

CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES AND INNOVATION

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

Date: Thursday, 20 April 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 13th March, 2006 (copy attached) (Pages 1 - 4)
To consider the minutes of the last meeting and update any matters arising
5. RBT Performance Update (report attached) (Pages 5 - 11)
To consider the attached report of the Chief Executive, RBT
6. Corporate Services Risk Register - End of Year Report (copy attached) (Pages 12 - 19)
To consider the attached report of the Executive Director of Corporate Services
7. Minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel (copy attached) (Pages 20 - 23)
To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel held on 27th March, 2006
8. Minutes of Meetings of the Communications and Marketing Group (copies attached) (Pages 24 - 31)
To consider the minutes of the meetings of the Communications and Marketing Group held on (a) 26th January, 2006 and (b) 16th February, 2006.
9. Digital Challenge (report attached) (Pages 32 - 34)
To consider the attached report of the Executive Director of Corporate Services
10. 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, 22 May 2006**

CUSTOMER SERVICES AND INNOVATION
13th March, 2006

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Councillors Burke, Hodgkiss and Jackson.

Councillor Sharman attended at the invitation of the Chairman.

66. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, HELD ON 20TH FEBRUARY, 2006

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 20th February, 2006.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th February, 2006, be approved as a correct record.

67. RBT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Chief Executive, RBT, submitted a report on the progress and performance of RBT for the quarter from November, 2005 to January, 2006, highlighting:-

- customer-service-centre programme well underway with the town-centre CSC being formally opened and work starting on Swinton CSC;
- improvement proposed to Surgery Connect access with golden-number and face-to-face contact;
- the Streetpride service, for which Rotherham Connect offers the front end, was recognised as one of the top four street-cleansing services in the UK by APSE at the beginning of December, 2005;
- the Council's shortlisting for the Local Government Chronicle eGovernment award;
- national award winner in the Guardian public service awards for the flexible/home-working initiative;
- the Council rated second nationally in terms of cashable savings (under Gershon);
- short-listing for Beacon status of the Council's procurement service;
- the first supplier, Corporate Express, goes live on end-to-end eProcurement;

The report included the Service overview for:-

- 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 November, 2005 to January, 2006.

Reference was made to the increase in charges, imposed by Central Government, in respect of local authorities' actions in the Magistrates' Court.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.

(2) That a report be submitted to a future meeting in respect of the services provided by RBT to schools.

68. WELFARE RIGHTS AND MONEY ADVICE SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report of the Welfare Rights and Money Advice Manager describing the role and functions of (i) the Welfare Rights Service and (ii) the Money Advice Service.

The report stated that the Welfare Rights Service specialised in social security benefits for people with disabilities and carers. The Service offered advice to those people who are the most vulnerable and targeted the following groups:-

- children and young people with disabilities
- people receiving non-residential social services
- people who are terminally ill
- the black and minority ethnic community

During 2004/2005, the Welfare Rights Service had helped customers obtain a total of more than £2 millions in extra benefits.

The Money Advice Service offered debt advice to residents of the Rotherham Borough area. The advice included negotiating with creditors; help and representation to apply for bankruptcy, completing court forms and attending court for repossession hearings. This Service was operating two projects:-

- a debt awareness campaign
- GPs referring certain patients who require debt advice (a project being developed with the Herringthorpe Healthy Living Forum)

During 2004/2005, the Money Advice Service had dealt with almost 300 new customers and advised them about almost £3 millions of debt.

Additionally, a debt advice was now appearing regularly on Radio Sheffield, to provide appropriate advice to listeners.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the work of the Welfare Rights and Money Advice Services be noted.

69. LIAISON WITH RBT

There were no issues raised by Elected Members.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following item to enable the arrangements to be processed without delay)

70. LOCAL E-GOV EXPO - LONDON - 5TH AND 6TH APRIL, 2006

Resolved:- That one Councillor be authorised to attend the above exhibition and conference.

71. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (financial affairs).

72. RAWMARSH CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Asset Management, relating to an evaluation of sites in the Rawmarsh and Parkgate area for the provision of a Customer Service Centre. The report had been referred from the Regeneration and Asset Board (Minute No. 125 of 22nd February, 2006, refers).

Details of the five sites that had been evaluated were set out in the report. It was noted that the preferred location was at Barbers Avenue.

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

73. CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Asset Management,

relating to the progress of the Customer Service Centres Programme. The report had been referred from the Regeneration and Asset Board (Minute No. 126 of 22nd February, 2006, refers).

A brief outline of the progress being made to develop each of the six proposed Centres was given in the report.

In respect of the development of a Customer Service Centre in the Aston area it was reported that, following the previous meeting of the Board, ground investigation work at the Mill Stone Quarry site had taken place and the initial results indicated confidence that the site could accommodate a Customer Service Centre without substantial foundation works costs.

Resolved:- That report be received and the progress for each of the six Customer Service Centres be noted.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Customer Services & Innovation Cabinet
2.	Date:	20 th April 2006
3.	Title:	RBT – Performance Update
4.	Programme Area:	RBT

5. Summary

The report presents the progress and performance of RBT for the period February 2006.

