

CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES AND INNOVATION

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

Date: Monday, 20 February 2006

Time: 11.30 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. Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 16th January, 2006 (copy attached) (Pages 1 - 3)
To consider the minutes of the last meeting and update any matters arising
5. RBT Performance Update (report attached) (Pages 4 - 10)
To consider the attached report of the Chief Executive, RBT
6. Pilot of Interactive Voice Response in the Customer Contact Centre (report attached) (Pages 11 - 12)
To consider the attached report of the Chief Executive, RBT
7. Minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel (copy attached) (Pages 13 - 18)
To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel held on 30th January, 2006
8. Minutes of the Meeting of the Communications and Marketing Group (copy attached) (Pages 19 - 23)
To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Communications and Marketing Group held on Thursday, 17th November, 2005
9. Liaison with RBT
To consider any questions received from Elected Members

For Information:-

Date, Time and Venue for the next meeting:-

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Monday, 13 March 2006**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES AND INNOVATION
Monday, 16th January, 2006**

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Councillor Jackson.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Burke and Hodgkiss.

52. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, HELD ON 12TH DECEMBER, 2005

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 12th December, 2005.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th December, 2005, be approved as a correct record.

53. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS - PROGRESS

Consideration was given to a report which listed the requests received by the Council during the months of October and November, 2005, for the provision of various information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The following details were noted about the requests received:-

40% were made by pressure groups (eg: Council Watch)

20% were made by commercial organisations (usually asking for information

needed to assist with product sales or marketing)

10% were made by individuals, concerning complaints or grievances

10% were made by individuals who did not specify any reasons for the requests

20% were received from solicitors, concerning legal actions

A small handful of the total number of requests were received from welfare organisations (eg: the Citizens' Advice Bureau) who were assisting clients.

Resolved:- That the contents of the report be noted.

54. COUNCIL TAX AND NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES - PAYMENT INSTALMENT DATES

The Service Development Manager, RBT (Connect) Ltd., presented a report outlining a proposal to offer the Council's customers a choice of instalment plans, to suit their circumstances, for the payment of Council Tax. The use of direct debit as the preferred method of payment was being actively pursued, because of the cost effectiveness of this method.

Customers would be offered the choice of four payment dates throughout the month, this facility being available whatever the method of payment. The facility to make instalment payments over twelve months would be offered to those customers paying by direct debit. The report stated that the current arrangement whereby Council employees could make their Council Tax payments via salary deduction would cease, again because of the cost effectiveness gains in transferring to the direct debit method of payment.

The advantages of using the direct debit method of payment, which was a faster and cheaper method to administer, were included in the report submitted.

It was noted that the Council also collected National Non-Domestic Rates on behalf of Central Government, although because of the relatively small number of payment transactions, it was suggested that the existing instalment arrangements remain unchanged.

Resolved:- (1) That, in respect of the payment of Council Tax, the Council shall increase the number of payment plans available for the payment by cash or cheque to four per month (ie: 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th).

(2) That the use of direct debit as the preferred method of payment of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates continue to be promoted, together with the facility to pay instalments over twelve months.

(3) That the withdrawal of the salary deduction payment method for Council employees and the facility to transfer instead to direct debits, be noted.

(4) That the amended payment arrangements be effective from 1st April, 2006.

(5) That, in respect of the payment of National Non-Domestic Rates, the existing arrangements remain unchanged.

55. RBT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Chief Executive, RBT, submitted a report on the progress and performance of RBT for the month of November, 2005, highlighting:-

- Customer Services/Public Access
- HR and Payroll
- ICT
- Procurement
- Revenues and Benefits
- Progress against Corporate Initiatives
 - Equalities
 - Investors in People
 - Consultation/Complaints

- Audit Updates
- Schools (appointment of Schools Account Manager)

Details were also provided of the Service Level Agreement underperformance during the period September to November, 2005.

Reference was made to the amendment to Service Level Agreement HR15 (percentage of correspondence answered within the agreed timescale); this aspect of the Service Level Agreement now had an enhanced target of 100%.

Resolved:- That the contents of the report be noted.

56. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PROCUREMENT PANEL

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel, held on 19th December, 2005.

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes be noted.

57. CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY, 2005 TO 2008 - UPDATE

Members received an update on the progress of the development of the Council's Corporate Procurement Strategy, December, 2005 to December, 2008. This document would be considered by the Cabinet, at its meeting to be held on Wednesday, 25th January, 2006.

