

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY COHESION

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

Date: Monday, 30 January 2006

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 19th December, 2005 (herewith). (Pages 1 - 6)
6. Community Planning Progress Report (Steve Holmes, Community Involvement Manager, to report)
7. Migrant Workers Update (Verbal Report by Zafar Saleem, Equalities and Diversity Manager).
8. Gypsy and Travellers Update (Verbal Update by Zafar Saleem, Equalities and Diversity Manager)
9. Womens' Strategy Update (Verbal Update by Janet Spurling, Equalities and Diversity Officer)
10. NRF Commissioning 2006/07 and 2007/08 - Update (report herewith) (Pages 7 - 12)
11. NRS Update (Verbal Update by Andrew Towler, Policy and Research Manager)
12. Year Ahead Commitment 43 - "Begin to deliver the Community Cohesion Action Plan" (report herewith) (Pages 13 - 21)

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting - Monday, 27th February, 2006 at 10.00 a.m.

Extra Report:-

14. R.M.B.C./Town and Parish Council Charter (report herewith) (Pages 22 - 43)

COMMUNITY COHESION
19th December, 2005

Present:- Councillor Robinson (in the Chair); Councillors Ali and Burton.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sangster.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

62. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21ST NOVEMBER, 2005

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion held on 21st November, 2005, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

Reference was made to Minute No. 53 (L.G.B.T. History Month Celebrations) and the need for an up-to-date and modern policy for flying flags at the Town Hall.

Members were in agreement about the need for a procedure. Discussion would take place with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services for the formulation of a specific policy, but that agreement be given to the flying of the rainbow flag during celebrations in February, 2006.

A report on the policy for flag flying would be submitted to Cabinet in due course for approval.

63. ROTHERHAM COMPACT

Zafar Saleem, Equalities and Diversity Manager, submitted a report, which outlined the completed internal consultation process that was undertaken on the Rotherham Compact Codes of Practice.

Members were informed that the Rotherham Compact was a statement of partnership between the Voluntary, Community, Statutory and Private sector partners represented in the Rotherham Partnership. It was a commitment to working together more closely and to respect each others rights and responsibilities. It offered a new approach to partnership and a framework to develop more detailed agreements in future work.

The Compact consisted of five Codes of Practice, each of which had an impact assessment stage within the Council. The Codes were:-

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

- Volunteering.

Discussion ensued on the structure of the Local Strategic Partnership and which organisations were and were not represented. It was suggested that as the Partnership was evolving, that the balance of influence for communities be extended to ensure some form of commonality across the borough.

Resolved:- That the completed Council's Impact Assessment Document on the five Codes of Practice be agreed.

(2) That the Impact Assessment Document be presented to the Rotherham Partnership Board and the Compact Implementation Group through the Local Strategic Partnership be agreed.

64. WOMEN'S STRATEGY GROUP

Consideration was given to the minutes of a meeting of the Women's Strategy Group held on Thursday, 17th November, 2005.

This group had been developed to look at key strategic issues to link into the delivery plan through consultation, with the aim of holding a conference to coincide with International Women's Day.

Membership of this group was fluid and nominations or expressions of interest should be forwarded on to the Equalities and Diversity Manager and he would pass them on to the most relevant person.

Members were also informed that Carol Mills, Executive Director – Resources, would be taking over as Chair of this group for all future meetings.

A request had also been made for a Council Member to be nominated to attend future meetings.

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

(2) That Councillor Burton be nominated as the Council Member representative to sit on this group.

65. NRF COMMISSIONING 2006/07 AND 2007/08

Deborah Fellowes, External and Regional Affairs Manager, submitted a report, which put forward proposals for commissioning within the new round of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (N.R.F.) for 2006/07 and 2007/08 and sought the support of the Cabinet Member for the draft N.R.F. Commissioning Framework.

The process of developing the N.R.F. Commissioning Framework had been closely aligned with the process of refreshing and refining the

Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (N.R.S.) and developing the Local Area Agreement (L.A.A.). The priorities identified were based primarily on research and evidence of need that had come from the extensive consultation carried out as part of the refresh of the N.R.S. and development of the L.A.A. All sectors have been involved in both of these initiatives.

The report outlined the process to ensure that funding was used strategically and to commission specific projects/pieces of work. This was designed to minimise the risk of local partners building up a further dependency on N.R.F. funding and creating a future sustainability problem. The approach outlined in the report would ensure that projects being developed and funded through N.R.F. were well aligned with the N.R.S. and L.A.A. The activities would be focused on addressing the inequalities faced by the deprived communities of Rotherham.

It was proposed that the existing management arrangements were refreshed through the establishment of a new Steering Group to oversee the commissioning and review of N.R.F. activity for 2006-2008. The Steering Group would oversee the process and advise the Chief Executive Officer Group within the Rotherham Partnership, who would make recommendations to the L.S.P. Board (and via the Chief Executive of RMBC to the Council's Cabinet).

It was proposed that this was composed of:-

- Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion (as Chair).
- Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods (as lead for Area Assembly Chairs).
- Senior representative from each local partner agency.
- Nominated representatives from private, voluntary and community sectors.
- Co-opted expertise for the NRS priority work areas as appropriate.

It was proposed that a 'Fund' be established that could be steered at Area Assembly level. The Fund would focus on local priorities within the criteria for N.R.F. and would be overseen by the Steering Group. It was, therefore, proposed to incorporate this into the framework based on the following principles:-

- A minimum allocation for each Area Assembly of £30,000 per annum.
- A top up allocation based on the population in N.R.F. areas and communities of interest within the Area Assembly boundary.

Whilst there was a focus on targeting of funding through strategic programmes, it was recognised that community groups and organisations could have a significant impact on local quality of life through small-scale activities at the local level. It was, therefore, proposed that a Community

Chest programme be established with £220,000 per annum for this purpose.