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 Contact Centre continues to meet all expectations and the high standard of performance against the SLA's continues throughout February 2006.

During the month the Revenues & Benefits Service will initiate the production and issuing of around 110,000 council tax bills and 41,500 revised housing and council tax benefit notifications. This will significantly increase the number of calls received by the revenues connect team throughout March and April and in preparation sixteen non specialist agency staff will be employed. The approval by Cabinet in December of the introduction of the Interactive Voice Recognition system will also assist by filtering the specialist and non specialist calls.

The six month pilot period for Rotherham Connect to deliver the choice based lettings function has come to an end. An agreement has been reached for an extension of the pilot pending a formal change request for the continuation of service delivery.

The development of the Customer Service Centre programme continues with earnest and it is pleasing to report that the drive to recruit staff has been extremely successful both for vacancies for the existing town centre CSC and the new Swinton CSC.

7.1.2. HR and Payroll

The self-serve roll-out continues throughout February to Adult Social Services and CYPS (ex Children and Families Service only) and continues to remain on target for completion by the 31st March. Feedback remains positive from all staff.

In preparation for the annual increments the service have reviewed and introduced a report to managers to notify them of those staff whom are eligible for an enhancement. This will be issued in March and managers will be responsible for notifying any errors, or omissions.

The service continues to strive towards meeting the challenging targets and in particular those which were enhanced in November 2005. During the month a number saw performance below the required target.

SLA HR17 It has been recognised that the number of calls to the service centre are well above those ever envisaged; as a result RBT submitted a Change request to fund additional staff (CR0425). After discussions and an agreement for RMBC to fund staff on a 3 month temporary basis the CR was refused. As a result RBT are undertaking a considerable amount of actions including the funding of additional staff to increase the performance around the SLA however, it is unlikely that this SLA will meet the enhanced target of 80%

It is noted that SLA HR09 Quality of information given to caller as a % score against model response (monitored by the HR Officers) was not measured this month by the client. Therefore there is no performance information available.

7.1.3. ICT

It is pleasing to report that all SLA targets were either met or exceeded during February.

For ICT the first rollout (replacement) programme is now in sight with March 2006 bringing the end of the 3 year plan. A bulletin which was prepared by ICT was sent out by the Client to inform all M3 managers that they should inform ICT of any PC's they feel have not been refreshed. During the remaining financial year ICT will cross reference the responses received with our information to confirm the numbers still to replace, it is envisaged that any outstanding PC's falling into the refresh programme will be completed by the end of March 2006.

Within the print department February sees the commencement of the year-end billing schedules for Council Tax, Housing Rents and Housing Benefits, it is anticipated that this once yearly event will test out the state of the art print unit.

7.1.4. Procurement

Within procurement February saw a return to normal levels around performance in particular to PR03 (BVPI8) payment of invoices within 30 days (95%). January having suffered from the knock-on effect of the Christmas break reported performance around payment of invoices at 89%. Top quartile figures for Metropolitan figures commencing at 94.26% for 2004/05.

It is envisaged that despite all the issues surrounding the procurement savings it is projected that the total for this financial year will be around 1.4million. This sees actual procurement savings returned to the council in excess of 1 million since October 2004.

In the case of Construction savings, agreement has now been reached to ensure future construction savings of £600K annually. Both the procurement client and RBT continue to work with EDS on how the £600K savings will be generated in future years, currently thought to be via an on-cost to construction projects.

The newly appointed CEO of 2010 has now signed off the External Security Doors initiative and again discussions continue around future procurement savings with the ALMO.

7.1.5. Revenues & Benefits

Revenues and Benefits continued during February to promote the direct debit take up with 29,769 letters been issued to council tax cash payers. The campaign has seen

2519 cash payers signing up to the scheme and although take up has been lower than expected it is anticipated that demand will increase once the 2006/07 bills have been received by customers. Other marketing techniques include promotion of the more flexible direct debit payment dates on the council tax billing envelopes.

The DWP has issued (circular A3/2006) proposed changes to the 2005 HB/CTB Performance Standards which in turn will alter the scoring methodology used for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The proposed changes, if agreed will take effect from 1st April 2006 and will form part of the CPA evaluation in 2007.

The proposed changes include increasing the targets for all measures linked to processing new claims and will include security targets for the first time in CPA assessment with a target being set nationally for the number of successful sanctions per 1000 caseload for the first time. The proposed target is significantly higher than that current set by Rotherham and is significantly higher than performance currently being achieved.

In addition, DWP are proposing to assess CPA in 2006 based on a completed self assessment based on The DWP 2005 Performance Standards for the period ending 31st March 2006, and the self assessment, together with all supporting evidence must be submitted to the Benefits Fraud Inspectorate by 31st May 2006. It should be noted that the deadline for submitting the self assessment has been brought forward from 15th July last year but that the depth of evidence required remains the same.

However, DWP have confirmed that they do not propose to make any changes to the changes in circumstances measure as they are still not confident that the data they are receiving reflects the true position and they will continue to keep this measure under review.

