

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES AND INNOVATION**

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

**Date: Monday, 15 January 2007**

**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 11th December, 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 - 12)  
To consider the attached report of the Chief Executive, RBT
6. Minutes of a meeting of the Procurement Panel (copy attached) (Pages 13 - 18)  
To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel held on 11th December, 2006
7. Liaison with RBT  
To consider any questions received from Elected Members
8. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**  
The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended (information relating to financial affairs)
9. Council Tax Collection - Action Plan (report attached) (Pages 19 - 36)  
To consider the attached joint report of the Revenues and Benefits Client Officer and Service Leader

**Date of Next Meeting:-  
Monday, 12 February 2007**

**CUSTOMER SERVICES AND INNOVATION**  
**11th December, 2006**

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

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hodgkiss.

**50. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, HELD ON 6TH NOVEMBER, 2006**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 6th November, 2006.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November, 2006, be approved as a correct record.

**51. TRADE JUSTICE POLICY - DRAFT STATEMENT**

The Policy Assistant, Chief Executive's Office, presented a report containing the Council's draft Trade Justice Policy Statement. The report and the Policy Statement included the reasons why Trade Justice is important to the Council, the work and activities already achieved and key priorities for the future.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and the Trade Justice Policy Statement be welcomed.

(2) That the work and activities that have been undertaken by the Council be endorsed and the Policy Statement be taken forward and be a key input into policy and service development and implementation.

(3) That the report and the policy statement be referred to the Cabinet and to the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel for further consideration.

**52. COMPLAINTS - COMMENTS OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

Consideration was given to the following correspondence:-

(a) the letter, dated, 21 June, 2006, from the Commission for Local Administration in England (Local Government Ombudsman), stating the views of the Local Government Ombudsman on the complaints received against this Council during 2005/06;

(b) the Chief Executive's letter of response, dated 18 July, 2006.

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

(2) That reports about complaints made against the Council be submitted, at intervals of three months, to the Cabinet Member and Advisers for

Customer Services and Innovation.

(3) That a seminar about the role and work of the Local Government Ombudsman be arranged for all Members of the Council.

**53. REVISION OF COUNCIL TAX LAYOUT AND INFORMATION ON DOCUMENTATION**

The Service Leader, Revenues and Benefits (RBT) submitted a report providing information about the amendments being made to the Council Tax reminders and final notice documents. Members noted that the legislative minimum content of each document is still required to be maintained.

The report stated that the changes had been made to improve customer service and income collection (reference RB02/BV09 Percentage of Council Tax collected for the year). Documents have been simplified to make them clearer and more understandable. A set of "Frequently Asked Questions" inserts has been created to provide answers to commonly asked questions without the need to contact the Council.

It was also noted that the Council Tax bill would be revised, but this work had not yet been completed. A further report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Customer Services and Innovation on this matter.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the format and content of the various Council Tax notices, letters and documents be noted.

**54. RBT PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Chief Executive, RBT, submitted a report on the progress and performance of RBT for October, 2006, highlighting:-

- the Payroll Team winning the "Payroll Excellence in the Public Sector" award at the prestigious Pay Magazine Awards;
- the Payroll Team achieved 99.77% accuracy and ICT achieved 100% performance on their Service Level Agreements;
- shortlisting of ICT for an e Government national award in the category "Local e Government excellence – Team";
- shortlisting of eProcurement for an e Government national award in the category "Local e Government excellence – Efficiency"; the awards would be announced on 17th January, 2007;
- there would be a pilot scheme of home based customer service agents, receiving telephone calls at peak times, during 2007.

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

Details were also provided of the Service Level Agreement underperformance during the period August to October, 2006.

Reference was made to the revised arrangements for the ICT refresh and it was agreed that details would be published in the next edition of the UNITE periodical.

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

(2) That the 'arrow report' no longer be submitted to this meeting.

**55. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PROCUREMENT PANEL**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel, held on 20th November, 2006.

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

**56. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING GROUP**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of the Communications and Marketing Group, held on 4th October, 2006 and 16th November, 2006.

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

**57. LIAISON WITH RBT**

No questions had been received from Elected Members.

