile. The representation of disabled people in the workforce is well below that of the proportion of disabled people in Rotherham as a whole. We are undertaking further work to clarify the disability status of current employees as in common with other organisations under-reporting may be a factor.

Further details of the council's workforce representation can be viewed at:

<http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/graphics/YourCouncil/Reports/Equalities.htm>

## **7. Looking Ahead and Future Challenges.**

The Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group has had a busy 18 months and is currently working on a detailed Corporate Equality Action Plan which will bring together the work the Council needs to take forward over the next three years to deliver true equality outcomes for local people. The Plan will build on the Council's successes, embedding what works and changing that which does not. The Plan will require the active participation and motivation of employees, Councillors, partners and local people if it is to achieve its objective of improving services and quality of life overall.

The next 18 months will continue to present challenges and opportunities through policy changes and new legislation.

- The Government is intending to introduce legislation on age that will give protection against discrimination to older people. The regulations are likely to become law in October 2006.
- There will be a requirement on all relevant public bodies to produce disability equality schemes to promote equality for disabled people by March 2006.
- A review of discrimination law that is currently being conducted is also expected to be completed soon with possible changes to current anti-discrimination law.
- New guidance on the Equality Standard for Local Government is expected in autumn with the equality strands covered extended to include sexuality, religion and belief. Also as the Council approaches declaring at Level 4 of the Standard external verification becomes a mandatory requirement.
- The existing Commissions for race, gender and disability are to be replaced by a single Commission for Equality and Human Rights. Further details of the impact of this on the Council are expected in due course.
- The need to maintain Community Cohesion and good community relations within the Borough.
- The 2005 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) framework places stronger emphasis on reducing inequalities and ensuring that equality is central to service delivery. It is expected that the focus should at all times be on meeting the needs of everyone, with special efforts for those most in need and in danger of being marginalised.

## **8. Acknowledgements**

The achievements highlighted within this document could not have been achieved without the hard work and commitment of the Corporate Equality & Diversity Strategy Group over the last 20 months and their leadership and dedication is acknowledged.

Thanks are also given to Di Billups, Executive Director, Children and Young People Services, who until her retirement in April 2005 was Chair of the Corporate Equality & Diversity Strategy Group.



**9. Appendices**

**Appendix A. Membership of Corporate Equality & Diversity Strategy Group.**

Lee Adams  
Assistant Chief Executive (Chair)

Cllr Glyn Robinson  
Cabinet Member for Community  
Cohesion

Zulfiqar Aslam, Social Services  
Julie Westwood, Social Services  
Michael McGuigan, Social  
Services

Zafar Saleem, Equalities &  
Diversity Unit  
Carol Adamson, Equalities &  
Diversity Unit  
Janet Spurling, Equalities &  
Diversity Unit  
Myriam Berrada, Equalities &  
Diversity Unit

Robert Parker, Resources  
Simon Cooper, Resources  
Alan Swann, Resources

Colin Bulger, CXD

Mohammed Nawaz, UNISON

Kate Plant, Rotherham Partnership  
Sarwar Khan , Rotherham PCT  
Lydia George, Rotherham PCT

Bev Booker, ECaLS  
Louise Sennitt, RBT  
Mike Hedges, RBT  
Anne Hawke, RBT  
Jill Dearing, RBT

Gill Walker, ECaLS  
Bhupinder Kaur Manku, ECaLS  
Bev Booker, ECaLS  
Helen Longland, ECaLS

Mahmood Hussain,  
Neighbourhoods  
Andrew Balchin, Neighbourhoods

Waheed Akhtar, BWN

Craig Jacques-Newton, DWN

Zahid Qureshi, EDS  
Karl Battersby, EDS

**Appendix B. Terms of Reference for the Corporate Equality & Diversity Strategy Group.**

**1. Objective**

- 1.1 To ensure effective and coordinated action across the borough Council to reduce disadvantages, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity, and promote diversity in terms of the people it services, its workforce, the partners it works with and the services it delivers.

**2. Structure of CE&DSG**

- 2.1 The structure of the group is set out in Appendix 1 attached and is explained in further detail below.

**3. Membership**

The core membership of CE&DSG will be:

- 3.1 Cabinet Lead Member for HR and Equalities  
Executive Director Children & Young People's Services (Chair)  
Head of Human Resources  
Manager – Equalities & Diversity Unit  
Officers from Equalities & Diversity Unit  
Officers from Strategic Human Resources  
Lead Champions from all Programme Areas  
Specialist advisers (Access Liaison Officer and Head of Legal Services)  
Union representative  
Representatives from employee self-organised groups
- 3.2 CE&DSG may co-opt other members on either a permanent or time limited basis to support the effective performance of its duties.
- 3.3 The Executive Director Children & Young People's Services, Head of Human Resources, and Manager Equalities & Diversity Unit have corporate lead responsibilities on equalities and diversity issues.

**4. Purpose, Role & Function of the Group**

- 4.1 To enable the Borough council to introduce a systematic and comprehensive approach to equality and diversity in service delivery and employment by using the Equality Standard framework.
- 4.2 To evaluate and report on the Council's position in relation to equality and diversity and to formulate prioritised proposals for action. This will cover, but not necessarily be limited to, recommendations for change and development in the policies, practices, procedures and culture of the Authority.

- 4.3 To ensure that work within and between Programme Areas is effectively co-ordinated and prioritised so that the overall objective is met.
- 4.4 To establish task groups to undertake detailed work on specific areas of equalities and diversity, see Section 5 below for further details.
- 4.5 To oversee the Borough Council's discharge of its statutory responsibilities in relation to race, disability, and gender and other relevant areas of equalities legislation and/or guidance that may arise in future. This will include but will not be limited to:
- Leading on the implementation, monitoring and review of the Race Equality Scheme and reporting on progress
  - Leading on achievement of Level 1 and 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government including coordinating compliance with the requirements for self assessment audit and impact and needs requirement assessments
  - Leading on the implementation, monitoring and review of the responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and reporting on progress
- 4.6 To establish effective links between CE&DSG and key contacts including:
- Self-organised employee groups
  - Trade Unions
  - Rotherham Race Equality Council
  - Other voluntary organisations
  - Statutory organisations
- 4.7 To identify internal and external consultation arrangements relevant to equalities and diversity and, where necessary, to initiate additional consultation activity on specific issues.
- 4.8 To ensure that appropriate and timely advice on equalities is provided to members and chief officers.
- 4.9 To ensure that equalities and diversity are effectively addressed in key strategies and plans to which the Council contributes and in partnership working in which it is involved.
- 4.10 To ensure that the work of the Council on equalities and diversity is effectively linked to the development of an agreed partnership approach to Community Cohesion through the Rotherham Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership).
- 4.11 To identify developmental and learning needs of members and officers on equalities and diversity and to formulate plans to respond to these.