58. LIAISON WITH RBT

A review of the Councillors' surgery reporting system was currently taking place.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Customer Services & Innovation Cabinet Member
2.	Date:	13 th February 2006
3.	Title:	RBT – Performance Update
4.	Programme Area:	RBT

5. Summary

The report presents the progress and performance of RBT for the month of December 2005.

6. Recommendations

That the information in the report be noted

7. Proposals and Details

7.1. Service by Service Overview

7.1.1. Customer Services / Public Access

The public-access transformation programme and CSC rollout continue to make progress against their very demanding plan for this year.

December brought about detailed planning around the full roll out of the additional services to the contact-centre staff, the Civic Customer Service Centre (CSC) and future CSCs. This planning will incorporate a review of the original service improvement plan deliverables and the change request submitted by RMBC for back office re-engineering. Once this exercise has been completed discussions will need to take place to agree the approach moving forwards. Once agreement has been reached performance will be reported monthly.

All the contact-centre SLAs were either met or exceeded during December.

Since the recruitment of the staff within the customer-service centre in October, we have invested heavily in training and development, all crucial in ensuring the success of the service. It is pleasing to report that each employee has received on average 16 days in soft skills, detailed legislative and technical training. Feedback from staff has been extremely positive.

The Registration and Celebratory Services successfully introduced civil-partnership registration and has commenced a pilot of civil funeral services. Initial feedback is very positive.

7.1.2. HR and Payroll

The self-serve roll out continued successfully during December with 2010 and RBT ICT.

HR&P saw one SLA failure for the month of December – HR 17 (percentage of enquiries resolved by front-line HR advisors over the telephone where the enquiry is not capable of being resolved through employee self-service including the intranet). NB: this SLA was enhanced to 80% from November 2005. Actual performance was 50.68%. However, discussions around CR0425 are currently underway and due to the significant increase in volumes RBT is negotiating to suspend financial penalties until this issue is resolved.

Also in December, briefing sessions were held to inform managers about annual leave calculation. There were 10 sessions held and 157 managers attended. Feedback from these sessions was very positive.

7.1.3. ICT

The new intranet, officially launched in December after months of development, is another successful example of RBT and RMBC staff working together in partnership.

Benefits include giving staff instant access to the latest versions of information and documentation enabling them to work more effectively, thereby improving the quality of services. Although "go live" was achieved, it is only the start with huge potential to develop even further. Improving information management, collaborative sharing of documents, targeted content and increasing self-serve capabilities.

All SLA targets were either met or exceeded during December.

Call volumes are higher than average and in-depth analysis is continuing to analyse these trends and reasons.

A proposal has been given to the client to reduce both the enhanced service level and the helpdesk answering time in line with other services within RBT. This change will allow an improved quality of service to the customer as agents have more flexibility in dealing with calls. The ICT client is in the process of carrying out an interim review on the SLAs - a response is awaited.

The month has again showed an abnormally high volume of change requests this is impacting on the change team's ability to respond to all requests immediately. A priority system has been established to ensure that urgent changes are given precedence.

The ODPM projects are now well underway with managers and staff working closely with the programme and project managers to ensure the timelines, skill sets, etc. can be provided by either existing service staff or brought in. The current impact on the day-to-day service is being minimised and managed effectively by the service.

7.1.4. Procurement

Performance against the SLAs continues to be on target apart from PR03 which continued to increase during December. Actual performance ended up at 97% which is an all-time high since the beginning of the contract. However, goods receipting is still an ongoing issue and the chasing of GRNs was hampered by the Christmas break, meaning that fewer payments were made than normal during the month.

A downturn in performance is anticipated in January with projected figures likely to see a 10% reduction due to the receipt of late GRN notifications and the impact of the Christmas closedown.

The penultimate round of the Beacon assessment was completed on 16th December. RBT played a full part in both the preparation for, and participation in, the visit by the 3 assessors. A final round of assessment will now take place in London on the 16th January. (This has now taken place and RMBC is awaiting feedback).

Within Procurement, 15 members of staff have opted to study in the foundation stage of the CIPS diploma, the first step on the road to become chartered buyers. The training which is funded by RBT consists of exams, classroom sessions and homework. This is intended to develop their skills as professional buyers in order to provide the best possible service to RMBC making them more commercially aware while at the same time developing the procurement team as individuals.

7.1.5. Revenues & Benefits

December saw the final audited version of the benefits subsidy claim for 2004/05 been approved in full without qualification by District Audit and was submitted to the DWP on time.

Performance against the SLAs has seen a small improvement around those underperforming targets.