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	Customer Services & Innovation Cabinet Member
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2006
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	RBT – Performance Update
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	RBT

**5. Summary**

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

**6. Recommendations**

That the information in the report be noted

## 7. Proposals and Details

### Highlights

Highlights for the period have been:

- Civic CSC 1 year old on 24/11/06
- 99.74% payroll accuracy achieved
- 100% Performance on new ICT SLAs
- New suite of SLAs successfully implemented
- Registrars employee wins Heart Employee of the Month for December
- Successful Fraud Investigation by Revenues and Benefits

### 7.1. Service by Service Overview

#### 7.1.1. Customer Services / Public Access

Within Rotherham Connect activity continues around process mapping Planning and Corporate Complaints with the service take-on for Social Services being under review. Neighbourhoods are the next service to be included and a communications plan is being developed in conjunction with the client team to engage with the program area in a structured way. All Housing and Council Tax Benefit, Free School Meals and Council Tax processes have been mapped by the improvement group with testing of these maps to take place in week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> December. Once this has been evaluated further discussions will take place with Stakeholders with regard to implementation.

The main focus within Rotherham Connect, however, remains on the delivery of the existing services. As expected and highlighted previously the SLA's for calls answered within 15 seconds and abandoned calls to the Rotherham Connect contact centre were not met. Vacancies in the Contact Centre at Customer Service Representative (CSR) level continue to impact on the service along with a reduction in staff resources caused by sickness and maternity leave.

Further to confirmation that up to 10 agency staff could be appointed to the contact centre to assist with call volumes, 9 agency staff were recruited, 3 are now effective, 2 are currently in training and the remainder are no longer with the Service due to being unreliable/unsuitable.

RBT have provided a report on the ongoing recruitment issues and presented this to the client and as a result the Council have revised the recruitment strategy in an attempt to increase interest in the Contact Centre posts. In the immediate term Customer Service Centre (CSC) staff have temporarily moved into the Contact Centre to try and minimise the impact on customers. In a further attempt to recruit to the vacant CSR posts ring-fenced to RMBC an advert has been placed on the Intranet without a closing date. Short listing has been carried out for the vacancies which do not require RMBC backfill and for maternity cover.

In response and in recognition to the ongoing recruitment issues RBT have submitted a Change request to suspend financial penalties, a response has now been received and RBT are considering what information can be produced to support the request.

A further impact on performance was Waste Management commencing delivery of a Christmas collection leaflet to all households on the 27th November. This was due to continue until 11th December. Only one days notice that the leaflets would be distributed was given to Rotherham Connect and no Change Request has been received. For week commencing 27th November call volumes increased by 17%, calls which in the main can be attributed to the leaflet distribution. It is anticipated that until the end of the campaign calls will still be higher than baseline. We are progressing work on the introduction of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) facility for the Streetpride service. The client is preparing a report for CMT and Members regarding the potential for wider use of IVR across other services in the Contact Centre, principally to address similar one-off campaigns or other anticipated increased demand for services and to route calls to specific advisors/agency staff.

Work continues within the Registrars section with the Registration Online (RON) pilot. As detailed previously it is still expected that the pilot will begin during January with training to take place in early January. An upgrade to the hospital system is required to ensure RON can be used. The cost of this will be split between the service and ICT. This is very good news as the RBT ICT service will then have total control of the registrars system in the hospital and will therefore be able to deal with any issues as they arise.

The Civic centre celebrated it's first birthday on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2006. Within the CSC a new set of SLAs has been agreed and work is underway in order to implement them to the agreed timescales. This month we have provided baseline information and the one live SLA has been achieved for this period.

The Jobs Day for the new Dinnington CSC was held on 13th November 2006 and 7 staff have been appointed. Interviews have now commenced for the role of Team Supervisor.

On a final positive note it is pleasing to report that an officer in the Registrars section, Wendy Dannatt, has been awarded employee of the month for December.

### **7.1.2. HR and Payroll**

Within HR & Payroll the emphasis remains on accuracy within Payroll, the Service Centre and the supporting teams.