- 4.12 To ensure that the Council's action and progress on equalities and diversity are effectively disseminated internally and externally.
- 4.13 To review annually the overall equalities structure and these terms of reference and, if necessary, propose amendments.
- 4.14 To support and participate in the proposed Best Value Review of the equalities and diversity service.

## **5. Operation of Task Groups and relationship to CE&DSG**

5.1 In order to take forward the overall equalities and diversity agenda and to provide focus for CE&DSG it is recommended that 3 task groups be established as follows:

- Employment & Training
- Service Delivery & Customer Care
- Specific Projects:
  - RRAA 2000 & Race Equality Scheme
  - Equality Standard for Local Government

5.2 These task groups will initially take responsibility for carrying out the work and reporting back to CE&DSG the outcomes. The activities carried out by the task groups will be time limited. Once a project is completed CE&DSG will allocate further activities to the task groups.

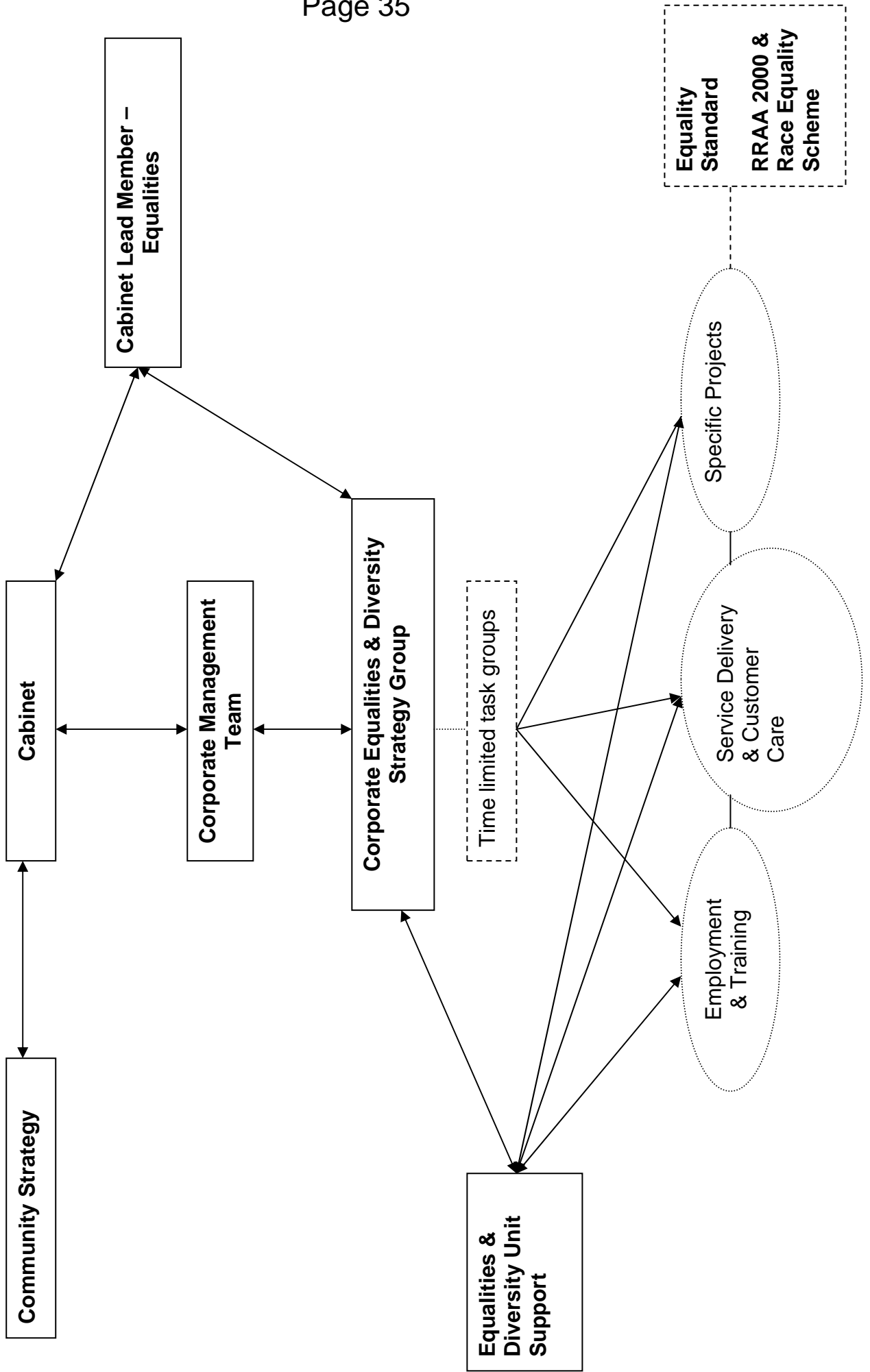
5.3 The work programme for CE&DSG would encompass the activities of these task groups. CE&DSG will provide the strategic steer, scope, and set the objectives and performance indicators for the projects undertaken by the task groups.

## **6. Servicing and Regularity of Meetings**

6.1 Meetings will take place every 6 weeks throughout the year and will be fixed annually.

6.2. The Manager, Equalities and Diversity Unit, will ensure that CES&DG is supported through the provision of general administration, for example, arrangement of meetings, venues, refreshments, note taking, distribution of materials and information, etc.