RB08 – Number of days taken to process a change in circumstances.

Although performance is still significantly below target, performance has generally improved week on week throughout the last 2 months to exceed DWPs estimated 18 days across Sx3 sites. This continues to be monitored along with continual assessment across the other local authorities of their current performance.

A significant amount of pension credit notifications were received on 4th January 2006 (3883) The majority of these will be pension credit upratings from April 2006 which will not affect the performance against the change in circumstances SLA. However, a number received may impact this and with no way to differentiate between the two, all of the notifications will need to be looked at as a priority.

Staff are currently working additional hours throughout the service on a short-term basis to tackle this together with the increased work accruing from the Christmas shut-down period.

RB02 - % of council tax collected.

The performance of this measure is down against the same period last year. Various activities have been implemented to address the issue.

The service is now ready to proceed with paperless direct-debit instructions. We are just awaiting confirmation from the Co-operative Bank for a date of commencement. A range of direct-debit promotions are in development including an advert in February 2006 payslips and a planned mailshot to all current cash payers. A report was taken to cabinet proposing that 4 dates each month be offered to cash payers, a 12-month payment opportunity in place of the current 10 month, and the removal of salary deductions as a payment option for some RMBC staff due to the complexity of administration.

7.2. Progress against Corporate Initiatives

RBT continues to progress areas in line with the Corporate and Community Strategy and the new staff within the performance team have now commenced. Areas in which the team are concentrating their efforts are around service planning, supporting the council during the forthcoming corporate assessment, consultation, complaints and meeting the equality standard.

7.2.1. Equalities

RBT has made good progress in its requirement to reach the Level 2 Standard and is an active member on the equality & diversity and Maari Groups. This quarter has seen the publication of its action plans for reaching Level 3 by December. These are

closely monitored and performance is currently on track. Along with the other programme areas, RBT is continuing to develop the evidence file in order to confirm its current level.

During December a Principal Officer was appointed for the Performance and Improvement team. This officer will now take a lead on co-ordination and monitoring of equalities across RBT.

7.2.2. Investors In People

RBT is currently embedding the feedback from the council's internal review and incorporating these into RBT's Raising the Standard plan. In response to the forthcoming internal review for the liP to be held in the summer of 2006, two members of staff from the Performance and Improvement team will be trained as internal reviewers.

The RBT corporate inductions led by Brian James continue enabling new staff to be formally introduced to RBT and its diverse and exciting way of working.

7.2.3. Consultation/Complaints

The recruitment of the Principal Officer in the performance team has enabled RBT to take a fresh look into the current process of how complaints are handled. Significant work is being undertaken on how the services across RBT are managing complaints and how this can be improved to ensure a consistent approach across all services,

7.2.4 Audit updates

All the audits undertaken by internal audit have been responded to and the recommendations are monitored on a quarterly basis. All recommendations were on track to be delivered by the due dates.

Internal audit have recently been into HR&P to undertake system reviews and are now commencing an NNDR audit in R&B. The Performance and Improvement team continue to be involved in the co-ordination of the audits to ensure consistency.

7.2.5 Schools

In recognition of the ongoing importance of schools the decision has been made to support a specialist Schools Account Manager. This post will be advertised shortly and will provide a single point of entry to RBT services.

8. Finance

The contract with RBT includes a service credits scheme, the effect of which is that whenever any SLA target is not achieved, a calculation based on the amount by which the target was missed and a number of other factors results in a decrease in the amount of service charge payable. In other words, there is a financial penalty for RBT as a direct consequence of its underperformance.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

If RBT is unable to achieve the SLA targets in the contract, in particular where these are also BVPIs or other statutory PIs, alongside the importance of some of the services delivered by RBT (Revenues and Benefits, Procurement Service), this may impact on the council's CPA rating.

There may also be a negative effect on the council's reputation and the perception of the RBT joint venture. Where there is underperformance, particularly where this is persistent or related to statutory PIs, the client team will work with RBT to develop action plans to redress the situation.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The RBT contract exists to modernise council services to enable the delivery of the council's priorities. RBT's performance will impact on the CPA score and a number of service and corporate inspections. RBT has responsibility for delivering services including a number of BVPIs and LPIs.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1 – Underperformance of SLA's

Contact Names:

Brian James, Chief Executive, RBT, X2414, brian.james@rotherham.gov.uk

Jill Dearing, Service Leader, Performance & Improvement X 3367,
Jill.dearing@rotherham.gov.uk