The key milestones for taking this forward and the formulae used target communities within Area Assembly boundaries were outlined in the report submitted.

Existing funding projects were given a reminder and a traffic light rating given relating to whether a project had secured mainstream or continued funding. It was not proposed that these existing projects should necessarily be funded in the future as no assessment had been made of their relative value for money or impact on outcomes and they would need to be assessed against other worthy initiatives being put forward through the commissioning process if they wished to bid for further resources as part of the Area Assembly local pot or Community Chest.

Members were given additional information on exit strategy updates for N.R.F. Projects 2005/06.

Resolved:- That the draft N.R.F. Commissioning Framework be supported and the establishment of a Steering Group to oversee the process be agreed.

(2) That the inclusion of a local fund for Area Assemblies within the Framework and consider the level of funding suggested for each area be agreed.

(3) That the inclusion of a Community Chest fund within the Framework and consider the level of funding suggested for this be agreed.

(4) That the N.R.F. Commissioning Framework be referred to the Cabinet for approval.

66. DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL STRATEGY

Colin Bulger, Head of Policy and Partnerships, submitted a report which outlined Rotherham Partnership's draft Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which was agreed for consultation by Rotherham Partnership at its most recent Board meeting.

Rotherham's current Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy was agreed in July 2004, and intended to cover the period 2004 to 2010. An integral part of the Community Strategy, it sought to ensure that all communities benefited from the economic, social and environmental progress in the Borough by addressing root causes of deprivation and driving forward improved services, co-ordination and delivery at neighbourhood level.

In its September Board meeting, Rotherham Partnership Board agreed to a refresh of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, with a particular focus on:-

- Improving its alignment with new Community Strategy following its refresh.
- Strengthening targeting and develop local indicators - at the time the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy was being developed, available information to support targeting and develop local indicators was limited. Since the strategy was published, work has been undertaken to improve this information base through commissioned research and the development of research and performance capacity within partner organisations.
- Reflect and incorporate the raft of new national policy and good practice in relation to neighbourhood well being.

Members were advised that through detailed profile analysis, the strategy identified a small number of communities of interest that suffered from high levels of deprivation. These were:-

- Minority Ethnic Communities and Asylum Seekers.
- Disabled People and their Carers.
- Vulnerable Older People and their Carers.
- Deprived Children and Young People.

Resolved:- (1) That the overarching strategic framework be noted.

(2) That the proposed targeting of communities of place and interest be noted.

(3) That the timetable for finalising the strategy be noted.

67. OLDER PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE - EVALUATION REPORT

Andrew Towleron, Policy and Research Manager, gave a verbal report on the Older People's Conference held on 2nd December, 2005, which was held for all persons over the age of fifty.

Over one hundred people attended to listen to a series presentations and workshops in the afternoon, including a talk by John Healy, M.P.

Some of the emerging issues that were discussed included housing, crime, transport, safety in the interchange, employment opportunities and community learning.

Feedback received would be fed into the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and the Older People's Strategy.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

68. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion take place on Monday, 30th January, 2006 commencing at 10.00 a.m.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member (Community Cohesion) and Advisors
2.	Date:	30th January, 2006
3.	Title:	NRF Commissioning 2006/07 and 2007/08 - Update
4.	Programme Area:	Chief Executive's Department

5. Summary

This report provides brief update on progress with the commissioning framework for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).

6. Recommendations

Members are requested to note progress on the NRF Commissioning Framework.

7. Proposals and Details

Background

A report was presented to the meeting of the Cabinet Member (Community Cohesion) and Advisors on 19th December. This report now provides a short update on progress.

The process of developing the NRF Commissioning Framework has been closely aligned with the process of refreshing and refining the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS) and developing the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The priorities identified are based primarily on research and evidence of need that has come from the extensive consultation carried out as part of the refresh of the NRS and development of the LAA. All sectors have been involved in both of these initiatives.

The target communities for the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy are:

- Geographical areas of deprivation (Aughton, Brinsworth, Central, Dinnington, Flanderwell, Kimberworth Park, Maltby, Masbrough, Rawmarsh, Swinton North, Wath, Wath East, West Melton).
- Communities of Interest (the four target communities of interest are: Minority Ethnic Communities; Disabled People and their Carers; Vulnerable Older People and their Carers; and Deprived Children and Young People).

Reports on the Commissioning process have also been presented to meetings of the Cabinet, Area Assembly Chairs, and the Chief Executive Officer Group of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). Further reports will be presented to PSOC on 20th January and to the LSP Board on 24th January.

At Cabinet, Members commented on the 'titling' of a small number of the target areas and this will be addressed when the final framework is completed.

The Commissioning Framework is still in the process of refinement but there is general support for activity across the three elements in the programme:

- Strategically identified activity across themed areas.
- Locally identified activity across the themed areas (based on Area Assembly boundaries).
- Community identified activity across the themed areas.

The proposal for a new Steering Group to oversee the commissioning and review of NRF activity for 2006-2008 has also been received positively – draft terms of reference are attached at Annex A.

Next Steps

The key priorities for NRF are being refined with a target date of delivery starting on April 1st at the earliest – as this is a developing process, the latest position will be reported verbally at the meeting.

8. Finance

The financial implications of this report relate to the effective and strategic use of NRF. NRF allocations are as follows:

2006/07 - £3,495,660

2007/08 - £3,511,557

Year	Total Available Budget	Strategic Commissioning	Area based Fund	Community Chest
2006/07	£3, 495, 660	£2,855,660	£420,000	£220,000
2007/08	£3, 511, 557	£2,871,557	£420,000	£220,000

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Framework will ensure that funding is used strategically with commissioning of specific projects/pieces of work. This is designed to minimise the risk of local partners building up a further dependency on NRF funding and creating a future sustainability problem.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The approach outlined in the paper will ensure that projects being developed and funded through NRF are done so in line with the Council's Corporate Plan, the Community Strategy, the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Regeneration Plan. The activities will be focused on addressing the inequalities faced by the deprived communities of Rotherham.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation is ongoing and has been carried out via the LSP Structures and a specific working group for each of the Theme Boards.