RMBC – CE&DSG Structure



**Appendix C. Equality and Diversity Performance Indicators**

<b>Indicator number and description</b>	<b>Targets for 2005/2006</b>	<b>Assessment of current performance</b>
BV2a Adoption of the Equality Standard for Local Government and level reached.	Level 2 by June 2005 and Level 3 by December 2005	The Council is on schedule to achieve Level 3 by December 2005 and we will aim to achieve the highest level, level 5, by 2007.
BV2b Race Relations Amendment Act 2000: General Duty to promote Race Equality	100% compliance with the duty to promote race equality	The Council has published our Race Equality Scheme 2 and a 3-year Race Equality Action Plan from 2005 to 2008.
BV11a % of the top 5% of earners who are women	46%	Achieved 44.31% at March 2005
BV11b % of the top 5% of earners from Black and minority ethnic communities	3.5%	Achieved 3.02% at March 2005
BV11c % of the top 5% of earners who are disabled	Not applicable	This is a new performance indicator for 2005/06 and a target is not required for the first year.
BV16a % of local authority employees meeting DDA definition of disability	2.4%	Achieved 1.61% at March 2005
BV17a % of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities	2.5%	Achieved 2.05% at March 2005
BV74 Satisfaction of council tenants with the overall service provided by their landlord, broken down by ethnicity	Survey runs every 3 years - aiming for 83% satisfaction for all tenants in 2006/07	Achieved 75.5% overall satisfaction at March 2004: 66.7% for Black and minority ethnic tenants and 75.4% for non-Black and minority ethnic tenants
BV75 Satisfaction of council tenants with opportunities to participate in management and decision making in housing services broken down by ethnicity	Survey runs every 3 years - aiming for 69% satisfaction for all tenants in 2006/07	Achieved 61.7% overall satisfaction at March 2004: 33.3% for Black and minority ethnic tenants and 61.9% for non-Black and minority ethnic tenants
BV156 % of authority buildings in which all public areas are accessible to disabled people	52%	Achieved 46% at March 2005

<b>Indicator number and description</b>	<b>Targets for 2005/2006</b>	<b>Assessment of current performance</b>
BV164 Whether the authority follows the CRE's Code Of Practice in rented housing	Yes	Yes for 2004/2005
BV165 % of pedestrian crossing facilities for disabled people	100%	100% at March - In future all crossings will be built with the necessary facilities.
BV174 Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population	100	99 at March 2005 The Council is working to increase the confidence of people to report incidents
BV175 % of racial incidents that resulted in further action	100%	100% at March 2005
BV225 Actions against domestic violence - % of 11 questions on action set by the Audit Commission to which the authority can answer yes	64%	This is a new performance indicator for 2005/2006 Achieved 55% at March 2005

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>26 September 2005</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>BME Strategy Group</b>
4.	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's</b>

**5. Summary**

The council has set up a BME Strategy Group To ensure that the needs of the BME community are identified, acknowledged, and addressed through the development and implementation of a BME Strategy for the Borough.

**6. Recommendations**

**That the Cabinet Member receives the minutes and draft Terms of Reference for this Group.**



## **7. Proposals and Details**

At a previous meeting the Cabinet Member and Advisors had expressed support for the development of a BME Strategy for the borough and approved funding to help complete this work.

After considerable liaison with BME groups on an individual basis, a BME Strategy Group has now been established is meeting regularly.

The Group is Chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Council, and the Vice Chair is Jahangir Akhtar (Chair of the Unity Centre). Membership is comprised of the key BME organisations in the borough as well as representatives from the Primary Care Trust, Voluntary Action Rotherham, the Police and the Local Strategic Partnership.

The formal reporting structure for this group is through the Cabinet Member (Community Cohesion). The draft Terms of reference for this group as well as the minutes of a meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2005 are attached as Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

## **8. Finance**

The Cabinet Member has previously approved a budget of up to £8,000 for work contributing to the development of a strategy.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The work is progressing well and will continue to be dependent on the participation of a wide range of BME organisations - this will be managed through continued dialogue and widespread ownership of the developing strategy.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

This work contributes to the Fairness theme of the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Attached.

## **12. Contact Name:**

Zafar Saleem, Manager, Equalities & Diversity Unit, Ext. 2757,

Zafar.Saleem@rotherham.gov.uk

Waheed Akhtar, Partnership Officer (Regeneration), ext. 2795, email:

[Waheed.akhtar@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Waheed.akhtar@rotherham.gov.uk)

## **Terms of Reference for the BME Strategy Group (2<sup>nd</sup> Draft)**

### **1. Aim**

To ensure that the needs of the BME community are identified, acknowledged, and addressed through the development and implementation of a BME Strategy for the Borough.

### **2. Objectives**

- a. Oversees the development, delivery, and monitoring of the BME Strategy for Rotherham.
- b. Addresses the long term sustainability of the BME voluntary and community sector.
- c. Provides a platform for all agencies and partners to share information and good practice on BME issues.
- d. Ensures that all the statutory agencies adopt a co-ordinated approach to consulting, engaging and involving the BME community.
- e. Ensures that the work of the group links to key strategic policy drivers such as the Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

### **3. Composition of Group**

Representation as per attached appendix.

### **4. Chair and Vice-Chair**

Chair - Cllr Terry Sharman, Deputy Leader, RMBC  
Vice-Chair – Jahangir Akhtar, Chair Unity Centre

### **5. Meetings cycle**

Every 6 weeks. (Emergency meetings to be called if necessary).

### **6. Reporting structure**

Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion delegated powers meeting.  
Rotherham Partnership theme groups: Proud, Fair, and Safe.

### **7. Name of group**

BME Strategy Group.