SLA Underperformance Oct - Dec 05

Service	SLA Ref	Measure	RBT			Comments
			Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	
			Actual	Actual	Actual	
Procurement	PR03	% of undisputed transactions for which the invoice receipt to payment authorisation process is completed within 30 days	93.00% 	94.00% 	97.00% 	Performance is steadily improving due to the roll-out of the e-procurement system and the vigilance of staff in receiving goods
Revenues and Benefits	RB08	Average number of days less than a baseline of 50 days for processing notifications of change of circumstances	Quarterly Measure 	Quarterly Measure 	30.16 days (19.84 days) 	As documented the impact of the new software has meant a significant drop in performance. This is being tracked both internally and by DMP and the BFT on a national basis. It is predicted that targets will be amended in the future. This should be reflected locally.
HR&P	HR15	% of correspondence answered within the agreed timescale	96.82% 	97.29% 	100.00% 	The enhanced target of 100% commenced in November.
HR&P	HR17	Percentage of enquiries resolved by front line HR advisors over the telephone where the enquiry is not capable of being resolved through employee self-service including the intranet.	52.20% 	56.13 	50.68 	Discussions held around CR0425 as part of the SLA review. Awaiting formal agreement from the client about suspending financial penalties

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Customer Services & Innovation Cabinet
2.	Date:	20 th February 2006
3.	Title:	Pilot Of IVR (Interactive Voice Response) In The Contact Centre
4.	Programme Area:	RBT

5. Summary

The report seeks agreement to implement IVR (Interactive Voice Response) software as a pilot in Rotherham Connect. This is required to enable the contact centre to better deal with anticipated increase in Council Tax and benefit call volumes as a result of the start of the new financial year.

6. Recommendations

That IVR (Interactive Voice Response) be piloted to enable the contact centre to deal with high volumes of telephone enquiries for Council Tax and benefits at the start of the new financial year.

7. Proposal and Details

Each March, Council Tax bills and benefit notification letters are issued for the new financial year. Last year 110,000 Council Tax bills and 42,000 benefit letters were mailed out.

This inevitably generates significantly more telephone calls than can normally be handled in the contact centre.

The potential to temporarily increase the number of staff available to take calls is currently being reviewed. If this were implemented, these staff would only be capable of dealing with the simpler, high volume enquiries that are generated. Existing, experienced Customer Liaison Officers would concentrate on handling more complex calls.

A key factor in making this proposal work is to establish a method of directing telephone calls to staff capable of dealing with an enquiry. Current call centre technology employed in Rotherham has a facility to enable this, but has not been implemented before. IVR (Interactive Voice Response) is a computerised greeting system that allows a telephone caller to select an option using their phone keypad from a voice menu. The system will then direct the customer to an appropriately skilled member of staff.

IVR has been widely used in the private sector and has received a bad press. Much of this has been the result of how the technology has been applied, with customers having to navigate through multiple push button choices leading to even further choices.

If applied within Rotherham Connect on a pilot basis, IVR would provide customers with probably no more than one or two options to choose from. Many customers would not have to make a choice but simply wait to be put through to a member of staff.

8. Finance

It is not envisaged that there will be any additional cost to the Council.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The option of temporarily increasing the number of staff to deal with the increased call volumes would probably not be feasible without IVR.

It is anticipated that customers will experience difficulties in contacting the contact centre at peak times of demand without additional resources being in place.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The RBT contract exists to modernise council services to enable the delivery of the council's priorities.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

None

Contact Names:

Brian James, Chief Executive, RBT, X 2414, brian.james@rotherham.gov.uk
Mike Hedges, Service Leader, Performance & Improvement X 3367,
mike.hedges@rotherham.gov.uk

Resources



Meeting Minutes

Meeting Title	Procurement Panel
Date	Monday 30th January 2006
Start time	11.00 am
Venue	Council Chamber, Rotherham Town Hall
Chair	Councillor Ken Wyatt

Attendees	Init	Programme Area
Ken Wyatt	KW	Councillor
Gerald Smith	GS	Councillor
Robin Stonebridge	RS	Councillor
Carol Adamson	CA	CEX
Lesley Dabell	LD	Voluntary Action Rotherham
Paul Edwards	PE	Corporate Services
Peter Hunter	PH	RIDO
Helen Leadley	HL	Corporate Services
Brian Leigh	BL	RBT
David Lisgo	DL	Social Services
Carol Mills	CM	Corporate Services
David Rhodes	DR	Economic and Development Services
David Sellers	DS	RIDO
Keith Thompson	KT	Corporate Services
Laura Townson	LT	Children & Young People's Services
Graeme Winton	GW	RBT