Performance within the Payroll team around accuracy stood at 99.74% with only 82 errors reported out of 31,480 payslips generated and it is worth noting that the Payroll Accuracy SLA target of 99.5% has now been met for seven consecutive months. Overall payroll accuracy is dependent upon everyone involved complying with the process, and the client is working with HR & Payroll to encourage managers to do so. For instance, a managers briefing was circulated recently requiring managers to comply with deadlines and accuracy of information submitted for processing. The HR and Payroll teams endeavour to process documents after the deadlines which ultimately reduces the amount of time for quality control checking. Whilst our error rate is very low this is no comfort at all to the person whose pay is wrong. For them it's one hundred percent wrong! We recognise this and we want to work towards seeing that all staff are confident that they will receive their pay correctly and in their bank account on time every time.

In relation to SLA performance there are two areas to highlight this month.

SLA 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) underperformed at 72.90%. It has been recognised by the client that call volumes have increased significantly against the original baseline which has created a significant call-volume pressure on the front-line service. In an effort to resolve this problem, RBT has taken the decision to fund additional staff whilst a six-month action plan is implemented. With this in mind, a change request has been approved by the client to suspend financial penalties.

SLA HR20 (Percentage of references sought within 2 working days of Managers requesting) underperformed at 83.80% during November. The Recruitment Team often struggle to request references within 48 hours as a result of managers not being clear about who has been successful at interview, within the interview pack, when it is returned. A considerable amount of time can also be spent going through interview packs to get this information because the CON1 (New Contract of Employment Form) is not sent in until later. The name and address of the referees can also require extra work to decipher them before the request for a reference can be sent out. It was not possible to complete the extra work on the particular days in November and therefore 27 references failed to meet the target.

The Payroll Team are working with Catering Management following their decision to move all the weekly paid Cooks and Kitchen employees from a weekly to a monthly payment in January 2007. This is a major project involving approximately 600 employees.

Job Evaluation work is on track against the revised plan. Regular liaison with Strategic HR takes place to ensure that HR&P is up to speed with constantly changing plans and strategy.

Finally, Usage of Yourself for sick absence input continues to work well. Adult Social Services is still a problem area however this should be resolved by a Change Request which will introduce Broadband and create easier access. The number of schools using this facility has risen from 56 to 71 and work is continuing towards increasing this number with a view to having them all using Yourself by the end of January 2007.

### **7.1.3. ICT**

Work continues with preparation for the renewal of both the Schools Connect contract, which ends 31st March 2007, and the Rotherham Grid for Learning, which ends September 2007. These are both important contracts for RBT and to reflect this we will be working closely with the ICT Client and Children and Young People Service (CYPS) to ensure that these can be renewed successfully. Discussions are underway with CYPS regarding different approaches to the next prices for the Schools Connect service.

Following Carol Mill's report on the advantages/disadvantages of moving the refresh cycle out from 4 years to 5 years, CMT have taken the decision to delay this decision until March 2007. The ICT Client has asked for an evaluation of the impact of this decision, which is now complete. There is evidence to suggest that the impact of not starting the Refresh Programme is starting to affect the quality of the normal service provided. Before a formal Change Request is submitted by RBT a meeting was arranged with Client Officers, Carol Mills and RBT to highlight the issues which revolve around increased costs and SLA targets which will be affected by the



delayed refresh programme. This meeting took place on 7th September 2006. This meeting concluded that a 'mini refresh' programme should be undertaken utilising revenue collected through the refresh element of additional PC's that have been purchased outside of the main programme. It was hoped that by carrying out this 'mini refresh' programme it would free up enough spares to deal with PC failures up to the end of March 2007. A further meeting took place on 9th October to review the situation and as a result a change request has been submitted by the Client formalising the suspension of the refresh programme and requesting RBT to adjust the service charge accordingly. RBT are also submitting a change request detailing the proposed 'mini' refresh programme and a suggested approach to next years catch up.

The majority of the eighteen new SLA targets have been brought into service this month and targets have been achieved. Work continues within the agreed timescales to monitor and baseline the remaining SLAs.

Design & Print Services have received approaches from 4 schools following the open day event staged on the 12th October 2006. Discussions are taking place internally to schedule more of these events to commence early in the new year and to invite amongst others internal staff to demonstrate enhanced capabilities and in particular the mail shot service.