**Appendix – Composition of BME Strategy Group**

Name	Organisation
Cllr Terry Sharman	RMBC
Lee Adams	RMBC
Waheed Akhtar	RMBC
Zafar Saleem	RMBC
Mr Jahangir Akhtar	Unity Centre
Cllr Shaukat Ali	MAARI
Cllr Mahroof Hussain	REMA
Mrs Parveen Qureshie	UMCC
Ms Mahmoona Quyam	Al-muneera
Mr Mahroof Rashid	ABCF
Mr Abdulla Mohamed	Yemeni Advocacy project
Mr Alms Abbasi	Diversity Forum
Mr Mohammed Suleman	Yorkshire Trust
Ms Khalida Luqman	Tassibee Project
Ms Zlakha Ahmed	Apna Haq
Mrs Fiona Keith	Wah Hong Chinese Association
Ms Gopa Raha	Bharat Integration Group
Janet Wheatley	VAR
Sarah Whittle	Rotherham PCT
TBC	Rotherham Partnership

**BME STRATEGY GROUP MEETING**  
**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2005, 10am – 12pm**  
**Conference Room, Eric Manns Building**

**Present**

Sarwar Khan – Diversity Coordinator, Rotherham  
Abdulla Mohammed – Advocate & Community Support Worker, Rotherham  
Yemeni Community Association  
Mahroof Hussain – Manager, REMA  
Almas Abbassi – Rotherham Diversity Forum  
Cllr Shaukat Ali – RMBC  
Janet Wheatley – Chief Executive, Voluntary Action Rotherham  
Parveen Qureshi – UMCC LSP  
Lee Adams – Assistant Chief Executive, RMBC  
Jahangir Akhtar – Chair, Unity Centre  
Mohammed Suleman – Yorkshire Trust  
Zafar Saleem – Equalities and Diversity Manager, RMBC  
Helen Dale – Administration Officer, RMBC (Minutes)

**1. Apologies**

Khalida Luqman - Tassibee Project  
Mahmoona Quayam – Al-Muneera  
Zlakha Ahmed, Apna Haq  
Waheed Akhtar – Partnership Officer, RMBC

**2. Minutes**

**2.1 General**

Cllr Ali agreed to Chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr Sharman.

**2.2 Notes of last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the last meeting were discussed and agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

The issue of a member of the BME Strategy group sitting on the LSP Board in order to cover BME Community issues was raised. The group were informed that the issue had been raised with the LSP Director and she or a nominee will attend the next scheduled meeting.

Lee Adams informed the group that the Leader had nominated Cllr Sharman as the Chair of the BME Strategy group.

There was a discussion about which portfolio covered the aims of the group as it could easily fit the responsibility of a number of Members.

The group felt strongly that the BME Strategy group needs to be officially recognised as a body of which RMBC deals with.

The group after a lengthy discussion supported the nomination that Cllr Sharman should chair the meetings. It was also agreed that Lee Adams and Zafar Saleem would be the lead officers working with the group.

Discussions were held around representation on the LSP and the role of NOP/VOICE. The group felt strongly the need to increase BME involvement with NOP/VOICE as this is the route into the LSP.

Representation on the LSP Board was agreed to be resolved at the next meeting of the group when the LSP Director attends.

### **3. Terms of Reference**

Copies of the draft terms of Reference were tabled and circulated at the meeting for comments or suggestions.

The group had various discussions around the Terms of Reference and suggested that an amended version is circulated to those not present for approval at the next meeting.

Specific comments raised by the group about the Terms of Reference included:

3.1 The group agreed the name of the meeting to be 'BME Strategy Group'.

3.2 The group felt that a full list of the organisations involved with the group needed to be included in the Terms of Reference not just those listed currently.

3.3 Where the minutes from the group should go to?

It was suggested that the group could report through the Rotherham Proud, as this would ensure that issues are then reported to the LSP Board. Lee Adams suggested that the group could report any items to any of the theme groups as appropriate. As discussed earlier the group agreed to raise any LSP issues at the next meeting of the group.

It was noted that other communities of interest may also want to representation on the LSP?

In response Zafar Saleem pointed out that all statutory partners including the LSP, as it was part of RMBC, must comply with the Race Relation Amendments Act and deliver the general duty to promote race equality, challenge unlawful discrimination, and promote equal opportunities. Thus there was a legal requirement on the LSP to engage with the BME sector which means that there was an argument that there should be specific BME

representation of the LSP. However, he pointed out that it was good practice, to include other communities of interest such as women, disabled people etc.

The group were of the view that the LSP needs to have its own Race Equality Scheme to articulate and communicate its commitment to race equality.

#### 3.4 Vice Chair

Lee Adams raised the issue of appointing an official Vice-Chair for the group. The group voted Jahangir Akhtar as Vice-Chair. Jahangir accepted the role.

#### 3.5 Regularity of meetings

The group questioned the regularity of the meetings. It was agreed to hold the meetings every 6 weeks to begin with.

**ACTION: Zafar to send the revised Terms of Reference to the full group for agreement at the next meeting.**

### 4. Scoping exercise

At the last meeting the group had agreed to conduct a scoping exercise to identify:

- The current services provided by the BME voluntary/community sector
- Any gaps and areas of need
- Areas of growth

The group decided that in order to identify gaps and common issues within the BME sector, a note should go out to all the relevant organisations asking them to write back giving the answers to the 3 sections above together with a copy of their aims and objectives.

**ACTION: Zafar to remind organisations of the need to complete the scoping exercise when sending out the notes.**

Janet Wheatley informed the group that VAR have recently conducted a profiling exercise of services for the Voluntary/Community sector. Janet agreed to forward the information to Zafar as she felt it may cover some of the scoping exercise areas. It was also suggested that it may be possible to do a mapping of services through each programme area. It was also stated that Waheed Akhtar has some information from a recent External Funding Review.

**ACTION: Janet Wheatley to forward profiling information to Zafar Saleem.**

A discussion was held by the group on the infrastructure of REMA. The group stressed that they need to be sure that everyone is clear about the role of REMA as an umbrella body.

Lee Adams explained to the group that we currently have a Service Level Agreement with VAR and the plan is to set up a similar SLA with REMA.

The group were of the view that the Voluntary/Community sector can provide services but the infrastructure within the sector needs developing in order to build capacity to deliver contracts.

Zafar Saleem informed the group that he had met with Helen Chambers and Helen Leadley regarding RBT procurement. Zafar told the group that they are happy to attend a future meeting of the group to discuss procurement issues.

The group expressed concern over the tendering procedure and stressed that the system needs to be made clearer.

## **5. Meeting with the Local Strategic Partnership**

As previously discussed the Director and the Chair of the LSP have agreed to attend the next meeting of the group. The group felt it would be a good idea to have a pre-meeting to decide which issues need to be raised at the meeting.