These proposals are currently being considered by the Local Government Association and further information will be released after 9th March 2006.

7.2. Progress against Corporate Initiatives

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

7.2.1. Equalities

RBT is now working on the Level 3 portfolio for equalities and is making good progress. Work has also started on the impact assessments, with one being completed so far, it is noted that the RBT Performance Manager will be ensuring that RBT fully meet with the new requirements prior to the Corporate Assessment in June.

7.2.2. Investors In People

RBT continues to be integrally involved with the council's IIP programme and has been funding two people through the internal reviewer training during February and March. This will enable us to be part of the RMBC internal review team. As per the

recommendation from the council's internal review, inductions continue to be held on a regular basis for all RBT new starters and are being well received. Services still undertake their own service-specific inductions.

There are a number of flexible working arrangements in place across RBT, including homeworking within Revenues and Benefits. As previously reported, the flexible working arrangements within the council won the Guardian Public Service Award 2005. The awards ceremony was in London and was attended by Alan Swann (RMBC) and Paul Briddock (RBT). This recognition was particularly pleasing as it recognised the partnerships approach to recruitment and retention of staff.

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, this system is on target to be implemented by the 1st May 2006.

A change request has now been submitted by the council for RBT to implement a corporate complaints management system across the authority to ensure a smooth running system that can be monitored and reported easily.

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. 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 has been advertised and interviews will be held mid April.

8. Finance

The contract with RBT includes a service-credit arrangement, 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 Dec 05 - Feb 06

Service	SLA Ref	Measure	RBT		RBT		Comments
			Dec-05	Jan-05	Feb-06	Actual	
Procurement	PR03	% of undisputed transactions for which the invoice receipt to payment authorisation process is completed within 30 days	97.00%	88.00%	95.00%		Performance in February behaved as predicted with a return to normal levels following January's equally predicted downturn itself caused by December's missing GRN's from RMBC.
Revenues and Benefits	RB08	Average number of days less than a baseline of 50 days for processing notifications of change of circumstances	30.16 days (19.84 days)		Quarterly Measure		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.
					Quarterly Measure		
HR&P	HR03	Accuracy of payment	98.50%	89.39%	99.50%		This measure was 1.1% below target. The Payroll Team can be proud of this performance given the current heavy reliance upon manual data collection and the time taken to estimate and process paymenseets before, during and after Christmas.
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.	50.68	52.16	54.20		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:	a) Customer Services and Innovation Finance and Deputy Leader
2.	Date:	a) 20 April 2006
3.	Title:	Corporate Services Risk register – end of year report
4.	Programme Area:	Corporate Services

5. Summary

This is an end of year report highlighting the major risks in Corporate Services and the actions being taken to mitigate those risks. This report addresses Cabinet Member's responsibilities to ensure that Programme Areas are managing business risks thoroughly and appropriately.

6. Recommendations

To consider and comment on the Corporate Services major risks.
To note the progress made in implementing risk management actions
To note the impact of those mitigating actions

7. Proposals and Details

In line with good practice, the Corporate Services Risk Registers are being aligned with the new Corporate Plan and Excellence Plan. The risk management system 'RISGEN' has been used to capture, analyse and assess all the risks identified in Corporate Services; however, this end of year report focuses on the major ones. These major risks are summarised in the table below.

Each risk has been assigned a risk manager and has been assessed in terms of Probability and Impact. Four types of impact have been evaluated:

- Cost / budget
- Service Delivery
- Reputation
- Legal / Compliance / Regulatory

The RISGEN system examines a number of factors to produce an assessment of Red – High Risk (numbered 1 or 2), Amber – Medium Risk (3 or 4), or Green – Low Risk (5 or 6).

Each risk has been assessed twice:

- Firstly, on the current position, based on the control measures presently in place
- Secondly, at a time in the 'future', assuming a series of risk management actions have been put in place.

By carrying out the risk management actions, the programme area aims to reduce its risks down to a minimum of Amber (medium risk) and preferably Green (low risk), compared to the current position. It should be noted that some actions are completed by an agreed date and others may be ongoing.

Additionally, Members will be aware that risks are constantly changing, due to political, social, economic and legislative influences and audit and inspection outcomes. Corporate Services Management Team is responsible for identifying new risks applicable to the functions delivered in the Programme Area and for updating the risk registers.

Whilst it is obviously key to good governance that managers and Members review risks on at least a quarterly basis, the Council's practices are such that risks and resource implications are reviewed every time consideration is given to the proposals in a CMT, Cabinet, Scrutiny or other Committee report.