Finally I am pleased to announce that RMBC has been shortlisted for an e-Government National Award in the category of "Local e-Government excellence: Team" (Proven team-working or partnership activity which has delivered more than the sum of the parts). This nomination recognises the role of the ICT section in a ground-breaking technology-based information-sharing initiative between Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and Rotherham Primary Care NHS Trust to help to improve the care of vulnerable people.

#### **7.1.4. Procurement**

The procurement service continues to work with the remaining large suppliers on the e-Invoice list to deliver the contracted benefit. NPower Electric went live on 14<sup>th</sup> November and we are working with them to include all their paper invoices into the electronic file as soon as they are capable. With NPower Gas testing has commenced and we are currently resolving billing quality issues with them. Work continues with the remaining suppliers and the further down the list we go, the greater the effort and time taken to get the right level of engagement with them. After the "top ten" suppliers, use of e-Invoicing will in future be integrated with supplier renewal and negotiated at the point of agreeing the framework agreement.

New SLAs and targets were implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> November and I am pleased to report that the service continued to achieve its targets.

The SLA trial aimed at trying to measure RBT Procurements active involvement in local supply market development within the SME and VAR organisations (PR06) has now widened to take account of 'Regional Suppliers', that is those now within the Yorkshire and Humberside region. The agreed position is that the trial which had been underway as a way of benchmarking activity locally would continue and be re-considered by both the Client and RBT.

The Procurement Card business case was signed off in September by RBT. The project was initiated, Visa Interface design work has been done and a test interface

created. Following the decision to fund this project from within Transformation, a client change request was signed off on 23rd November. The Bank Agreement was signed by RMBC on 30th November and the P-card account is now live. Two process design meetings have taken place with EDS Highways and a pilot process has been agreed. We are ready to issue cards for walk-through testing.

However on 4th December, the Client was notified that this along with other RBT/RMBC joint projects was being put on hold until the outcome of "Our Futures" is known.

Performance on the Council's BVPI8 target of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days is reported for the month as 93%, a further improvement over previous months; although it is highlighted that this historic issue in gaining commitment from Council Officers in the GRN process is essential to any further improvement.

Procurement savings targeted to be delivered are around £424,000 short of the original plan, this is due to the confirmation that the Council will not be able to deliver the £600,000 budgeted construction savings. This leaves a considerable gap between the RMBC Finance Director's request for £4.5M procurement savings this year and the current estimate of £2.34M excluding construction savings (compared with an estimate of £2.81M in the Annual Plan). Unless more addressable spend is offered to RBT by RMBC, this target remains non-achievable.

On a final positive note it is with pleasure that I can announce that RBT has been shortlisted for an eGovernment National Award. eProcurement at RMBC is a finalist within the category of "Local e-Government excellence: Efficiency" (*Using electronic service delivery to improve the customer experience & improve local authority efficiency*). The awards are to be announced and presented at a ceremony at The Savoy Hotel in London on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2007. This is fantastic news and acknowledges the incredible hard work that's been going on in Procurement in the last three years.

### **7.1.5. Revenues & Benefits**

Work continues on the joint working initiative between RBT, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and RMBC Social Services, with a view to launching a consolidated service in December/January 2007. Training is ongoing and will continue to January 2007. The Joint Team Project Board met on the 22nd November 2006 and agreed that the target for the joint team was to be based on population growth forecasts for people over 60 years.

Progress around the E-Benefits project continues with two site visits hosted by RBT. Representatives from Salford and Norwich Councils visited us to see the system working in a live environment. Training continues within the Customer Services Centres with the aim of all Customer Liaison Officers receiving claims through e-benefits as soon as possible. Following on from this, work will commence to investigate how the Assert mobile solution can enhance the work currently done by Visiting Staff in the Benefits Assessment Team.

The new suite of 23 SLAs was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> November with 17 Annual and 6 Quarterly measures. However In terms of SLAs, performance continues to be tracked monthly and in some cases weekly against targets. In light of the new suite

of measures, RBT remain with a number of SLA's whereby performance by the financial year end is likely to be below target:

### RB02/BV09 – Percentage of Council Tax collected for the year

The percentage of council tax collected at the end of November 2006 is 1.38% down on performance at the same time last year, however, in real terms performance is actually 0.28% less. One of the reasons for this is the introduction of the option for customers to pay council tax over 12 monthly instalments (numbers are increasing each month), which results in less to be collected from April 2006 to January 2007 and more to be collected in February and March 2007.