## **6. AOB**

### **6.1 Monitoring community tensions and cohesion**

Mr Suleman asked whether community tension was being monitored following a rise in the activities of extremist groups and recent events in London.

The group were informed that Michael Hellewell from the Chief Executives Department and Kate Plant were establishing a tensions indicator for the Community Cohesion Strategy and Action Plan.

Lee also explained that the Chief Executive was calling emergency contingency meetings on a regular basis to look at the local issues arising from the incidents on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005. The Police and both BME elected members had been invited to participate in the meetings to ensure that partners work closely together.

The group agreed that if any urgent matter should arise a meeting of this group should be called immediately.

## **7. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed for the meetings of the BME Strategy group to be held bi-monthly.

**ACTION: Zafar Saleem agreed to speak to Tanya of the LSP in order to set the date of the next meeting to involve the LSP Director or nominee.**

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	Community Cohesion Delegated Powers meeting
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	26 September 2005
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Draft Sustainable Development Position Statement
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	Chief Executive's Department

## 5. Summary

This report invites the meeting to consider the Council's draft Sustainable Development Position Statement. This Position Statement acknowledges that all Programme Areas are involved in and committed to ensuring sustainable development, and that good progress has been made. It also makes a number of recommendations on how these actions and interventions can be developed further to support the Council's sustainable developments aims and objectives as set out in the Community Strategy, Corporate Plan and Year Ahead Statement, and meet new legislative and other national requirements such as CPA 2005.

## 6. Recommendations

The Meetings is asked:

1. To consider the attached Sustainable Development Position Statement, including the recommendations as outlined in section 7 of this report
2. To ensure that the findings of the Position Statement are embedded into policy and service delivery processes and performance management arrangements
3. Support that each Programme Area nominates an officer to join the proposed Officer Sustainable Development Steering Group and be its representative on it
4. To agree to refer the report to Members Sustainable Development Group, Cabinet and the relevant Scrutiny Panel
5. That the final Position Statement be forward to the Rotherham Partnership for their consideration



## **7. Proposals and Details**

The draft Position Statement has been developed following detailed consultation, discussion and analysis, including an examination of 'Best Practice'.

It includes an assessment of the Council's current approach to taking forward sustainable development in the Borough, and linkages with regional, national and international policy. It identifies that the Council has a pivotal role to play in the promotion of sustainable development at all levels (strategic and operational) and across all Programme Areas plans, policies and activities. It also underlines the good progress that has been made by the Council, and that it is a clear and consistent priority for the Council and its partners.

The Position Statement makes a small number of recommendations on how this approach can be refined and developed to meet the sustainable development aims and objectives it has set itself. These include those contained in the Year Ahead Statement and the Corporate Plan as well as new Government requirements, notably those contained in 'Securing the Future' the UK Government's new UK Sustainable Development Strategy and CPA 2005 which strengthen the sustainable development Key Line of Enquiry. These recommendations are outlined below:

1. It is proposed that the Council should now develop a Sustainable Development Framework. This would set out a small number of intermediate composite aims that would link the high level priorities and objectives contained within the Corporate Plan and the Community Strategy with more operational ones contained in thematic plans and programme and service area plans. It would also set out the key programmes of work that need to be delivered to achieve these aims and which the Council can be held directly accountable for the delivery of, together with outcome based indicators to measure and track progress.
2. It is also proposed that an Officer Sustainable Development Steering Group be set up within the Council, initially to develop the proposed Sustainable Development Framework, and more widely to coordinate the Council's approach to sustainable development in support of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.
3. A series of Officer and Member training events should be held to increase awareness throughout the Council of sustainable development and of the importance of ensuring that it is mainstreamed within all new policies and initiatives.
4. Finally that the position statement should be taken to the LSP Board, in order that the LSP is included in the process to develop the Sustainable Development Framework and will subsequently adopt it.

## **8. Finance**

There are no direct and significant financial implications with this report.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Sustainable Development is one of the key themes of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Community Strategy. Without this position statement and subsequent Framework, the Council may be unable to show a coherent approach, strategic focus and commitment to Sustainable Development.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

As the Position Statement identifies, Sustainable Development is a clear and consistent priority of the Council and its partners. It is fully aligned with, and a shared cross-cutting Priority Theme of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. The production of a Sustainable Development Framework are also Year Ahead and Corporate Plan commitments. It is also pivotal to a wider network of plans, strategies and initiatives such as Best Value, Local Development Framework, Community Plans neighbourhood renewal and LA 21.

It is vital therefore that the Council is able to highlight the work that it is doing, and the commitment that has been made to sustainable development is progressed and evidenced

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

The development of such a Position Statement and its broad focus was considered and agreed at the most recent meeting of the Members Sustainable Development Group.

Rotherham's Community Strategy 2005 – 2010

Rotherham MBC's Corporate Plan 2005 – 2010

Rotherham MBC's Year Ahead Statement 2005

ODPM 'Securing the Future': UK Government's UK Sustainable Development Strategy, 2005

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## **Draft Rotherham MBC Position Statement - Sustainable Development**

### **1. Introduction**

This draft position statement examines the Council's progress in advancing sustainable development in the Borough, and makes recommendations on how this can be enhanced. It is based on an examination of national, regional and local policies and programmes; statistical and performance data; findings from surveys and inspections and 'best practice' from other local authorities and agencies.

### **2. What is Sustainable Development?**

The most widely used definition is that sustainable development is; "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development ,1987).

Sustainable development encompasses a wide range of principles, it aims to integrate social, economic and environmental concerns. Essentially the goals of sustainable development across the UK are:

- To live within environmental limits
- To ensure a strong, healthy and just society
- To achieve a sustainable economy
- To promote good governance
- To use sound science responsibly

(Securing the Future: delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, 2005)

Sustainable development has been developed locally by the Priority Theme identified in Rotherham's Community Strategy:

"Rotherham will be a place where the conditions are right to sustain economic growth, the well-being of its citizen's is prioritised and there is a high quality living environment sustained through minimising harm from development. Rotherham will be recognised locally, nationally and internationally for the positive impact of all organisations being excellent in sustainable development best practice".