Apologies	Init	Programme Area
Waheed Akhtar	WA	CEX
Bob Crosby	BC	Neighbourhood Services
Jill Dearing	JD	RBT
Ian Smith	IS	Asset Management Service
Sarah Whittle	SW	Social Services

Minutes		
Ref	Item or Action	Action Owner
01/06	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting of the Procurement Panel, held on Monday, 19th December, 2005, were agreed as a correct record.</p>	

02/06	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>(a) Procurement – Shortlisting for Beacon Status</p> <p>The presentation had been very well received at the shortlisting event in London, in January. It was anticipated that the decision about Beacon status would be received during March, 2006.</p> <p>(b) “How to do Business with the Council”</p> <p>Brian Leigh’s presentation on RBT’s draft document on ways of doing business with the Council was deferred until the next meeting of the Procurement Panel, to be held on Monday, 27th February, 2006.</p>	BL
03/06	<p>Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 157 - Procurement Measures and Compliance</p> <p>Paul Edwards made a presentation about BVPI 157, the nationally agreed targets for e enabling certain customer-facing transactions performed by local authorities.</p> <p>The Panel noted that this Performance Indicator affected all Service Areas throughout the Council and Paul’s presentation included details of the various types of interaction which were being measured (which are listed on the final page of these minutes).</p> <p>Panel Members noted that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Council had delivered the 29 priority outcomes, required by the I&DeA, by the due date of 31st December, 2005; - the Council was already achieving compliance with the required and the good elements of priority outcomes and had begun to meet some of the requirements of the excellent element; the audit of this Performance Indicator was due to begin in the near future; - given the extensive nature of this topic, Paul offered to meet with Panel Members separately, to discuss the implications of BVPI 157 for individual Service Areas. 	
04/06	<p>RBT Service Improvement Plan – Phase 3</p> <p>Graeme Winton made a presentation to the Panel about Phase 3 of the RBT Service Improvement Plan. The first phase had involved bringing together a number of disparate</p>	

	<p>purchasing functions throughout the Council and establishing the P2P (purchase to pay) team and the BPPT (best practice procurement team). The upgrading of technology had taken place in the second phase, with the Cedar 5.0 system and on-line catalogues being introduced. The third phase involves the development of the Council's Corporate Procurement Strategy (current version, draft 3), joint working with other local authorities in the Yorkshire and the Humber region and further e-enabling of the procurement function.</p> <p>The Panel debated the implications of a number of issues in respect of the Service Improvement Plan:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - using technology (and thus eliminating the need for paper) for invoicing, ordering and requesting quotes/cost estimates; - ways of measuring the financial savings being achieved; - involvement with the Regional Centre of Excellence for Yorkshire and The Humber; - use of the Supplies and Contract Management System (SCMS); - the timetable for improvements in the first half of 2006, including the first supplier being on-line on Friday, 24th February, 2006; - the arrangements with Rotherham 2010 Limited; - the need for controlled and limited use of procurement cards (one example discussed was the use of these cards for the purchase of supplies for emergency repairs to properties) which could achieve reductions in the cost of individual transactions and also reduce the quantity of materials held in storage. 	
<p>05/06</p>	<p>Public Procurement – Legislation Changes – The New EC Consolidated Procurement Directives</p> <p>Brian Leigh made a presentation to the Panel about the changes to the EC Consolidated Procurement Directives affecting procurement by public sector organisations. A number of salient issues were discussed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a single Procurement Directive (2204/18/EC) would be effective from Tuesday, 31st January, 2006; - the Competitive Dialogue, a new procedure being 	

	<p>introduced and one which should be treated with caution;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the modernisation of procedures and the introduction of e Tendering and e Auctions; - implications for the third sector (ie: the community and voluntary sector) and also for the use of contractors based in the local area; - sustainability issues; - framework agreements will be limited to four years' maximum duration; - Brian Leigh and Simon Bradley were offering to provide advice and guidance to Service Areas on the implications of the new directives. 	
06/06	<p>Financial Regulations - Procurement Guidance</p> <p>Panel members received a copy of a guidance note which documented the procedures to be followed when procuring goods and services on behalf of the Council. The document did not replace the existing requirements and principles contained elsewhere in the Council's Standing Orders and in Section D (Systems and Procedures) of the Council's Financial Regulations, but was to be used by all employees as a reference point to ensure compliance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.</p>	
07/06	<p>Equality and Diversity Standard Level 3 – Q&A Assessment</p> <p>Carol Adamson distributed copies of the self-assessment document which contained the questions and criteria to be completed and evidenced in order to meet the Equality and Diversity requirements within Procurement and Partnership Working. The evidence needs to be gathered by April, 2006, in time for the external validation of the Equality Standard, which is expected during May, 2006.</p> <p>Carol Mills and Helen Leadley agreed to assist with compiling evidence, by identifying a cross-sample of contracts, to check that equality clauses have been included. Subsequently, they would write to the contractor asking for a report on how they are complying with the equality requirements in their contract. This will form the first of an annual sample of contractors to facilitate the monitoring of compliance with equalities' clauses in contracts. It was agreed that Panel members would provide</p>	<p>ALL CM HL CA</p>