12. Contact Names:

Lee Adams, Assistant Chief Executive, ext 2788,

lee.adams@rotherham.gov.uk

Deborah Fellowes, Acting Director, Rotherham LSP, ext 2769,

Deborah.fellowes@rotherham.gov.uk

Waheed Akhtar, Partnership Officer (Regeneration), ext 2795

waheed.akhtar@rotherham.gov.uk

Annex A
NRF Steering Group
DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

Name of Partnership:
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Steering Group.
Overall Aim:
To assess, develop and oversee the commissioning arrangements for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (2006-2008) and to ensure funds are used effectively in the delivery of the local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS).
Objectives:
<p>The NRF Steering Group will perform the following core functions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assist in finalising and disseminating strategic implementation plans in relation to the NRF commissioning framework. 2. To identify organisations with the potential to deliver against the commissioning framework and to invite and assess tenders as appropriate, making recommendations to the Partnership Board for final approval. 3. To assess applications prioritised via the Area Assembly and Community Chest strands for strategic fit and to make the final decision on grant awards through these strands. 4. To make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer Group regarding the ongoing monitoring and management of the NRF programme, in light of Rotherham Partnership's strategic role with regard to other sources of external funding e.g. SRB, Single Pot etc.
Method of Operation:
<p>Chairing of Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, RMBC <p>Frequency of Meetings:</p> <p>Fortnightly between February and April.</p> <p>Location of Meetings:</p> <p>To be rotated between partner organisations.</p>

Accountability to Partnership Board

Reporting to the Board through the Chief Executive Officer Group.

Relationship to Chief Executive Officer Group:

The Group's role is to ensure consistent, fair and timely assessment of project applications/tenders on behalf of the Partnership Board and Chief Executive Officer Group.

Relationship to the Accountable Body (RMBC):

The Accountable Body (RMBC) has a responsibility to advise the NRF Steering Group on guidelines and procedures with regard to use of NRF, in liaison with Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber.

Membership:

Core Team:

- Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, RMBC (as Chair).
- Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, RMBC (as lead for Area Assembly Chairs).
- Senior representatives from the following partner agencies:
 - South Yorkshire Police
 - Rotherham PCT
 - Rotherham Chamber of Commerce
 - Voluntary Action Rotherham
 - Further Education
 - Nominated representative from private sector
 - Nominated representative from voluntary sector
 - Nominated representative from community sector
- Co-opted expertise for the NRS priority work areas as appropriate.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
--

1.	Meeting:	Community Cohesion Delegated Powers
2.	Date:	30 th January, 2006
3.	Title:	Year Ahead Commitment 43 - “Begin to deliver the Community Cohesion Action Plan”
4.	Programme Area:	Chief Executive’s Department

5. Summary

To update Delegated Powers meeting on the progress of commitment 43 in the Year Ahead Statement 2005-2006 “Begin to deliver the Community Cohesion Action Plan”.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. **Note the progress made on implementing the Council’s Community Cohesion Action Plan 2005/2006 as set out in Appendix 1.**
2. **Receive a further update report in March 2006 including priorities for the Council’s Community Cohesion Action Plan 2006/2007.**
3. **Note that the Council has been shortlisted for the LGC Sustainable Communities Awards 2006 for our work on Community Cohesion.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

Rotherham Partnership has produced and adopted a "Community Cohesion Strategy" and an "Operating Plan" to deliver the Strategy. Both of these documents were subject to a report to CMT and approved on 18th October 2004. The Partnership requested that all partners identify key tasks and actions as their contribution to the delivery of the Community Cohesion Strategy. CMT and Cabinet approved the Council's Community Cohesion Action Plan submitted in a report on 23 March 2005 as our contribution to Rotherham Partnership's Community Cohesion Strategy.

As part of commitment 43 of the Year Ahead Statement to progress the Community Cohesion Action Plan the progress/feedback shown in the Community Cohesion Action Plan in Appendix 1 demonstrates that the Council have made a significant progress and is on target towards the delivery/completion of the plan. Through implementation of the actions indicated the Council would meet the guidance issued by the Local Government Association and Home Office on promoting community cohesion.

The Council will be working with the Local Strategic Partnership to identify priorities for 2006/2007 and set further targets and actions for delivery of the Community Cohesion strategy. A half day consultation event with key stakeholders took place on in November 2005 and the following were identified as priority areas for future work:

- Engagement with young people especially those from the bme community.
- Inter-faith dialogue with a focus on the Christian and Muslim communities.
- Continuing to challenge prejudice and discrimination with an emphasis on tackling racial harassment and homophobia.
- Promoting interaction between Rotherham's diverse communities through celebratory events such as the Diversity Festival.
- Gathering community intelligence to act quickly and decisively to challenge myths and rumour that could potentially divide our communities.

The 2006/2007 priorities will form a delivery plan that will be finalised by February 2006 and will be reported back to CMT for approval in March 2006.

7.2 Comments on Action Plan

Objectives numbers 1 to 4 & 6 to 8 have been completed.

Objective 5 - Revisit the provision for travellers in the Borough.

A report was submitted to CMT in September 2005 recommending the establishment of an Inter-Agency Group and setting out the policy agenda for addressing traveller issues. The Inter-Agency Group has been established with officers drawn from the relevant Programme Areas, the LSP, PCT, and SYP. A sub-regional needs assessment is currently being undertaken South Yorkshire Housing Advisers Forum. The needs assessment is to cover road side encampments, a site, and the requirements of the community in settled accommodation. A position statement will be available in January 2006 and following consultation with members of the Inter-Agency Group, a report will be submitted to CMT in February/March 2006.