This is one of the seven shared and agreed themes of all local partners, including Rotherham MBC, and has been adopted in the Council's new Corporate Plan. Sustainable development is acknowledged as a cross cutting theme, impacting on and interacting with all of the other themes.

### **3. Why is Sustainable Development Important?**

Ensuring sustainable development is one of, if not the, the greatest challenges facing the World.

As the World's environment is being put under ever increasing pressure through human activity, this pressure is becoming more evident and we can see the effects of this through a variety of signs. These include climate change, which is causing temperature and sea levels to rise and ice and snow cover to fall, the depletion of natural resources, air and water pollution, and water shortages. These signs indicate that we are living beyond the earth's carrying capacity and the need to slow down, halt and even reverse these problems before it is too late.

In addition to this environmental aspect of sustainable development, it is also important to consider the importance of a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment and tackle wealth inequalities which lead to poverty. Equally important is the commitment to a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well being.

Sustainable development is essentially about working towards a World which seeks to simultaneously progress economic and social and environmental goals and policies in ways that develop and maintain a good quality of life for us all and enable future generations to do the same. To do this action must not also be taken at the global level but also at the local – “think globally, act locally” as is often quoted.

The variety of considerations that sustainable development covers is broadly examined under the three headings of the social, economic and environmental well being of Rotherham.

Social issues include considerations such as:

- improving the quality of life for,
- ensuring everyone has access to community facilities,
- ensuring that local communities and cultural identities are strengthened through all the work we do,
- ensuring communities are fully involved and engaged with the Council and social inequalities which cause deprivation and poverty are tackled and reduced.

Economic issues examine areas such as:

- supporting local businesses to adopt sustainable development priorities,
- helping to create a vibrant local economy,
- tackling the causes of poverty and social exclusion.

Environmental issues cover items such as:

- reducing the need to travel which in turn helps to reduce congestion within the Borough,
- improving access to public transport,
- encouraging businesses to use energy more efficiently and act in a more environmentally friendly way, work to reduce the amount of waste going into landfill and reduce pollution.

These are just some examples of the multitude of issues that need to be considered and addressed as part of sustainable development.

Sustainable development is inherent in a whole host of important activities and is not the job of one programme area or department, everyone has a part to play. This is reflected in the Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan in which sustainable development is a cross cutting theme.

#### **4. Policy Context**

Sustainable development is a clear and consistent priority at all levels - international, national, regional and local.

##### *International*

Over the last decade, sustainable development has come to the fore as a central tenet of national and international policy. In 1992 world leaders met at the "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. A Framework was drawn up for world-wide sustainable development that sought to promote global coordinated policy responses to achieve sustainable development. This Framework has been progressed through initiatives such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2004, and agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol aimed at reducing emissions of harmful gases.

##### *National*

The UK Government has also made sustainable development a top priority, and has been a key player in global negotiations. As early as 1999, the UK Government set itself key objectives in documents such as the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. It has also introduced supporting fiscal and legislative measures, for example in relation to Landfill, and set itself challenging sustainability targets which it reports progress on annually in a 'Achieving a Better Quality of Life: Review of Progress towards Sustainable Development'. It continues to be a major theme of national policy, as reflected in the importance placed on it in its key strategies such as the 'Securing the Future: delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy' (2005), policy statements as the Spending Review Statement 2004 and programmes such the Sustainable Communities Plan launched in 2003. The Government has pledged to make

sustainable development a priority during the UK presidency of the EU in 2005.

The “Securing the Future: delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy” has five guiding principles which set out the UK’s overarching approach to sustainable development, these are shown in Figure 1 below.

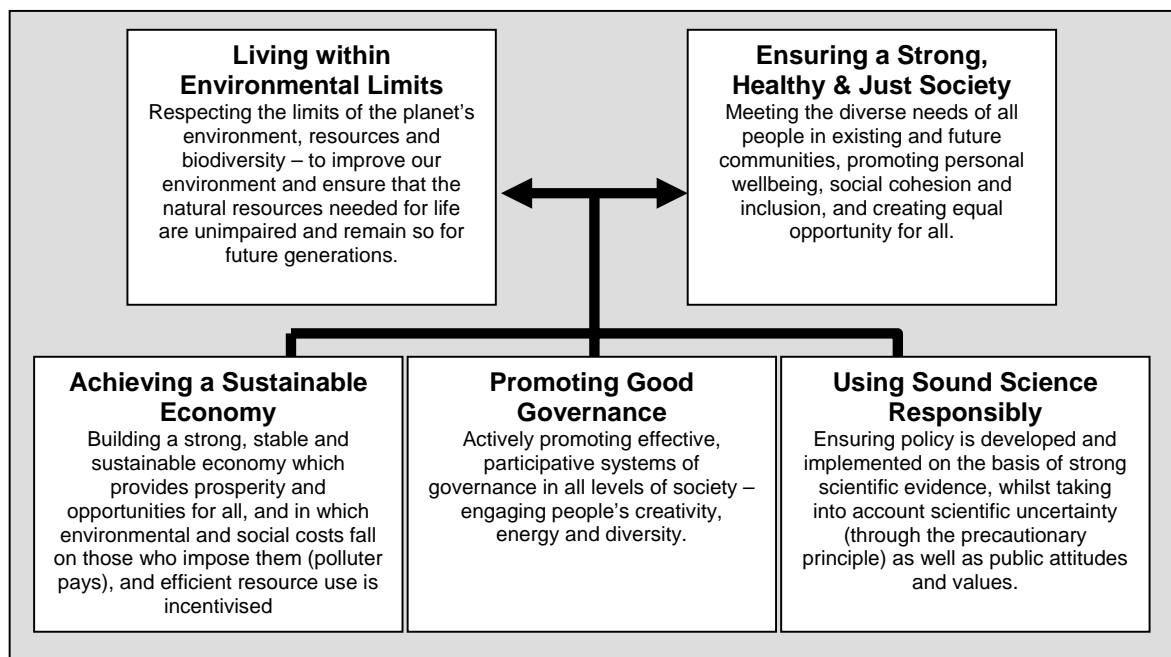


Figure 1: Guiding principles for sustainable development, ‘Securing the Future: delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy’ (2005).