8. Finance

The Council has formulated a new Corporate Plan and the Programme Area has aligned its Service Plans and associated financial plans to achieve the key objectives. The Corporate Services risk registers are aimed at mitigating any risks which could prevent those objectives from being achieved. A key principle of the resource allocation in the budget for 2006/07 has been the cost of managing risk. Every effort has been made to capture risks and costs but as these are subject to change it is possible that some other risks may be identified that may trigger

additional cost. Should this be the case, the Programme Area will look at the options for reallocating resources.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Rotherham has the opportunity to achieve 4 star / excellent status in 2006. A key action to help in achieving this is the proactive management of significant risks.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Risk Management is part of Good Governance and very important to high scoring on the Use of Resources CPA assessment.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Corporate Plan 2005-10

Risk Management Strategy 2005

Local Code of Corporate Governance 2005

Statement of Internal Control 2004/05

Audit Commission Performance Audit Follow Up Report 6/12/05

Report to CMT 16/1/06

Report to Audit Committee 25/1/06

Report to PSOC 17/2/06

Contact Names:

Carol Mills, Executive Director Corporate Services, x2004.

Appendix

Corporate Services major risks and actions

Corporate Services major risks and mitigating actions – year end 2005/6			
Risk	Assessment prior to actions	Actions and Impact	Assessment after actions
RBT Staff resistance to change due to lack of empathy/understanding and impact on (resistance to) partnership working	4 (Amber)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target areas where understanding causing a problem. The impact of this is to change perceptions, but is an ongoing task • Work with Finance Managers to raise their awareness. This has improved the process for dealing with charges from RBT • Strengthen client team – means that they are more able to support when difficult situations arise • Workshops for HOS and M3 managers – to raise awareness and give them the opportunity to get responses to queries. • Communication plan for customer services – to get programme area sign up to the change in the way we deliver customer services 	4 (Amber) no change as feel this needs constant management
Failure to control change requests to RBT resulting in significant ongoing cost	4(Amber)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor activity on going against contract and financial impact – to identify any changes which should be at no cost and that PAs have properly accounted for the change 	4 (Amber) no change as this is an ongoing feature of the contract

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise change control procedures to ensure standard checks in place • Review changes agreed regularly 	and as PAs want more development work
Inability of Council to meet its contractual obligations re Rotherham Connect	2 (Red)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining legal and financial advisers to assist if dispute occurs • Agreement of actual affordability gap – so that accurate figure is addressed via alternative funding approach • Alternative funding and delivery plan for customer services agreed with RBT and CMT to replace original approach • Approval of capital bid for ICT strategy will release funds to pay for investment by BT 	3 (Amber) Plans in place are considered appropriate to resolve this problem but require constant monitoring
Other financial issues arising out of the contract or change in way Council delivers its services requiring agreement and funding approach	1 (Red)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued discussion between CEX, Director and RBT CEX on issues and possible ways to resolve • Strengthen client role – with private sector expertise – to assist with solution identification and problem resolution • Retain finance and legal expertise to assist if formal dispute occurs • Update affordability model and receive quarterly financial statements from RBT for review by RBT and CMT • Reports to CMT as necessary on 	2 (Red) Still a major risk due to changing resource levels of Council and way services delivered (ALMO; Commissioning: other partnerships). Possible option to re-negotiate

			specific issues – to get their sign up to an agreement	contract going forward
Strategic Partnerships				
Maintaining multi-disciplinary partnerships advisory team	2 (Red)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer opportunity for work shadowing or secondments to build skill • Use of partner consultants – for learning ops for the staff and for back-up when workload high 	2 (Red) this is a small and highly skilled team that could be tempted to move into private sector by better rewards
Project workload too high to manage due to council's interest in partnership working	1 (Red)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the in-house team size to reflect workload size and gap in technical skill area • Use legal and finance partnerships to engage external advisers to meet needs 	4 (Amber)
Legal and Democratic services				
Absence of key electoral staff putting election in jeopardy	2 (Red)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train Legal business support staff to be able to stand in if required • Ensure staff carry out election duties to build knowledge and skill • Seek support from Association of Electoral Administrators (back-up if required) • Approach SY and regional colleagues to have a fall-back plan 	2 (Red) still a very risky area in view of the legislative requirements to meet.
Breach of Freedom of Information Act	1 (Red)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication Scheme in place 	4 (Amber)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for all staff • Procedure in place for dealing with FOI and communications to staff to make aware and reminders • Audit and follow up – and advise on progress against meeting requirements • Reports to Leader & Cabinet on PA performance 	<p>as new staff join the Council they will need to be briefed and until this becomes embedded, greater management is needed</p>
<p>Strategic HR Ability of the Council to attract, motivate, retain staff. Although this is a general risk – there are some areas of difficulty such as Social Workers, EHOs etc)</p>	<p>2(Red)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve workforce planning do as to have a clearer picture of gap areas and plans to meet them – including young people and retaining older people • Benchmark performance in this area against comparator LAs an model areas of good practice • Continue with development of positive action opportunities for under-represented groups • Utilise technology to make recruitment processes easier 	<p>2(Red) an ongoing challenge!</p>
<p>Need to ensure fair and sustainable pay structures</p>	<p>1(Red)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate with TUs to achieve agreement on a total reward strategy covering compensation for equal pay; changes to terms and conditions; the revised pay structure • Communicate and consult with staff 	<p>2 (Red)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure members are fully briefed on all actions and gain agreement• Work with regional colleagues to achieve common agreements and learn from each other	
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Corporate Services