Objective 9 - Develop a clear strategy for promoting diversity at the Rotherham show.

A Diversity Festival Steering Group has been established with membership drawn from Culture, Leisure, and Lifelong Learning, CXD, artists and performers, the LSP, and voluntary community sector. This group is looking at how best to promote the Diversity Festival within the main Rotherham Show weekend. The Strategic Leader, Culture, Leisure, and Lifelong Learning is currently exploring options for securing the long term funding for the Diversity Festival. External funding for the 2006 Diversity Festival is being sought and REMA has been successfully shortlisted for this work for the first round of the A4e grant.

Objective 10 - Develop Community Cohesion actions across Neighbourhoods/ Area Assemblies.

Actions that tackle community cohesion, identified through local community planning, are to be included in Area Assembly Action Plans. All seven Area Action Plans to be based on the five Community Strategy Themes and underpinned by the sustainable development and fairness themes. The Proud theme includes actions relating to community cohesion to ensure a link with the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Rotherham Partnership's Cohesive Communities Operation Plan and the Council's Community Cohesion Action Plan. Draft Action Plans are scheduled to be produced by April 2006 with finalised plans to be implemented in June 2006.

7.3 LGC Sustainable Communities Award 2006

The Council has been shortlisted for the Local Government Chronicle Sustainable Communities Awards 2006. Senior Officers, Community Leaders, and Elected Members will be attending the awards event on 2 February 2006 in London. The Council's bid was put together by the CXD and Rotherham Partnership and features examples of activities and initiatives carried out in 2005 that foster positive community relations. Examples included the Peace Tent at Rotherham Show, support for Rotherham LGBT group, and our work with the local Muslim community on Emergency Planning and responding to the London Bombings.

8. Finance

The costs of the Community Cohesion initiatives highlighted in the action plan have been met through mainstreaming activities, with the exception of work undertaken with under the banner of the Diversity Festival which has been met through external funding.

The costs of attendance at the Local Government Chronicle Sustainable Communities Awards 2006 will be met by the CXD.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Rotherham Borough has not experienced the disturbances that have occurred elsewhere in the country and abroad. However, community tensions will always exist and so it is vital that the Council remains vigilant, not complacent, and continuously monitors the impact of its policies and practices on community relations, and proactively promotes trust, understanding, and mutual respect between the different cultures and communities of interest that exist within the Borough.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Promoting community cohesion contributes to the Proud and Fair themes of the refreshed Community Strategy and Council Corporate Plan.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report to CMT 18th October 2004 – Taking Forward The Community Cohesion Agenda.

Rotherham Partnership's Community Cohesion Strategy (a "Community Cohesion Strategic Framework for Action" and a Delivery Plan (an "Annual Operating Plan").

Local Government Association and Home Office guidance.

Report to Cabinet 23rd March 2005 - Year Ahead commitment 43 - "To prepare and adopt a Community Cohesion Strategy" which endorsed the "Community Cohesion Action Plan"

Contact Name:

Zafar Saleem, Manager, Equalities, Community Cohesion & Inclusion, Ext. 2757,
zafar.saleem@rotherham.gov.uk

Myriam Berrada, Equalities & Diversity Unit, Ext 2767
myriam.berrada@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – RMBC Community Cohesion Action Plan – Progress

Rotherham Borough Council's Community Cohesion Action Plan 2005/2006

Rotherham Borough Council is committed to promoting community cohesion and set out below is the Council's contribution to the delivery of the Community Cohesion Strategy produced by Rotherham Partnership.

OBJECTIVE	LEAD	SUPPORT PARTNERS	TASKS	DEADLINE/TIMESCALE	Progress
<p>1a Support the Cohesive Communities Partnership and the Community Cohesion Coordinator to deliver community cohesion within the context of the refreshed Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.</p> <p>1b Ensure delivery of Community Cohesion elements of Corporate Plan.</p>	Manager Equality & Diversity Unit, CXD.	Community Cohesion Coordinator.	<p>1. Attendance at 6 weekly Community Cohesion meetings.</p> <p>2. Establish regular liaison meetings between the Community Cohesion Coordinator and the Council.</p> <p>3. Oversee delivery of actions once in Corporate Plan.</p>	<p>1. March 2005</p> <p>2. March 2005</p> <p>3. March 2006</p>	<p>1. Completed.</p> <p>2. Completed.</p> <p>3. Completed.</p>
<p>2 Monitor levels of cohesion within the Borough by providing quality information to the Cohesive Communities Partnership and all Partners.</p>	Neighbourhood Statistics Coordinator, Policy & Research Unit, CXD.	Community Cohesion Coordinator.	Produce multiple analyses of indicators.	March 2005	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Monitoring of tension indicators ongoing.</p>

OBJECTIVE	LEAD	SUPPORT PARTNERS	TASKS	DEADLINE/TIMESCALE	Progress
3 Identify current community cohesion good practice within the Council.	Manager Equality & Diversity Unit, CXD.	All Programme Areas.	Map existing activity and produce report evaluating the outcomes and impact on Community Cohesion.	August 2005	Completed.
4 Develop a strategy for asylum seekers and refugees in Rotherham.	Team Leader, Asylum Project Team, Neighbourhoods.	Community Cohesion Coordinator.	Draft Asylum Seeker and Refugee Action plan developed.	April 2006	Completed.
5 Revisit the provision for travellers in the Borough.	Principal Policy & Planning Officer, Neighbourhoods.	Policy & Research Unit, CXD; Equality & Diversity Unit, CXD; ECaLS; and EDS.	Production of a Travellers Strategy.	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Report to CMT submitted in September 2005. ✓ An Inter-Agency Group has been established. ✓ A needs analysis is being completed. ✓ A position statement and report to be submitted to CMT in Feb/Mar 2006.
6 Monitor levels of Racial, LGBT and DV incidents within the Borough.	Policy Officer Crime & Disorder, CXD	MAARI, Domestic Violence Coordinator, and LGBT community.	Production of quarterly reports identifying issues and trends.	April 2005.	Completed.
7 Ensure that emergency planning systems are culturally sensitive and	Equality & Diversity Officer, EDS.	Equality & Diversity Unit,	1. Hold 4 focus groups with	November 2005	Completed