	<p>examples from within their Service Areas, to Helen Leadley, which would be assessed for compliance with the Equality and Diversity Standards.</p> <p>Carol Mills and Helen Leadley offered to assist with preparing a report to be considered at the Panel's next meeting and, if necessary, with obtaining the necessary information from contractors.</p> <p>In addition, Panel Members would provide examples to Helen Leadley of the following information, again from within their Service Areas, to enable the Panel to consider, at its next meeting, the need for standardised wording:-</p> <p>a) questions about Equality and Diversity in pre-tender questionnaires issued to prospective tenderers;</p> <p>b) standard terms and conditions relating to Equality and Diversity, included in contract documents as a matter of routine.</p> <p>It was also agreed that Carol Adamson will forward information about the standard contract clauses recommended by the Commission for Racial Equality for inclusion in all contracts, for consideration at the next meeting.</p>	<p>CM HL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>CA</p>
<p>08/06</p>	<p>Procurement – Three Years' Rolling Plan</p> <p>Carol Mills informed the Panel of the intention to publish, on the Council's Internet web site, a plan of the Council's probable procurement requirements for a period of three years. It was envisaged that the plan would be continually updated and always roll forward for the next three years' period. It was considered that this type of information would be very useful for companies, contractors and suppliers of all sizes, wishing to enter into contracts with the Council. The availability of this information service had also been highlighted during the Beacon status application process. Helen Leadley would be distributing a suggested template document to all Service Areas.</p>	<p>HL ALL</p>
<p>09/06</p>	<p>Procurement – Action Plan</p> <p>Panel Members received as copy of the Procurement Action Plan (as at January, 2006).</p> <p>It is intended that sub-groups of Procurement Panel members will be established to take ownership of certain actions within the Procurement Action Plan, as soon as the</p>	<p>ALL</p>

	Corporate Procurement Strategy has been approved (currently set for mid-March, 2006).	
10/06	Scrutiny of the Procurement Process Helen Leadley referred to Appendix E of the third draft of the Corporate Procurement Strategy, concerning the role of Scrutiny in the Procurement Process. It was recommended that Helen should submit a report on this issue to the meeting of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee, to be held on Friday, 17th February, 2006.	HL

Next Meeting	
Date	Monday 27 th February 2006
Time	1.30 p.m.
Venue	Town Hall, Rotherham

All actions to be completed prior to the next meeting unless otherwise stated.

Procurement Priority Outcomes

R9 (green) - Appropriate e-procurement solutions in place, including as a minimum paperless ordering, invoicing and payment.

G8 (to be delivered by March 2006) - Establishment of a single business account (i.e. a cross-departmental 'account' run by the local authority whereby businesses are allocated a unique identifier that can be stored and managed via a corporate CRM account facility supporting face-to-face, website and contact centre transactions).

G9 (green) - Regional co-operation on e-procurement between local councils.

E5 (not mandatory) - Access to virtual e-procurement 'marketplace' established.

E6 (not mandatory) - Inclusion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in e-procurement programme, in order to promote the advantages of e-procurement to local suppliers and retain economic development benefits within the local community.

E7 (not mandatory) - Agreed targets for efficiency savings by December 2005, including the % of undisputed invoices paid in 30 days (BVPI 8).

G7 - Use of technology to integrate planning, regulation and licensing functions (including Entertainment Licensing and Liquor Licensing) in order to improve policy and decision making processes around the prevention of anti-social behaviour

Procurement BVPI 157 Interactions.