An action plan has been developed to increase performance around council tax collection, and this is being presented to members in a separate report.

### RB08/BV78(b) – Time taken to process changes in circumstances

Performance continues to fall outside the current target although performance has improved slightly against October 2006. Benchmarking has been undertaken with a number of other LA's and this has been passed to the Client Officer for consideration. In addition, work has been done within the team to look at ways of improving performance and a number of initiatives are to be introduced in the next few weeks including changes to current workflow and introducing a 'sifting' stage in order to 'sift' changes on receipt and obtain outstanding information more quickly.

Worthy of note is the news of one of many successful Housing Benefit fraud investigation by the Revenues and Benefits Fraud Team.

Following up a fraud referral from a visiting officer based in the Assessment Team an investigation commenced into an allegation that a customer, on making a claim for Housing and Council Tax Benefit, had failed to declare the fact that he was in receipt of a monthly Mineworkers Pension and had also received a lump sum payment which he had failed to declare. The customer was interviewed under caution by investigations officers and was adamant that he had informed the benefits office of the pension and lump sum payment. Further investigations showed that this was not the case and therefore the case was referred for prosecution.

At the Magistrates Court hearing the customer continued to insist that he had not been dishonest and had not deliberately withheld the details of his pension and lump sum. As a consequence he requested a 'trial by jury' and the case was referred to Crown Court.

After a two day trial, during which several RBT employees were subjected to cross examination, the jury at Sheffield Crown Court found the defendant guilty on the two charges of dishonestly failing to notify the council that he was in receipt of the lump sum and pension. Judge Roger Keen QC sentenced the customer to 3 months imprisonment, suspended for a year, and in his summing up stated that it had been an act of gross stupidity on the defendant's part to request such a trial in the face of such overwhelming evidence. He went on to further state that he did not think the public ought to pay for that and ordered him to pay the prosecution costs totalling £2500.

## 7.2. Progress against Corporate Initiatives

### 7.2.1. Equalities

A member of ICT completed his BSc Hons in Computer Studies (first Class) and as part of the graduation ceremony he was awarded the Sheffield Hallam University, 'Faculty of ACES, Diversity and Equality prize' for 'Work that Furthers Understanding of Issues of Diversity & Equality & Increases Opportunities for Social Inclusion.' This was secured by developing a methodology for accessibility testing and exploring the impact of web technologies in Local Government on Social Inclusion as part of his final year dissertation. He is writing an article for the next issue of Unite.

Level two training with the TUC commenced on Equality and Diversity early December, funded by the learning Skills council.

### 7.2.2. Investors In People

In 2007, the IiP assessment will include 'Profiling' of certain selected criteria, in order to measure ourselves against stretching targets. RBT is developing a Training system that will encourage the review and evaluation of staff development within the organisation to ensure the investment in people gives a return to the council.

Workforce planning is being embedded into Service planning along with Equalities and Diversity. A Consultation Steering group has been founded to explore issues highlighted by the Staff survey. PDR workshops will take place in the New year, following a skills audit of existing PDR form 2s, to improve the standard of individual targets set by managers. This will ensure the 'Golden thread' filters down to front line staff.

### 7.2.3. Consultation/Complaints

An RBT Consultation Steering group has being formed, commencing in November. Inclusion and community consultation have been identified as two integral parts of the Council's future performance assessment framework.

Mark Leese has now commenced within RBT and is responsible across the Council for the registry, referral all Complaints, Comments and Compliments. A key aspect of Mark's role is to monitor performance of handling complaints across the authority, alongside identifying, analysing and providing the appropriate supporting information to the Customer Services Client to enable timely and accurate reporting across the Council and to the Member arena

Within RBT we have revised the internal processes and, customers whom have cause to complain, are notified within 5 working days of a named contact. From the 6th November our target is to acknowledge customer complaints within 3 working days.

## 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. A total of £23K has been

deducted from the service charge to date, and further amounts disputed by RBT are under discussion.