OBJECTIVE	LEAD	SUPPORT PARTNERS	TASKS	DEADLINE/TIMESCALE	Progress
inclusive in design and delivery.		CXD; Emergency Planning Team, EDS; Community Cohesion Coordinator; and Risk Management Officer, Social Services.	members of the community. 2. Revise Emergency Planning Guidelines as appropriate to ensure needs of community met.		
8 Publish regular “myth busters” and other positive information on asylum.	Team Leader, Asylum Project Team, Neighbourhoods.	Community Cohesion Coordinator; and Head of Communications, CXD.	Production of regular fact sheets and dissemination of information through media	April 2005	Completed.
9 Develop a clear strategy for promoting diversity at the Rotherham show.	Strategic Leader, Culture, Leisure, and Lifelong Learning.	All Partner Agencies; and Equality & Diversity Unit, CXD.	1. Produce strategy for Diversity Festival 2. Secure funding for 2006 festival.	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diversity Festival Steering Group has been established. ✓ Aims & objectives of the Diversity Festival agreed. ✓ Long term funding for Diversity Festival being sought. ✓ External funding application submitted in partnership with REMA for 2006 Diversity Festival.

OBJECTIVE	LEAD	SUPPORT PARTNERS	TASKS	DEADLINE/TIMESCALE	Progress
<p>10 Develop Community Cohesion actions across Neighbourhoods/ Area Assemblies.</p>	<p>Head of Neighbourhood Development Services, Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Community Cohesion Co-ordinator.</p>	<p>Neighbourhoods/ Area Assembly Action Plans.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Actions that tackle community cohesion identified through local community planning are to be included in Area Assembly Action Plans. ✓ Cycle of Community Planning started. Two community plans produced. ✓ Each Area Assembly to have an Action Plan in place by June 2006. ✓ Drafts to be completed by April 2006.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
--

1.	Meeting:	DELEGATED POWERS – COMMUNITY COHESION
2.	Date:	30th January, 2006
3.	Title:	Progress on the Joint Charter between Parish Councils and Town Councils and RMBC.
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods

5. Summary

This report provides an update on the development of a joint working charter between Rotherham's Parish and Town Councils and RMBC. The Charter will set out how the two tiers of local government aim to work closer together for the well being of local people and to promote engagement with the democratic process.

6. Recommendations

THAT THE REPORT AND PROGRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINT CHARTER BETWEEN RMBC AND PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS BE NOTED.

7. Proposals and Details

The Rural White Paper of 2000 identified the potential for Town and Parish councils to take on a stronger role as part of the Modernising Local Government agenda. The paper introduced the concept of Quality Parish and Town councils and highlighted their potential to give town and rural communities a better deal on services and a stronger voice in decisions affecting their daily lives. The White paper clearly indicated that the Government envisages local councils providing strong local leadership and working in partnership with principal authorities to improve the quality and range of services available.

Parish and Town Councils are the first tier of democratic government in England. Rotherham currently has 29 Parish and Town Councils of which three are classed as Parish Meetings. In August 2004 the Democratic and Resources Scrutiny Panel reviewed the current situation with regard to:-

- The current relationship between the principal Council and Parish and Town Councils in Rotherham
- The possible impact of Quality Parish Council legislation
- Good practice from other authorities

This review was considered by Cabinet in September 2004 and the following recommendations of the report supported:

- Begin the process of negotiating a joint working Charter.
- Improve communications - consultation to be formalised
- Provide a link officer in each programme area to provide liaison when required
- Training and development opportunities to be opened up to parish clerks and councillors
- Other forms of support e.g legal services to be available to parish councils (at an agreed cost)
- Guidance on funding opportunities to be provided

Our approach to developing a charter

Following this a Seminar was held in January 2005 between RMBC and all Parish and Town Councils to look at how to improve joint working between the two tiers. It was agreed that the Yorkshire Local Councils Association would be asked to arrange a representative working group from the Parish Councils to work with the Council on the detail of the Charter. Following the seminar twenty four local councils confirmed their commitment to developing a joint charter.

A summary of progress in relation to all of the actions listed above is provided in **Appendix A**.

Progress

During April 2005 an officers working group met with representation from Neighbourhoods, Education Culture and Leisure, Chief Executive, Economic and Development Services, Resources and Rotherham 2010. This task of this group is to ensure that the Charter is

viewed as a high profile issue within their service area and that a link is established for Parish Councils when relevant issues arise.

The Yorkshire Local Councils Association arranged a postal ballot for nominations to be made for the working group during July and August 2005. The nominations were discussed at the South Yorkshire Local Councils branch meeting of the 5th of October 2005 and it was decided that the issue would be finalised by candidates being placed in a further postal ballot to be sent to all Rotherham's Parish and Town Councils.

The YLCA will again arrange this process and have provided a timetable to ensure that ballot papers are returned to them and the elected representatives known by the 23rd of December 2005.

Following this a series of Charter development meetings and events will take place in early 2006.

A summary of the framework to deliver the Charter by March 2006 is provided in **Appendix B**.

The Charter

It is proposed that the Charter will use the good practice framework provided by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as a starting point. The Charter will set out:-

- A basic statement of mutual rights and responsibilities
- Promote and embed joined up working between the two tiers which will underpin public confidence in local democracy.
- Develop a framework for service devolution and financial arrangements
- Support more councils to obtain Quality status
- Set out a performance and review structure which remains flexible for change and amendment as things develop.