Meeting Minutes

Meeting Title	Procurement Panel
Date	Monday 27th March 2006
Start time	1.30 pm
Venue	Committee Room 1, Rotherham Town Hall
Chair	Councillor Ken Wyatt

Attendees	Init	Programme Area
Ken Wyatt	KW	Councillor
Gerald Smith	GS	Councillor
Carol Adamson	CA	CEX
Abi Dakin	AD	RBT
Matt Gladstone	MG	CEX
Helen Leadley	HL	Corporate Services
Brian Leigh	BL	RBT
David Lisgo	DL	Social Services (Adult Services)
Sarah McCall	SM	Corporate Services
Michael McGuigan	MM	Children & Young People's Services
Paul Smith	IS	Asset Management Service
Laura Townson	LT	Children & Young People's Services
Jeff Wharfe	JW	RiDO

Apologies	Init	Programme Area
Bob Crosby	BC	Neighbourhood Services
Lesley Dabell	LD	Voluntary Action Rotherham
Jill Dearing	JD	RBT
Carol Mills	CM	Corporate Services
David Rhodes	DR	Economic and Development Services
Ian Smith	IS	Asset Management Service
Keith Thompson	KT	Corporate Services

Minutes		
Ref	Item or Action	Action Owner
16/06	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting of the Procurement Panel, held on Monday, 27th February, 2006, were agreed as a correct record.</p>	

17/06	<p>Beacon Status Approval</p> <p>The Panel noted the recent award to the Council of Beacon status in respect of “Quality Services through Procurement”.</p>	
18/06	<p>“How to do Business with the Council”</p> <p>Brian Leigh gave a presentation to the meeting about the ways in which companies could do business with the Council. The presentation and subsequent discussion included the following issues:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the buying process was led by the RBT BPP Team; - a member of staff in each Programme Area had been allocated the purchasing/buying responsibility; - contracts were entered into in accordance with European legislation; - companies could obtain useful information from the Internet web site www.buy-local.co.uk; - the Borough Council’s Internet web site included a section entitled “Selling to the Council”; - companies’ bids were assessed in respect of the ability to perform the work required; in addition, the financial stability of a company would be assessed and they would have to provide evidence of specific claims (eg: claiming the status of an environmentally friendly organisation); - a scorecard method of assessment was also used and the commercial and technical elements of a company’s bid would be examined; - in respect of contracts valued lower than the European legislation cost threshold, the Council maintained a list of favoured contractors; the selection of any particular company’s bid would be based on best value principles; - arrangements were being made for tenders to be submitted by electronic mail. 	
19/06	<p>Embedding Equality in Procurement</p> <p>Carol Adamson gave a presentation to the meeting about embedding equality in the Council’s procurement process. The presentation and subsequent discussion included the following issues:-</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; - the new Disability Discrimination Act 2005 introduces a positive duty to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o eliminate unlawful discrimination o eliminate unlawful harassment o promote equality of opportunity o take account of disabled peoples' disabilities even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably - the Commission for Racial Equality published a guide to "Race Equality and Procurement in Local Government"; - the benefits of equalities, in terms of helping to improve the quality of Council services, were outlined; - the Council should promote equality through contract specifications and contracts (employment related performance targets and service delivery targets); - there was a need to collect and share examples of good practice. <p>The Council had achieved Level 3 Equality status (a self-assessment process) in December, 2005 and the external verification process for Level 4 status would take place during April or May, 2006.</p>	
20/06	<p>Procurement – Action Plan</p> <p>Discussion took place on the latest version of the Action Plan for procurement. Helen Leadley and Sarah McCall distributed a Gantt Chart which listed specific tasks and the people responsible for their completion. It was noted that Carol Mills was the project sponsor for the Procurement Action Plan.</p> <p>There was a need to develop a corporate approach to project management throughout the Council.</p> <p>It was agreed that future reporting on the Action Plan should be on an exception basis, highlighting areas where improvement was needed and also the positive aspects of performance.</p> <p>Panel Members were asked to submit their feedback on the Gantt Chart, to Sarah McCall, by Wednesday, 12th April, 2006.</p>	ALL

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Next Meeting	
Date	Monday 8 th May 2006
Time	11.00 a.m.
Venue	Town Hall, Rotherham

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

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**NOTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING GROUP MEETING****HELD ON THURSDAY THE 26th JANUARY 2006****Present:**

Councillor Ken Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Innovation
(Chair)
 Lee Adams, Assistant Chief Executive
 Siyra Ayub, Internal Communications Officer
 Ray Globe, E-publishing Officer, Children and Leisure Services
 Tracy Godfrey-Davies, Administration Assistant, Communications and Marketing
 Clark Herron, Communications Manager, EDS
 Tracy Holmes, Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing
 Mark Leese, Customer Services Officer
 Graham Nicholson – Design Manager, RBT
 Jennifer Floy, Chief Executive's Dept (Performance and Quality)
 Steve Pearson, Media and Communications Officer
 Natalie Roche, Work Placement
 Tony Sanderson, Communications Officer, Social Services
 Annette Senior, Emergency Planning Officer
 Veronica De'ath, Information Manager, RBT - ICT

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:
 Fabienne Cotte, Marketing Manager, Culture and Leisure Services
 Emma Kirkwood, HR Officer, Employee Involvement, Resources

2. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD 17th NOVEMBER 2005

These were agreed as a true record with additional points added to items:
 5. Advertising appears in the Year Book. The official position regarding advertising and sponsorship needs to be clarified.