The Strategy also identifies four priority areas for immediate action shared across the UK, these are:

**Sustainable Consumption and Production**

This means not only examining how goods and services are produced, but also the impacts of products and materials across their whole lifecycle and building on other people’s awareness of social and environmental concerns.

**Climate Change and Energy**

This will involve seeking to secure a profound change in the way we generate and use energy, and in other activities that that release these gases. At the same time we must prepare for the climate change that cannot now be avoided.

**Natural Resources Protection and Environmental Enhancement**

A better understanding of environmental limits, environmental enhancement and recovery where the environment is most degraded to ensure a decent environment for everyone, and a more integrated policy framework.

### **Sustainable Communities**

Working to give communities more power and say in the decisions that affect them; and working in partnership at the right level to get things done.

(Securing the Future; delivering UK sustainable development strategy, 2005)

The Strategy also pointed to the general good progress that UK has made in progress sustainable development. A good example is the Nation's recycling rate which has doubled since 1997 from 7.5% to 14%, with a preliminary estimate of 17% for 2003/04 though remains below that of many of its European counterparts such as Germany at 26.6% and Denmark at 18.7%.

### Regional

Sustainable development is also a top priority at the regional level. The Yorkshire and Humber Region was the first to adopt a commitment to contribute to the UK sustainable development targets through the publication of the Regional Economic Strategy in 2002. The Region has subsequently ensured that promoting sustainable development continues to be a central theme of key regional strategies, including Yorkshire & Humber Regional Assembly's "Advancing Together", together with numerous supporting plans and strategies including the Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Planning Guidance, Regional Waste Strategy and Yorkshire and Humber Climate Change Action Plan and Regional Waste Strategy. A Regional Sustainable Development Framework has also been agreed to ensure that sustainability is embedded into all plans and strategies. This Framework contains 15 aims and 4 cross cutting themes through which to work towards sustainable development, these are:

- Good quality employment opportunities available to all
- Conditions enabling business success, economic growth and investment
- Education and training opportunities building the skills and capacities of the population
- Safety and security for people and property
- Conditions and services engendering good health
- Culture, leisure and recreation opportunities available to all
- Vibrant communities participating in decision making
- Local needs met locally
- A transport network maximising access whilst minimising detrimental impacts
- A quality built environment and efficient land use patterns making good use of derelict sites, minimising travel and promoting balanced development
- Quality housing available to everyone
- A bio-diverse and attractive natural environment
- Minimal pollution levels

- Minimal greenhouse gas emissions and a managed response to the effects of climate change
- Prudent and efficient use of energy and natural resources with minimal production of waste

The cross-cutting themes are:

- Social inclusion and equity across all sectors
- A partnership and participative approach
- Geographic adaptation to meet the needs of rural and urban communities
- Creativity, innovation and appropriate use of technology

All this work has been supported by actions to improve the delivery and integration of regional and local actions such as the introduction of the Regional Energy Forum, which brings together key stakeholders to help manage the effects of the Region's Energy Sector on the environment and improve its environmental performance.

### Local

Local authorities are recognised as pivotal in delivering sustainable development. Local authorities deliver key services such as housing and waste; are major buyers of goods; influence how people live through education and land-use planning and co-ordinate services and activities through their key role in partnerships such as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). This key role was one of the main outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and numerous national reports and studies. A good example is the Government's Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Development which stated that "We believe that local authority...leaders, with the support of their cabinets, are best placed to develop a vision for the future of their area based on the sustainable community components, and to secure the buy-in of the community and other stakeholders".

Central Government has given councils important enhanced powers and duties to promote sustainable development. These are wide and diverse. At the strategic level, these notably include the duty to promote the well being of their area, to promote good health, the requirement on all local authorities to ensure that all community strategies contribute to sustainable development and the Shared Priority between national and local Government to promote "Sustainable Communities and Transport". At the more operational level, good examples include, the requirement that sustainable development should be a core principle "underpinning" land-use planning and the Secure Buildings Act (2004) which relates to improving the efficiency of buildings. Additionally, local authorities have also been set challenging targets by Government around many of the key aspects of sustainable development such as waste disposal, efficiency of new buildings and the amount of new development on formerly derelict land.



These powers and duties have been reinforced by the Government's recently published revised sustainable development strategy 'Securing the future: delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy'. This underlines the key roles councils have in promoting sustainable development, and confirms that progress in taking forward sustainable development will be a new Key Line of Enquiry in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. It also includes details of 68 sustainable development indicators which highlight priority areas shared across the UK.

### **5. Rotherham's Approach**

Rotherham, like all local authorities, devotes considerable resources to promoting sustainable development.

It is now a key cross cutting theme of Rotherham's new Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan. These are supported by a wide and diverse range of more operational plans and strategies such as the Local Development Framework (previously the Unitary Development Plan), Waste Strategy, Social Inclusion Framework, Environmental Action Plan, Regeneration Plan and South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan together with Programme Area and Service Area plans.

The Council has also developed numerous actions and services. These span all Programme Areas such as improving air quality and greens spaces, minimising waste, promoting economic development, transport and tackling inequalities. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is currently being refreshed and will also strongly feature sustainable development.

Recent years have seen a raft of measures introduced by the Council to improve the integration of sustainable development. These operate at many levels - the creation of a Members Sustainability Group at a strategic level, and at an operational level the introduction of Street-pride. Another good example is the Integrated General Appraisal Tool that is being developed to maximise potential strategies, plans and actions contribution to sustainable development.

The Council has also successfully sought to minimise its direct impact on the environment. It has introduced policies to reduce and minimise waste, car travel and harmful emissions - Rotherham MBC is reputedly the only council in the Country to have all its electricity needs met through 'green' sources. A number of its buildings have achieved Environmental Management System accreditation in recognition of the Council's success in managing the environmental impact of its services. The Council is also examining its procurement policy and is looking at options to strengthen the principles of sustainable development within it as part of its review of its Procurement Strategy.