The development of the Charter represents an important element of the move by the Council and partner agencies towards a Neighbourhood Management approach to the delivery of services. Members are currently considering the revised governance arrangements for Area Assemblies and a Neighbourhood Management Coordination Group, working through the Local Strategic Partnership, is taking forward a range of activity aimed at improving the local coordination and integration of services.

The Charter will provide a strong framework for future decisions regarding the role of Parish and Town Councils in the delivery of local services and in strengthening the accountability of service providers to local communities.

8. Finance

Significant restructuring of budgets and processes will be required in future if Parish and Town Councils request consideration to devolve some services to a neighbourhood level. The government is currently looking at a national neighbourhood framework to address the issue of inequality in the ability to raise resources between different neighbourhoods.

Parish Councillors will need financial support to obtain training and development if they are to develop a wider community leadership role and make the most of new opportunities.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There is a wide variation in the degree to which Parish Councils currently engage in Area Assembly processes. The framework that is being developed to set out a clear role and function for area assemblies as a partnership vehicle will need to provide greater clarity for the future.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The issues set out in this report link to key elements of the Government's vision for neighbourhood development, promoting local democracy and delivering community leadership.

Community Strategy

Developing closer ties with Parish and Town Councils links with the PROUD theme and the key priorities: "Develop local democracy at a neighbourhood level, devolving powers and resources and increasing opportunities for engagement."

Corporate Plan

Support Parish and Town Councils in achieving quality status: Develop a Parish Councils accord and strengthen joint working.

Year Ahead Statement:

Contributes to Action Point 36: The Community and Voluntary Sectors, Parish and Town Councils.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Cabinet/CMT Report 29 March 2005
- Charters for Town and Parish Councils and Principal Local Authorities: A Good Practice Guide April 2005
- Rural White Paper 2000
- Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter ODPM 2005
- Scrutiny Review August 2004
- Vibrant Local Leadership ODPM 2005
- Together We Can: Civic Renewal Unit 2005

Contact Names : Tom Cray, Executive Director Neighbourhoods Ext 3401
Tom.cray@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix A

Key Actions since January 2005

- Seminar held between RMBC and local councils in to discuss improved joint working. Local councils asked to consider if they would support the development of a Charter with support from the Yorkshire Local Councils Association (YLCA).
- 24 of 29 local councils confirmed their commitment to RMBC to develop the Charter.
- Officer working group formed to drive the Charter within each programme area and Rotherham 2010. Key contacts established to improve communications and provide link officer network.
- Agreement to provide training for parish clerks and councillors alongside elected members agreed in principle.
- Draft Charter written based on existing national and local good practice with guidance provided by the ODPM. Draft to provide basis for opening negotiations.
- YLCA to arrange postal ballot requesting nominations from local councils to form a working group of 5 members with 2 deputies to represent local councils during negotiations with RMBC.
- Ballot papers sent out by the YLCA to all Rotherham's local councils with deadline for return of the 23rd December 2005.
- RMBC working group to negotiate Charter established December 2005. A Representative from the Resources programme area will sit on the working group to provide guidance on practical support for Parish Councils and other relevant funding issues.

Appendix B

Charter Delivery Framework January to March 2006

- First meeting of the joint working group scheduled for the 05/01/06. Template Charter to be developed at this session and distributed for wider consultation with local councils.
- Parish Councils seminar to be held 28/01/06 to examine proposed Charter. Event to be facilitated by the Yorkshire Local Councils Association using their experience in Charter formation.
- Second meeting of the joint working group in February 2006 to consider final amendments to Charter.
- Final meeting of joint working group in February 2006 to approve Charter and agree content of report to Cabinet.
- Final Charter for Council and partners to be agreed in March 2006 linked with strengthened Council Community Governance arrangements to involve Parish and Town Councils.

Rotherham



The Joint Charter

JOINT CHARTER BETWEEN
ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL AND
ROTHERHAM'S PARISH AND TOWN
COUNCILS

This is a charter negotiated by the Parishes working group on behalf of Rotherham Parish and Town Councils and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and endorsed by the following at a charter conference held at Rotherham Town Hall on Saturday 4th February 2006:

Name/signature

Council

Name/signature

Council

Joint Charter between Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and Rotherham's Parish and Town Councils.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

2. All Parish and Town Councils

3. Quality Parish and Town Councils

Appendix 1 Financial Arrangements

Appendix 2 Possible functions to be delegated by mutual consent

Appendix 3 Specific functions to be delegated by mutual consent to Quality Parish Councils

Appendix 4 Consultation process

Appendix 5 Compliment and complaints procedure

Appendix 6 Principal RMBC contacts

Appendix 7 Support services

THE JOINT CHARTER

Introduction

1. Rotherham Borough Council and the Parish and Town Councils of Rotherham recognise the benefits of publishing a joint charter. In particular, the Parish and Town Councils signed up to the charter are committed to supporting the principal authority through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the principal authority is committed to supporting the parish and town councils in their drive for Quality Parish Council status
2. The Charter is a result of local consultation to deliver a new, closer working relationship and to provide mutual support between the two tiers, confirms existing good practice and reflects the increasing importance attached by Central Government to partnership working
3. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acknowledges that Parish and Town Councils are the grass roots level of local government. By working with them both individually and collectively the principal authority aims to act in partnership with local communities whilst balancing the needs of the wider community.
4. In their role as democratically accountable bodies Parish and Town Councils offer a means of shaping the decisions that affect their communities and neighbourhoods. They offer a means of decentralising the provision of certain services and of revitalising local communities and neighbourhoods. In turn, Parish and Town Councils recognise the strategic role of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and the distribution of services which it has to achieve.
5. Rotherham Borough Council recognises the diversity of the various Parish and Town Councils and of the communities they serve.
6. The Charter is a flexible and adaptable document so as to keep pace with changing circumstances and arrangements for local government. This will be achieved by the minimum of an annual review and a Quarterly meeting of the Joint Working Group.