Hackney Carriage Licenses
Private Hire Operators Licences
Grounds Maintenance – landscaping
Play Facilities
Contract management
Procurement Policy
Tenders

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**NOTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING GROUP MEETING****HELD ON THURSDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2005****Present:**

Councillor Ken Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Innovation (Chair)
Siyra Ayub, Internal Communications Officer
Fabienne Cotte, Marketing Manager, Culture and Leisure Services
Ray Globe, E-publishing Officer, Children and Young People's Services
Clark Herron, Communications Manager, EDS
Tracy Holmes, Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing
Dean Kerry, Communications Manager, Neighbourhoods
Mark Leese, Customer Services Officer
Graham Nicholson, Design Manager, RBT
Julie Roberts, Town Centre and Markets Manager, EDS
Tony Sanderson, Communications Officer, Adult Services
Phil Marshall, SALA UK Limited

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Lee Adams, Assistant Chief Executive
Jennifer Floy, Planning and Quality Offices, Chief Executive's Department
Tracy Godfrey-Davies, Administration Assistant, Communications and Marketing Department
Marie Hayes, Commercial and Promotional Services Manager
Emma Kirkwood, HR Officer, Employee Involvement, Resources
Dawn Price, Consultation Officer
Dawn Rowley, Customer Services Client Manager

2 NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD 15TH SEPTEMBER 2005

These were agreed as a true record but one additional point was added in relation to item 5 on the Rotherham Show debrief. Tracy Holmes informed the group that a bid has been submitted for funding towards marketing, with money to spend specifically on the Rotherham Show next year.

3 INFORMATION SOFTWARE (ENSEMBLE TV) AND LINKS WITH CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY

Phil Marshall, from Sala UK Limited, gave a presentation to the group about LCD screens that are being installed in certain locations within the council and demonstrated the sort of information that could be shown within the Civic Centre. The system is all based on Microsoft and web technology and is used to relay information to the public and staff electronically.

The system's hardware is already installed within the Civic Centre but the software is not; currently the screen is only showing queuing information.

The screens are also being installed within kiosks and have the capacity to run corporate messages, as well as incorporating interactive touch screen buttons. The pilot scheme in the kiosks is being phased in and should be fully in place by February 2006.

The screens:

- * can be used to show a broadcast
- * can have live-feed information added onto them
- * may aid the council in meeting e-Government requirements
- * can be operated/controlled centrally or locally
- * can be multi-lingual
- * can be used to generate advertising revenue
- * are dynamic and can be immediately updated at any time
- * are protected from damage as they are fitted into a steel frame.

Tracy Holmes highlighted the need for an overall strategy or vision for this technology or we risk individual services going their own way in their use of the screens. The screens' contents need to be planned and structured, in conjunction with the corporate communications and marketing strategy.

4 UPDATE ON CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES, INCLUDING ISSUES RE BRANDING, CORE LEAFLETS, CONSULTATION

Mark Leese updated the group. The customer service centre will be officially launched by the Mayor on Thursday 24 November.

Seven core leaflets will be displayed within the centre, which are being temporarily re-branded for the launch. A consultation exercise is needed on the formal branding to be used, in time for the next centre opening at Swinton next year.

A corporate uniform will not be in place for the launch date but staff will be wearing clothing in agreed colours of black and white. A consultation exercise with staff has taken place and the uniforms, when they are available, will be navy blue with 'Rotherham Connect' stitched on. At a later stage, a consultation exercise will be carried out through Reach In to get people's views on the centre's opening hours.

5 REVIEW OF ROTHERHAM COUNCIL MATTERS

Tracy Holmes had been asked by the Chief Executive to review Rotherham Council Matters, looking at the amount of money spent on it, the product we have, how to release money, access in other languages and so on. TH reported that in order to release significant amounts of money for re-investment, the authority would need to look at the potential for advertising/sponsorship.

Councillor Wyatt had taken the issue of advertising to his delegated powers group, where it was agreed that the views of elected members should be sought. The overwhelming decision had been that they did not want to include advertising in Rotherham Council Matters. They felt that the publication is popular as it is and has credibility; adding advertising may make the publication look like junk mail. Although there was no support for advertising, the sponsorship issue had not been discussed. The option of including advertising inserts from partner organisations was felt to be another issue for consideration. More work is to be done to look into these issues.

Action: Tracy Holmes

6 INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOLS

A series of documents have been produced that give clarity to some of the corporate internal communications, for example, what they are, corporate level responsibilities, programme area level responsibilities, deadlines, and so on. Currently, protocols have been drafted for team briefings, managers' briefings, ComMenT briefings and Unite.

The intention was to launch the protocols at the managers' briefing session in December but this has been delayed. The documents will be circulated to executive directors, and members of this group, for comment and feedback.