The Council takes its community leadership role very seriously. It is, for example, one of a small number of local authorities that has a Cabinet Member with a specific sustainable development portfolio, and has established a Corporate Sustainability Member Working Group to co-ordinate and take forward sustainability issues, and drive the Council's sustainability aims. RMBC can point to many examples where it has shown strong vision and leadership in this area. Examples include, lobbying and campaigning around energy issues, the decision to purchase all its electricity needs from 'green' sources, the 'brownfield' focus of its regeneration programme which is transforming many hundreds of acres of formerly derelict land blighting the Borough into high quality housing, economic, recreational and other uses. We have also been effective in promoting the importance of sustainable development to some staff groups and the wider public through initiatives such as internal training programmes, School Waste Action Clubs and 'the don't be a tosser' campaign.

The Council has sought to add value by working in partnership. This is evidenced by the joint "LA21 in the Community" post with Groundwork Dearne Valley, the Buy-local Campaign with Rotherham Chamber of Commerce and its support for the social enterprise Creation Recycling.

## **6. How well is Rotherham MBC doing?**

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has a long and generally good track record in promoting sustainable development.

Progress is primarily monitored through indicators contained in many plans and strategies. These range from the high level Corporate Plan to more operational plans and strategies such as the Environmental Action Plan and individual Programme Area and Service plans. These indicators are mainly drawn from established sources such as the Government's Quality of Life Index.

Analysis of these indicators generally point to good progress across all the main aspects of sustainable development. For example, employment levels in the Borough are at their highest levels since records began, deprivation is falling, Rotherham's recycling rate has risen from less than 4% in 1999/2000 to 14.9% last year and the Council's record in reducing harmful emissions from its own buildings is amongst the best in the Country.

There is also good evidence that this progress is improving the quality of life for Rotherham people. Local surveys show improved satisfaction levels regarding the quality of green spaces, litter and fear of crime.

Furthermore, this general good progress is reflected in external inspections and reviews. The Audit Commission stated that "improving the environment is an important factor in regenerating neighbourhoods and Rotherham residents have seen positive change" (Best Value Review of Regeneration, 2004). In another

inspection the Audit Commission reported that “there has been a reduction in the amount of municipal and household waste, supported by an extensive recycling infrastructure” (Inspection of Waste Services, 2004). A number of Council buildings have also just secured EMAS accreditation in recognition of the progress the Council has made in improving environmental performance. Additionally, the Council has won an award for most improved score in the Business in the Community Environment Engagement Index survey (Yorkshire & Humber) in 2003, and in 2004 came 4th in the local authority sector.

However, despite this good progress in Rotherham's performance, there are still some areas where performance is generally below the national average e.g. educational attainment and average earnings. Also in a few areas performance has reduced, for example car usage and car ownership are both increasing at rates above the national average.

Recent work was carried out to analyse all Council service plans. These recognised sustainable development as an important cross cutting theme as highlighted by its inclusion in the service plans aims and themes, however many did not have specific aims or targets regarding the work they will be undertaking to address sustainable development. This will need to be improved in the future (utilising the service planning guidance and Impact Assessment Tools) to ensure programme areas make explicit links to how they will contribute to the Council's sustainable development agenda.

Rotherham's overall position is one of good progress in integrating and delivering sustainable development into the Council's policies and services, and this is delivering a better quality of life now and for the future. There still remains much work to be done to achieve the challenging aims the Council has set itself and those held in common with others, as set out in key plans and strategies such as the Community Strategy and Council's Corporate Plan. There is also further work to be done to develop a shared understanding of sustainable development across the Council.

Further, the council needs to provide advice and guidance to the LSP in order that sustainable development is inherent in the work undertaken across all of the themes of the Community Strategy.

## **7. The Way Forward**

The development of this Position Statement has highlighted a key area of potential improvement.

Generally the relationship between the numerous plans, strategies and programmes that contribute to promoting sustainable development in the Borough is good. There is recognition that these linkages in some areas could be enhanced, and better articulated. In particular, the aims contained in the

many plans and strategies have not been brought together into a single unified manageable set, and there are few indicators widely utilised at the strategic level that provide a composite picture of total Council activity in support of the delivery of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan for sustainable development. This can make it difficult for partners to coordinate their actions behind a coherent set of aims, and for the Council and agencies to track progress in meetings their sustainable development objectives.

It is proposed therefore that the Council should develop a Sustainable Development Framework. A succinct document which will set out a small number of intermediate composite aims that would link the high level priorities and objectives contained in the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan with more operational ones contained in thematic plans and programme and service area plans. It would also set out the key programmes of work that need to be delivered to achieve these aims and which the Council can be held directly accountable for the delivery of, together with outcome based indicators to measure and track progress. It would be developed within the context and in support of existing plans and strategies locally, regionally and nationally. A number of other local authorities have already developed such a framework to great effect. It will also highlight current gaps that we need to tackle to promote sustainable development. Its main purposes would be to:

- Provide a succinct public statement that would outline the Council's key sustainable development aims, the key actions and programmes that need to be delivered to achieve this and progress against these.
- Set out a small number of overarching strategic priorities that outline the Council's key contribution to promoting sustainable development in support of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan together with regional and national sustainable aims and objectives.
- Provide the main context and focus for sustainable development policy and decision making for the Council and in partnership with key stakeholders.
- Clarify and strengthen the relationship between the many Council sustainable development related strategies, plans, programmes, including service plans.
- Promote understanding of what is meant by sustainable development, and the Council's pivotal role in it.
- Monitor progress over the Council's contribution to promoting sustainable development (perhaps based on the sustainable development indicators set out in the Government's national Sustainable Development Strategy)

It is also proposed that an officer Sustainable Development Steering Group should be set up within the Council, initially to develop the proposed Sustainable Development Framework, and also more widely, to co-ordinate the Council's approach to sustainable development in support of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. This will provide further strengthening of the relationship and approach across programme areas.

Additionally, that a series of Officer and Member training events should be held to increase awareness throughout the council of sustainable development and of the importance of ensuring that it is mainstreamed within all new policies and initiatives.

Finally, it is proposed that this position statement should be taken to the LSP Board, in order that the LSP is included in the development of the Sustainable Development Framework, and will subsequently adopt it.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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