## **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 LPI's

### **Contact Names:**

Brian James, Chief Executive, RBT, X2414, [brian.james@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:brian.james@rotherham.gov.uk)

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<b>Corporate Services</b>
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### Meeting Minutes

Meeting Title	<b>Procurement Panel</b>
Date	<b>Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2006</b>
Start time	10.00 am
Venue	Council Chamber, Rotherham Town Hall
Chair	Councillor Ken Wyatt

Attendees	Init	Programme Area
Ken Wyatt	KW	Councillor
Robin Stonebridge	RS	Councillor
Brian Barrett	BB	Economic & Development Services
Simon Bradley	SB	RBT Procurement Manager
Abi Dakin	AD	RBT
Sandra Greatorex	SG	Voluntary Action Rotherham
Joanne Kirk	JK	RBT
Helen Leadley	HL	Corporate Services
Brian Leigh	BL	RBT
David Lisgo	DL	Social Services (Adult Services)
Carol Mills	CM	Corporate Services
Lorna Peacock	LP	Procurement Project Manager, Recycling Action Yorkshire
David Rhodes	DR	Economic and Development Services
Keith Thompson	KT	Corporate Services
Jeff Wharfe	JW	RiDO - Rotherham Partnership

Apologies	Init	Programme Area
Gerald Smith	GS	Councillor
Carol Adamson	CA	Equalities & Diversity
Lesley DaBell	LD	Voluntary Action Rotherham
Mark Ford	MF	Neighbourhoods
Matt Gladstone	MG	Acting Assistant Chief Executive
Gary Ironmonger	GI	2010 Rotherham Ltd
Ian Smith	IS	Head of Asset Management
Laura Townson	LT	Children & Young People's Services
Sarah Whittle	SW	Adult Social Services

Minutes		
Ref	Item or Action	Action Owner
68/06	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed those present and introductions were made.</p>	
69/06	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting of the Procurement Panel, held on Monday, 20th November, 2006, with the following amendments:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Min. No. 59/06 Trade Justice Policy Statement:- Action Point (4) should read:- “That feedback from the above action points be included into a final draft statement for consideration by Corporate Management Team and the <u>Youth Cabinet</u>.”</li> <li>- Min. No. 60/06 Voluntary Action Rotherham – Procurement Service Team:- Projects:- should read:- “mini-conference possibly in conjunction with <u>other procurement organisations</u>”.</li> <li>- Min. No. 61/06 to read:- <u>PFI</u> Report</li> </ul> <p>were agreed as a correct record .</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes, not covered by the agenda items.</p>	
70/06	<p><b>Recycling Action Yorkshire – Presentation by Lorna Peacock, Procurement Project Manager, RAY</b></p> <p>The presentation covered the following aspects:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aims and targets of RAY:- the most important being to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions</li> <li>- Length of programme and funding</li> <li>- To support and encourage Local Authorities to recycle and to “Buy Recycled”</li> <li>- To help Councils link their policies to recycling and to influence RMBC Procurement Strategy &amp; LPI’s 5, 8, 9 &amp; 14</li> <li>- Signatories to date in the region</li> <li>- To identify opportunities for recycling or using recycled products in organisations; to look at alternative products and innovative solutions</li> <li>- To provide case and business studies, and</li> </ul>	

	<p>encourage a culture change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Target for construction to use 10% recycled products to be built into contracts</li> </ul> <p>In order to do this RAY provided 5 days of free support for Local Authorities to assist them to turn their sustainable procurement policy into action. This involved base-lining, developing an Action Plan and an Implementation Plan, followed by a 6 month review. Training would be additional support.</p> <p>It was emphasised that using recycled products did not mean poorer quality, or necessarily increased cost. Councils needed to look at “whole life” costs and to identify financial benefits.</p> <p>The following issues were raised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kerbside collection of plastics – currently not available in Rotherham due to there being no contractor to collect</li> <li>- Use of 100% recycled paper in the latest edition of “Rotherham Matters”</li> <li>- Investigate the whether water grate covers could be made from recycled material (rather than metal)</li> <li>- Recycling requirement(s) within the current PFI contracts, and the forthcoming Leisure contract</li> <li>- Peat-free compost</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Point:- Helen to discuss with Lorna how the Council could take up this offer.</b></p>	<p>HL</p>
<p>71/06</p>	<p><b>BVPI 8 – Payment of invoices within 30 days (GRN receipt of goods on a timely basis)</b></p> <p>Detailed information, collected from September, October and November, relating to invoices not paid as per BVPI 8 was presented to the meeting. It was pointed out that this data included all programme areas, together with reasons for non GRN (which included:- i) budget dispute; ii) no authorisation; iii) invoice received late; iv) late authorisation; v) waiting confirmation and vi) CEDR receipt mis-match)</p> <p>Those present were concerned at the large scale of the problem (2,000 order related, and 1,000 non order related) and the financial and economic implications. The implications for the Council were far reaching, and could affect local businesses and employment.</p>	