Action: Tracy Holmes

9. Resolved.

3. COMMUNICATING IN A CRISIS

Annette Senior, from Emergency Planning, gave a presentation to the group focusing on the role of communications in an emergency. Highlighted was our duty to make the public aware of the risks, prepare the public before an incident, keep the public informed throughout an incident and support the public following an incident.

TH confirmed that a double-page spread in the next Rotherham Council Matters would be used to provide information and advice to residents and businesses.

The debriefing following the last emergency planning exercise 'exercise lightning' had identified the need to expand the staff rota for sustained emergencies. The current numbers of staff available to cover a major incident would be insufficient to cover both media relations **and** public information.

Tracy Holmes went through the current arrangements for the Comms role in the Borough Emergency Operations Room and Eric Manns, further identifying a lack of resources – Exercise Lightning had shown that the emphasis would inevitably fall on dealing with the media. It had therefore been suggested that Programme Area communications leads could be called upon to enhance the corporate response, following appropriate training provided by the Emergency Planning Team.

Tony Sanderson said that Programme Areas have the skills to put advice/information on the inter/intranet.

Clark Herron suggested 'real' media involvement in the next Emergency Planning exercise. Siyra Ayub suggested contacting universities for journalism student involvement.

Lee Adams recommended contacting other authorities that have had major incident experience to benchmark RMBC arrangements

Action: Tracy Holmes

The Programme Area leads attending the meeting – Ray Globe, Clark Herron and Tony Sanderson – agreed in principle to join the rota, subject to other emergency planning contributions they may be required to make in their own PAs.

Action: RG, CH AND TS to investigate

It was agreed that this should be discussed further at the forthcoming awayday.

Action: Tracy Holmes for agenda

4. BRANDING ROTHERHAM CONNECT

TH reminded the group that an RMBC brand strategy had been agreed by CMT including modernisation of the RMBC logo with a new strapline. The strategy states that RMBC currently has too many brands, sub-brands and logos. Greater clarity and consistency is needed, with the retention of a core brand and the Council's consistent visual identity apparent in all designs.

It had been agreed that the Connect logo would sit alongside the Council core brand within an agreed suite of sub-brands.

The Customer Services Programme Board subsequently commissioned a refresh of the existing Connect brand which would ultimately require the support of other partners eg police and PCT as the initiative develops.

Consultation is required on the new Connect brand.

People need to be involved from all programme areas.

It was felt that Programme Area leads on the communications and marketing group would need to become 'Branding Champions', policing the new brand guidelines currently being developed.

Action: Tracy Holmes

5 COMMUNICATING CPA AND JAR

Tracy Holmes gave the group a handout on communicating corporate assessment. The key messages are the need to take a 'one council' approach and the need for speed of cascade of information. Programme Area communications leads are to be asked to cascade the information to staff more quickly and managers are being reminded of their own responsibility to communicate directly with their own staff.

The production of an A-Z of council services was identified as critical, and the possible use Rotherham Council Matters to distribute to all households and businesses was discussed.

Action: Tracy Holmes to research and progress

Graham Nicholson is producing guidelines on how we use the brand, logos and strapline. This will be distributed to staff. It was noticed that the **old** strapline was still being used on recruitment advertisements and guidance on this was required urgently.

Action: Graham Nicholson/Tracy Holmes

Siyra Ayub is working on a Members newsletter. Meetings with Cabinet members have been arranged to ask how their programme of work is currently communicated to the council and to see their views on current internal communications. Siyra is also working on the internal campaign on the Vision Themes with a view to displaying posters of staff around civic buildings.

A general information area on the intranet for details on CPA/JAR will be available to raise staff awareness.

Tracy Holmes asked if it was possible to contact all staff via a 'Newsflash' system. Veronica De'ath to explore.

Action: Veronica De'ath

Lee Adams asked if Equalities could attend the Comms and Marketing awayday to discuss current position on accessible information.

Action: Tracy Holmes

6 GENERAL UPDATES

- **Town Centre – Big Screen**
Town centre staff meeting with BBC on February 2. The BBC is looking at involvement with Rotherham's big screen project and this could include staffing support.
- **Internal Poster Campaign**
Similar style to the New Vision themes but with pictures of staff. Photos to be taken on the 13 & 14 February.
- **Corporate Design/ID Guidelines**
Graham Nicholson provided a handout updating on current position.
- **Image Library/Photo Consent Issues**
Funding approved by Cabinet from members' contingency fund.
- **Development of the Website**
Next phase now being progressed by Corporate Services, by agreement with the CX.

7. EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION SCHEME

Ken Wyatt asked for equal emphasis on customer suggestion scheme. Ken Wyatt to liaise with Mark Leese.