7 LAUNCH OF THE INTRANET

The new RMBC intranet site is being launched on Friday 18 November. No issues were raised by the group in relation to this.

8 WEB STRATEGY GROUP AND CONSULTATION ON WEBSITE

Key Wyatt has been considering how to use the website as a tool for some targeted consultation. This item is to be referred to the consultation group, via Dawn Price.

Action: Tracy Holmes

9 STAFF DISCOUNT OFFERS

Siyra raised the issue of companies who offer services or goods at a discount to staff and how best to promote such information. Many companies offer discounts as a way around paying for advertising. It was agreed that this issue should be picked up by HR and incorporated into the information they produce for staff in relation to staff benefits.

Action: Siyra Ayub

10 ADVANCE NOTICE – 22ND DECEMBER MEETING: EMERGENCY PLANNING ISSUES

Tracy Holmes attended a debrief after the last emergency planning exercise to discuss how best to deal with communications issues in the event of a major incident. It was suggested that all RMBC communications colleagues come together to help with this in such an event.

Alan Matthews is scheduled to attend the communications and marketing group meeting on 22 December to discuss this. Tracy Holmes queried the group's attendance for the next meeting; as a number of colleagues will be on annual leave, the issue will be deferred until the communications and marketing away day.

11 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING AWAY DAY

The next away day has been scheduled for 3 February 2006.

12 UPDATE ON ROTHERHAM RADIO LICENCE

One bid has been submitted so far, from Lincs FM; this is now with Ofcom. The deadline for bids is March 2006.

13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Big Screen Update

Julie Roberts updated the group. The screen is now in place in All Saints' Square. Over the next two weeks, cables will be installed, the satellite it will run from will be tested and staff will be trained to use the audience management system. A final run-through will take place on Wednesday 30th November, and the go-live date is scheduled for Thursday 1 December. However, this is not being promoted yet, in case there are any unforeseen delays.

Filming took place last week with Matt MacKay, from Hallam FM, who is to be the front man for the screen. New filming will be done every month to ensure it is topical. Julie and Dawn Runciman are now working on the screen's scheduling programme ready for the launch. The screen will be on from 8am until 6.30pm and all screen time must be planned; once up and running, it will be decided on a week-by-week basis.

Everything that is undertaken within All Saints' Square needs a licence and a licence bid has been submitted. If everything goes ahead smoothly, the licence should be received about two weeks into December. Until this time, there are restrictions on what can be shown on the screen as some things, such as music, are licensed.

RMBC staff, and community groups, have been asked if they have any material or footage suitable to be used on the Big Screen but the response has not been great. Everyone is asked to do a quick audit to see if they have any footage or information that may be appropriate; if so, send it to Julie.

Action: All

A press release was issued as the screen was installed, to inform the public about what was happening – Tracy Holmes distributed a copy of the press release to the group. The screen is not yet live but some of the initial reaction, including comments from the public and letters to the Leader, has been negative. There had, however, been some positive media coverage - print out of the information from the BBC's website was also distributed to the group.

Currently, all the work in relation to the Big Screen is being absorbed by Julie and her team, on top of their full time jobs. It was agreed that the group should be lobbying for staffing and resources in order to sustain the project over time. Clark agreed to email Adam Wilkinson to outline the case for needing resources.

Action: Clark Herron

It was agreed that a launch event should take place for the switch on of the Big Screen. Julie will email the group members asking for help in relation to this once she has done some initial planning.

Action: Julie Roberts

'I am' Campaign

The council is currently planning on a public awareness campaign to promote the new vision themes and improvements in the borough. This work is to go to the Chief Executive and the Leader for approval. Once more information is available, it will be circulated to members of the group. If the campaign goes ahead, it will run from mid-January to March.

Brand Guidelines

Graham is now producing branding guidelines. This will cover things such as: use of the council logo, use of the strapline, use of typefaces, colours, visual imagery, good practice for written communications, use of third party logos, stationery, electronic communications, corporate signage, vehicle livery, merchandising and promotional items, accessibility, and media advertising.

A one-stop shop for printing is being set up, which CMT have agreed to. This print unit should be the first port of call for any printing requests and they should be given first refusal for such work; this is a procurement/savings issue for RBMC.

Language Standardisation

Tony Sanderson asked the group for views on how we should refer to members of the public. In printed material, they are referred to as: customer, client, person, individual, service user, etc. Views are sought as to whether we should we look to reduce the variation or standardise this to one word in all council material.

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 22 December at 10.00am in room 1 at the Town Hall.