All Parish and Town Councils

Community Strategy, Local Strategic Partnerships and Sustainability.

7. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will work in partnership with all Parish and Town Councils within its area to promote sustainable social, economic and environmental development for the benefit of local communities.

8. Where a Parish or Town Council (or group of Parish or Town Councils) has prepared a Parish plan, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will take account of its proposals and priorities. The principal authority will work to strengthen the links between these Parish and Town councils and the local strategic partnership in order to improve the delivery of local priorities.

9. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acknowledges that Parish and Town Councils will play a key role as a partner within the evolving Area Assembly process.

10. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will hold an annual conference at the beginning of each year to discuss issues of mutual interest with Parish and Town Councils.

11. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council representatives will be invited to attend meetings with Parish and Town councils groups when appropriate.

12. Parish and Town Councils will send copies of their agendas and papers to the relevant programme area representative officers and, on request, to RMBC Ward Councillors. RMBC officers and Ward Members will be given an opportunity to speak at Parish and Town Council meetings on matters of mutual interest.

13. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will provide support in the administration of the holding of Parish and Town Council elections. The respective authorities will work together to limit the costs of holding such elections.

Consultation

14. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will aim to provide a reasonable consultation period to allow Parish and Town Councils the opportunity to comment before making a decision which affects the local community, providing

this does not affect statutory requirements and having regard to the cycle of meetings of both Borough and Parish and Town Councils.

15. In addition Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will circulate a list of its public reports to Parish Clerks at the same time as they are sent to members of the principal authority. Parish and Town Councils will ensure that local Ward Members are kept informed and given the opportunity to comment before making a major decision that affects the community. Only in exceptional circumstances will the appropriate consultation period not take place, in which case a written explanation will be given on request.

16. The Borough Council will ensure that, when invited, Elected Members will attend meetings of Parish Councils to discuss matters of mutual interest.

17. To ensure that communications are channelled effectively, contact between Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and any Parish and Town Council will be focused through the Parish Clerk or Parish Chairperson in the case of Parish Meetings. Contact within the principal authority will normally be through the nominated officer from each programme area as listed in Appendix 6.

18. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council supports the Parish and Town Council liaison function and all officers in each department within the principal authority will recognise this function and be guided by the consultation commitment within Appendix 4. The principal authority is committed to providing appropriate training to elected members and officers about the roles and functions of Parish and Town Councils.

Information and Complaints

19. RMBC and Parish and Town Councils will look at the feasibility of developing a joint newsletter with the aim of improving communications and flow of information between the two tiers.

20. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and the Parish and Town Councils will acknowledge letters sent by the other party and provide substantive answers to letters/emails that need a reply. For the principal authority this will be in accordance with its Customer Charter. A full substantive reply or an acknowledgement will be sent by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council or the Parish and Town Council within 10 working days. If an acknowledgement is sent, the full substantive reply will be sent within 28 days unless there are reasons for a longer period.

21. If a Parish or Town Council wishes to compliment Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Councils service then this should be addressed to the designated programme area contact officer for that service. If a Parish or Town Council is dissatisfied with the principal authority's actions, its response to a request for information or its failure to consult it can initiate a formal complaints procedure. The procedure for dealing with Parish and Town Council compliments or a complaint is attached in Appendix 5.

Standards Committee

22. Both Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and the Parish and Town Councils have adopted Codes of Conduct, based on the national model of Code of Conduct. The Parish and Town Councils will work with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's Standards Committee to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

Shared Responsibility for Service Provision

23. If a Parish or Town Council (or group of Parish and Town Councils) wishes to take on shared responsibility for service delivery, the principal authority will consider this, where it is Best Value (taking account of cost, quality, local preferences and practicality). Where it is not Best Value or practicable the principal authority will, in consultation with the Parish or Town Council, explore alternative solutions to allow a local level input into service delivery.

Financial Arrangements

24. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has set out it's financial arrangements for Parish and Town Councils in Appendix 1 in accordance with it's principles and good practice guidance.

25. Where a Parish and Town Council takes on the provision of certain services, the level of funding will be agreed by the principal authority and the Parish and Town Council. A list of possible functions which can be considered for delegation by mutual consent are listed in Appendix 2.

Promoting Community Improvements and Practical Support

26. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will promote the local community life through discussions with individual Parish and Town Councils regarding their plans for any improvements and how they can be supported. Examples of support could include developing Parish plans, the potential for shared access to appropriate electronic information and funding advice.

27. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council will, where practical, offer Parish and Town Councils access to it's own support services to enable them to take advantage of the economies of scale. A menu of support services will be developed, with some supplied by RBT, the principal authority's strategic partner. **Service level agreements will need to be agreed by all parties before these can be undertaken.** (Please see Appendix 7 for a list of possible support services.)

28. Where appropriate training and development opportunities for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Councillors will be opened up for Parish and Town Councillors, Parish and Town Clerks as appropriate in relation to officer development opportunities, subject to agreement between all parties on apportionment of costs.

Quality Parish and Town Councils, Delegation of Functions and Service Provision

29. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council supports the Quality Parish Council initiative and will actively encourage Parish and Town Councils to attain the accreditation. The principal authority will give Quality councils or (groups of Quality councils) who wish to, the opportunity to put forward proposals to take on aspects of the delivery, management and monitoring of services currently provided by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. The services that could be considered for potential devolution, or parts of them, are those listed in appendix 3, in accordance with the practical and financial arrangements set out in appendix 1

APPENDIX 1

Financial Arrangements

The financial arrangements between Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and the Parish and Town Councils will be based on the current government guidance, including:-

The Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme June 2003
Guidance from central government on avoiding double taxation

Whole Service Transfers

Proposals for service transfer may be based on all of a service within the Borough, or all of the service within a Parish area. Where it is proposed that a whole service is to be transferred to the Parish and Town Council community in Rotherham, all of the direct costs will be raised by the operating councils. Any contractual implications arising from the transfer will need to be considered fully and resolved prior to the service being transferred.