	<p>It was noted that from the data it was possible to identify problems in particular programme areas.</p> <p>One specific example of a non order related invoice was cited. Concern was expressed at the high value of this order, which should have gone out through the OJEU process.</p> <p>Those present agreed that it was clear the system was being abused with a high degree of non-compliance.</p> <p>It was also pointed out that the target re: payment of key suppliers within 10 to 14 days was not being met and thus the Council was losing money.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked those involved in producing this important data.</p> <p><b>Action Point:- (1) Carol agreed to take the data provided to the Corporate Management Team to highlight the scale of the problem.</b></p> <p><b>(2) Helen agreed to take action through the Procurement Champions by contacting names of requisitioners listed as appropriate.</b></p> <p><b>(3) That Brian and Joanne submit an update report to this Panel in the New Year.</b></p>	<p>CM</p> <p>HL</p> <p>BL/JK</p>
<p>72/06</p>	<p><b>Action Plan Update</b></p> <p>Helen Leadley drew the Panel’s attention to the actions which were either amber or red and provided an update in respect of each.</p> <p>Particular reference was made to:-</p> <p>APR1.04 – Procurement Ethics Policy –</p> <p>It was reported that the Procurement Ethics policy had been drafted. Brian Leigh needed to add information re: escalation point. It was agreed that this should be the Procurement Champions. The document would be presented to CMT and to the Cabinet Member for approval. It was expected that this would show as “green” in the next report.</p> <p>APR1.06 – Procurement approach to comply with FOI Act</p>	

	<p>It was agreed that the reference point in this document should also be the Procurement Champions. This was then ready to go to CMT and to the Cabinet Member for approval. It was expected that this would show as “green” in the next report.</p> <p>APR1.08 – Capital Project Review</p> <p>Comments on the flow chart had been received. An Action Plan would follow. There would be an opportunity for PSOC to be involved in the process.</p> <p>APR2 – all action points reported “green”</p> <p>APR3.05 – Document imaging</p> <p>Options were being examined. It was expected that this would show as “green” in the next report.</p> <p>APR4.03 – elimination of barriers</p> <p>It was reported that work was on-going. The Chief Executive’s staff had been invited to give a presentation to the Panel about the aims and objectives of the Base Budget Review; Local Area Agreements; and also the Compact. These all overlapped with this work.</p> <p>Reference was made to the implications of the Local Government Bill which would be published this week.</p>	HL
73/06	<p><b>Legal Update</b></p> <p>There was nothing further to report.</p>	BL
74/06	<p><b>Commissioning Reports</b></p> <p><b>It was agreed: (1) That the Adult Services presentation by David Lisgo be included on the January 2007 agenda.</b></p> <p><b>(2) That the Children &amp; Young People’s Services presentation by Laura Townson be included on the January 2007 agenda.</b></p>	DL HL
75/06	<p><b>Future Agenda Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary and Community Sector Base Budget Review - Colin Bulger</li> <li>- SCMS/ E-Framework Agreements/Contract Register – Brian Leigh</li> </ul>	HL BL

<b>Next Meeting</b>		
Date	Monday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> January, 2007 ( <b>please note the change of date</b> )	
Time	10.00 a.m.	
Venue	Town Hall, Rotherham	

#### **Dates of Future Meetings**

The dates for future meetings of the Procurement Panel were agreed as follows:-

Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2007 starting at 10.00 a.m (\*possible change due to half term)

Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 starting at 10.00 a.m.

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

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