Action: Ken Wyatt/Mark Leese

8. PROGRAMME AREA REPORTS

Clark Herron added that the first issue of Rotherham Renaissance Update had been produced and there was a possibility that it may be produced quarterly.

9. COMMS AND MARKETING AWAYDAY – 3 FEB 2006

Tracy Holmes asked that members of the group make every effort to attend. The meeting will be held at the All Saint's Centre at 9am on the 3 February.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 16 February at 10am in room 1 at the Town Hall.

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

NOTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING GROUP MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY THE 16th FEBRUARY 2006

Present:

Councillor Ken Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Innovation (Chair)
Siyra Ayub, Internal Communications Officer
Charlotte Bunker, Work Experience Student
Fabienne Cotte, Marketing Manager, Culture and Leisure Services
Veronica De'ath, Information Manager, RBT - ICT
Ray Globe, E-publishing Officer, Children and Leisure Services
Tracy Godfrey-Davies, Administration Assistant, Communications and Marketing
Tracy Holmes, Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing
Emma Kirkwood, HR Officer, Employee Involvement, Resources
Steve Pearson, Media and Communications Officer
Debbie Robinson, Operations Manager, Strategic HR
Tony Sanderson, Communications Officer, Social Services

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:
Lee Adams, Assistant Chief Executive
Marie Hayes, Commercial and Promotional Services Manager
Clark Herron, Communications Manager, EDS
Dean Kerry, Communications Manager, Neighbourhoods
Mark Leese, Customer Services Officer
Graham Nicholson – Design Manager, RBT
Dawn Price, Consultation Officer
Julie Roberts, Town Centre and Markets Manager, EDS

2. EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY

Debbie Robinson from HR gave an overview of the forthcoming employee opinion survey that takes place every 2 years and is due to take place this June.

Response rates are being targeted, it is hoped this year will see a 6% increase.

Year	Response Rate
2004	48%
2006	54%
2008	60%

DR emphasised the need to start communicating now to staff that the survey will be out in June. PAs were asked to promote the event via their internal newsletters,

focusing on actions taken as a direct result to previous surveys - to dispel the myth that no action is taken.

UNITE are concentrating on myth busting rather than what has been achieved, to demonstrate confidentiality. KW enquired about the anonymity/confidentiality of the survey as personal details are asked for at the back of the questionnaire. DR assured the group that the independent company that collates the surveys do not pass on this level of data to Human Resources, protecting confidentiality.

TS questioned the timing of the survey as the CPA will also take place in June.

DR asked all comms leads to think about hard to reach groups in their PAs such as home carers and the provision of 'completion sessions/team meetings' during work hours to give staff time to fill in the questionnaire.

HR will need to know how many hard copies of the questionnaire each PA will require. Paper based questionnaires will then be given to comms leads for distribution; an electronic version of the survey will be made available to all staff with PCs. The questionnaires will be available from the beginning of May.

3. UPDATE ON RADIO STATION

Approximately 6-9 months ago OFCOM detailed Rotherham on a working list for application for a license to broadcast. The deadline for applications passed last week.

There have been 3 bids for a license:

Rother FM
Renaissance FM
Radio Rotherham

Rother FM ran a trial station for 4 weeks prior to placing their bid. They are part of the Links FM Group.

Renaissance FM is linking up with Garnett-Dickinson, a local company.

Radio Rotherham is part of Ulster TV.

With 3 bids received, OFCOM will hold a consultation period and will publish the bids on their website. It will take 3-4 months to reach a decision. KW would like to see the Council comment on the consultation

4. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD 26th JANUARY 2006

These were agreed as a true record with additional point added to item:

7. Customer Service Scheme – KW mentioned that Joanne Kostanjsek is to review the customer care standards.

5. ACTION NOTES FROM AWAYDAY

Copies of the action notes were distributed to the group. The group agreed the away day was a valuable use of people's time.

FC as a French speaker brought to the attention of the group the issue that current French translations were of a poor quality.

VD updated the group on the development of the Image Library. Bootroom are to produce a more detailed specification, the library system will be ready for testing at the beginning of April.

PA to identify 2 people to act as Administrators – all names to be sent to GN.

6. STAFF AWARENESS OF NEW VISION THEMES

SA has been working with a photographer taking pictures of staffs in their work environments to reflect vision themes for internal posters. TH showed the group specimen copies of photographs taken.

LA asked how much front line staffs know about the vision themes. EK informed the group that baseline figures in the Reach-In survey indicated that on the whole staffs recognised the themes. TH proposed using the baseline in a follow up Reach-In survey. Dates for the next survey have not been finalised and could be moved to coincide with the poster campaign.

7. UPDATING FORMAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMS & MARKETING GROUP

EK noticed that the membership of the group detailed on the website was out of date.

TGD to send contacts list of current membership to TH. TH to decide core membership and ask SA to post this to the website

Action: TGD, TH and SA

8. RBT REPRESENTATION ON THE GROUP

LA has asked for RBT to be formally represented on the group.

9. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS – ROLE OF MANAGERS

TH will be meeting with M3 managers to discuss. TH to email notes to the group.

Action: TH

10. NEWSNIGHT COVERAGE OF EASTWOOD

Clark Heron had been involved in this.

11. APRIL ISSUE OF RCM

Deadline for all copy for this edition is Friday the 10th of March.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

TS asked if the group could start to discuss the Rotherham Show at the next meeting.

The Local Strategic Partnership has decided not to have a 'Future of Rotherham' conference this year. The question was raised of the partnership doing something at the Rotherham Show instead. Deborah Fellowes has been charged with publicity and marketing for the LSP, TH to invite DF to the next meeting.

Action: TH

TH brought to the attention of the group the approaching LGA 'Employee of the Year' award. KW asked for nominations from the group. The deadline for nominations is the 21st of March. TH to distribute information.

Action: TH

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 16 March at 10am in room 1 at the Town Hall.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member – Customer Services and Innovation
2.	Date:	20 April 2006
3.	Title:	Digital Challenge
4.	Programme Area:	Corporate Services

5. Summary

The Digital Challenge is a government competition initiative with the objective of creating a digitally enabled society and combating the digital divide within communities. This report informs members of the current position of the joint South Yorkshire Digital Challenge bid, and seeks agreement to Rotherham's participation in the project.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- 1) note the current position regarding Digital Challenge**
- 2) support the Council's involvement in the joint South Yorkshire bid**
- 3) suggest a pilot community for early deployment of Digital Hit Squads and the Digital Directory in Rotherham, should the bid be short-listed**

7. Proposals and Details

The Digital Challenge is a government initiative with the objective of creating a digitally enabled society and combating the digital divide within communities. It is aimed at encouraging local authorities to put technology to use in an innovative way to meet the needs of communities and citizens. It takes the form of a competition open to local authorities either individually or in partnership with others, to propose innovative and collaborative projects for achieving the Digital Challenge vision. Initial bids have to be submitted by 28 April 2006, when 2 will be selected from each of the 9 English regions, then a national short-listing process will select 10 of these 18 bids. Each of the 10 short-listed bids will receive £200,000 funding to work with partners to further develop their proposals, which must be submitted by the end of December 2006. The national Digital Challenge winner, to be announced in early 2007, will receive £7m, largely in the form of consultancy and development resources from leading technology industry partners, to further develop and implement their digital vision and proposals. Full details of the Digital Challenge competition are available on the website www.digitalchallenge.gov.uk.

It has been agreed by the South Yorkshire Leaders and Chief Executives that it would be appropriate for a South Yorkshire sub-regional bid to be submitted rather than separate bids from individual local authorities in the sub-region. A project team has been set up, led by officers from Sheffield and Barnsley, working with consultants to develop the initial bid. This proposes the creation of Digital Hit Squads and a Digital Directory.

- Digital Hit Squads will consist of teams of volunteers who will work with communities and people to help them use and understand e-services and technology. They will be able to work with people at home, in businesses, at retail centres and in the community across all of South Yorkshire.
- The Digital Directory will be the electronic equivalent of the traditional telephone directory, allowing people to register for a list of individuals and organisations who have electronic access and/or provide electronic services.

Rotherham has committed to be involved with the project, although we have not been asked to commit any full time resources to the project team developing the initial bid. However, we have been asked to contribute to the process in 2 specific ways:

- Acting in a peer review role, who the bid team can consult on ideas, proposals, initiatives etc.
- Offering a pilot community within Rotherham which could act as one of the targeted communities for the first deployment of the Digital Hit Squad and Digital Directory, should the bid be successful in being short-listed. Sheffield are proposing an inner city community with strong BME representation, Barnsley are proposing an ex-mining area with deprivation, and it has been suggested that Rotherham might propose a suburban, possibly semi-rural community to ensure that differing types of communities are included.

8. Finance

It is not expected that there will be significant resources required from Rotherham in the development of the initial bid. If this is successful there would be £200,000 funding granted to further develop the bid, but there would be a requirement for resources from Rotherham to work on the project.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

If the South Yorkshire Digital Challenge bid is not successful, the sub-region and Rotherham in particular will miss the opportunity to access £7m funding and development resources available to the competition winner for implementing their Digital Vision in their community.

If Rotherham is not prepared to be involved in the South Yorkshire bid, then it is likely that any early implementation will be targeted elsewhere in the sub-region, to the detriment of Rotherham's digitally challenged people and communities.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Digital Challenge is one element of the government's Digital Strategy, which builds on the e-government agenda and technology developments (e.g. broadband) to encourage take-up of digital services and tackle the digital divide.

Participation in a successful bid would be likely to drive up take-up of electronic services, with consequential opportunities for Gershon efficiency savings.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Digital Challenge website – www.digitalchallenge.gov.uk

Contact Name :

**David Finch, RBT Client Manager, 01709 336537,
david.finch@rotherham.gov.uk**

**Carol Mills, Executive Director of Resources, 01709 822004,
carol.mills@rotherham.gov.uk**