Transfers to a Parish

Where there is a proposal for a transfer of a service to a Parish, provided the transfer meets the requirements as set out in the Charter (see paragraph 22), it will be supported financially by the relevant direct costs for that service being transferred as a grant, providing it will not have a detrimental financial impact on service provision across the Borough.

The Councils' party to this Charter will consider the transfer of additional associated costs. Any contractual implications arising from the transfer will need to be fully considered and resolved before the service is transferred.

Principles

The principle of the service transfer and the associated financial impact will be subject to Member approval at the appropriate level.

Double Taxation

The Councils' party to this Charter will make every effort to avoid double taxation, having regard to the government's guidance. As a general rule all the components of a service in that particular parish area will be transferred simultaneously.

Appendix 2

Possible functions which may, by mutual consent, be considered for delegation.

(GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES)

- Markets
- Street Cleaning
- Maintenance of Highway verges, footways and footpaths
- Litter collection (other than principal routes)
- Recycling provisions
- Street naming
- Parking restrictions
- Some aspects of the management of libraries and museums
- Some aspects of leisure and tourism provision (e.g playing fields)

Appendix 3

Possible functions which might, by mutual consent, be considered for delegation to Quality Parish and Town Councils or a group of Quality Councils (or those councils, or groups of, that can demonstrate to the satisfaction of RMBC, the same level of competence to the Quality Parish Council standard.)

(GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES)

- Highways Management
- Road safety measures
- Noise and nuisance abatement (Clean Neighbourhoods and Env Act 2005)
- Some aspects of enforcement
- Some aspects of environmental health
- Some aspects of development control
- Some appointments to external bodies

Appendix 4

Consultation Process

Each Programme Area Lead Officer will be asked to:-

1. Ensure that officers within the Programme Area consult with Parish and Town Councils on issues of mutual interest. This can range from strategic consultative documents to operational parochial issues.
2. Ensure that all consultation documents from officers within their programme area include a summary sheet of the main issues to be addressed by the consultation.
3. Ensure that Parish and Town Councils are given a reasonable period to respond to consultations.
4. If a reasonable consultation period is not possible the reasons for this should be stated. Under such circumstances, Parish and Town Councils will make every effort to convey their views of their council.

Appendix 5

Parish and Town Councils Compliments/Complaints Procedure

Compliments

1. If Parish and Town Councils have a compliment about a service, they are requested to contact the relevant principal programme area contact officer.

Complaints

1. In the first instance, if Parish and Town Councils have a complaint about a service they are advised to contact the relevant principal programme area contact officer to try and remedy the situation and reply within 10 working days.
2. If they are not satisfied with the response given then submit details of the complaint to the relevant Head of Service who will respond within 30 working days.
3. If they are still dissatisfied with the response, then they can submit details of the complaint to Democratic Services who will arrange for the complaint to be heard by a member of Panel consisting of three councillors and a representative from Legal Services. In the first instance you will be contacted within 5 working days of the complaint being referred to Democratic Services.

Appendix 6

Principal Programme Area Contacts

Resources

Debbie Bacon: Extension 2054
debbie.bacon@rotherham.gov.uk

Chief Executive's office

Andrew Towler: Extension 2785
andrew.towler@rotherham.gov.uk

RBT

Jill Dearing: Extension 3367
Jill.dearing@rotherham.gov.uk

Education, Culture and Leisure

Phil Rogers: Extension 3666
phil.rogers@rotherham.gov.uk

Economic and Development Services

Tom Knight: Extension 2906
Tom.knight@rotherham.gov.uk

Social Services

Zulfiqar Aslam: Extension 3939
zulfiqar.aslam@rotherham.gov.uk

Neighbourhoods

Paul Griffiths Extension 6965
paul.griffiths@rotherham.gov.uk

2010 Rotherham Ltd: Neighbourhood Managers

Wentworth North:

Andrew Leigh Extension 4801
andrew.leigh@rotherham.gov.uk

Wentworth South:

Jane Hurley Extension 74205
jane.hurley@rotherham.gov.uk

Rotherham North:

Jill Jones: Extension 6913
jill.jones@rotherham.gov.uk

Rotherham South:

Lynne Hamshaw: Extension 3471
Lynne.Hamshaw@rotherham.gov.uk

Wentworth Valley:

Ayuba Lawan: Extension 4703
ayuba.lawan@rotherham.gov.uk

Rother Valley South:

Sneh Soni: Extension 4406
sneh.soni@rotherham.gov.uk

Rother Valley West

Adrian Cheetham: Extension 3432
adrian.cheetham@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 7

Provision of Support Services

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, through its strategic partner, RBT, can offer support services to individual or collective groups of Parish and Town Councils ranging from Human Resources, Information Technology and Finance. Some examples of the services that may be offered are listed below:-

Human Resources

- Payroll Service
- Personnel Advisory Service
- Training courses/Literature

Information Technology

- Desktop and mobile PC Support
- One stop shop for all IT needs.
- Helpdesk support
- Advice on planning of IT infrastructure
- Website design and maintenance

Finance

- Account Receipt
- Debt Recovery

The costs of delivering these services should be agreed with RBT directly. It is worth being aware that a more cost effective approach for the procurement of these services would be through a 'cluster' of parish and town councils purchasing the service collectively rather than individually. Any request for services should be made via xxxxxxxx in the first instance.