

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

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

**Date: Monday, 12 March 2007**

**Time: 9.30 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 12th February, 2007 (copy attached) (Pages 1 - 6)  
To consider the minutes of the last meeting and update any matters arising
5. Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Service Provision From Police Stations (report attached) (Pages 7 - 13)  
To consider the attached report of the Council's Access Officer
6. Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI8) (report attached) (Pages 14 - 19)  
To consider the attached report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services
7. Extending the Use of Interactive Voice Response in the Contact Centre (report attached) (Pages 20 - 24)  
To consider the attached report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services
8. RBT Performance Update (report attached) (Pages 25 - 32)  
To consider the attached report of the Chief Executive, RBT
9. Minutes of a meeting of the Communications and Marketing Group (copy attached) (Pages 33 - 37)  
To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Communications and Marketing Group held on 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2007
10. Minutes of a meeting of the Procurement Panel (copy attached) (Pages 38 - 42)  
To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Procurement Panel held on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2007

11. Liaison with RBT  
To consider any questions received from Elected Members
  
12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC  
The following items are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under those paragraphs, indicated below, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended
  
13. Procurement Client - Cover for Maternity Leave (report attached) (Pages 43 - 46)  
To consider the attached report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services  
  
(Exempt under Paragraph 1 of the Act – information relating to an individual)
  
14. Customer Service Programme - Review (report attached) (Pages 47 - 57)  
To consider the report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services  
  
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – information relating to financial affairs)

**Date of Next Meeting:-  
Monday, 16 April 2007**

**CUSTOMER SERVICES AND INNOVATION**  
**12th February, 2007**

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

**64. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY, 2007**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2007.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2007, be approved as a correct record.

**65. CORPORATE SERVICES - QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Consideration was given to a report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services detailing the quarter three position on the performance of the Best Value Performance Indicators monitored and reported on by the Corporate Services Directorate, and Local Performance Indicators owned by the Corporate Services Directorate.

Reference was made to the measurements of performance which had been categorised in accordance with Performance Plus.

Particular reference was made the following Performance Indicators:-

(a) Status green star indicators:-

BVPI 12 – days/shifts lost to sickness

BVPI 16a – percentage of employees with a disability

BVPI 17a - percentage of black and minority ethnic employees

(b) Status blue circle indicators:-

BVPI 11a - percentage of top 5% of earners that are women

BVPI 11c - percentage of top 5% of earners with disability

BVPI 15 – ill health retirements

(c) Status red triangle indicators:-

BVPI 11b - percentage of top 5% earners from minority ethnic communities

BVPI 14 – early retirements (excluding ill health)

The report included details of the local performance indicators for services within the Corporate Services Directorate, most of which were performing well.

Resolved:- That the performance of the key corporate Best Value Performance Indicators and Local Performance Indicators, as detailed in the report submitted, be noted.

## **66. CORPORATE COMPLAINTS REPORT 2006**

Consideration was given to a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services which:-

- (i) provided details of the complaints received and handled during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2006;
- (ii) provided an update on the position regarding the development of the Corporate Complaints System; and
- (iii) identified good practice amongst the Council's Directorates for measuring customer satisfaction.

The report also highlighted:-

- the Local Government Ombudsman had not issued a report of maladministration against the Council during this six months' period;
- more complaints were now being fully resolved at Stage 1 of the procedure;
- 70% of complaints were closed within the appropriate timescales during this period;
- the reporting template about complaints has been modified to incorporate performance against complaints received via the Local Government Ombudsman.

Elected Members asked to be informed of the reporting arrangements in respect of complaints made against 2010 Rotherham Limited.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and the statistics on Complaints Management for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 be noted.

(2) That the progress being made to develop further the corporate complaints system be noted.

(3) That approval be granted for a cross-Council approach to measuring satisfaction levels amongst customers of the complaints procedure.

(4) That approval be granted for the revision of the Officer Guide, to incorporate details recently published by the Local Government Ombudsman for handling unreasonably persistent customers or customers displaying unreasonable behaviour.

(5) That it be noted that there is to be a seminar for all Members of the Council, on the role and function of the Local Government Ombudsman, on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2007.

#### 67. RBT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

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

- the Welfare Rights Service has achieved £1 million in extra benefit income for clients since 2003;
- the Payroll Team achieved 99.83% accuracy;
- e-benefit training is complete within the Customer Service Centres;
- Registration Online to be live from 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2007;
- progressing the work on the introduction of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) facility for the Streetpride service;
- approval of the business case for the use of the Procurement Card;
- RBT has won the national e-Government Award for "Local e-Government excellence: Efficiency".

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

Reference was made to the action be taken to address the under-performance in respect of Service Level Indicators PR01 (Percentage of

catalogued goods or services delivered within the 'lead times' displayed in the item file) and PR02 (Percentage of authorised cheque requests processed on the next available run date). It was noted that the issue affecting indicator PR02 was an isolated occurrence.

The effects on performance of the office and service closure during the Christmas and New Year holiday period were also discussed.

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

(2) That, for future reports, performance data be displayed by the use of graphs, together with text commentary.

(3) That further consideration be given to the implementation of an enhanced Interactive Voice Response (IVR) facility by the end of March, 2007.

**68. PETITION CONCERNING THE CUSTOMER SERVICES FACILITIES AT WATH TOWN HALL**

Consideration was given to a petition, containing 1,029 signatures, concerning the customer service facilities currently provided at Wath Town Hall. Discussion took place on the issues arising from the petition, including the Council's development of new customer services' facilities across the Borough area.

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

(2) That the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Services examine the implications of the petition, in the light of both the Varney review about shared services and the Council's policies for the development of customer service facilities as part of the Our Future process and send an appropriate response to the petitioners.

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

Consideration was given to the minutes of a meeting of the Procurement Panel held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2007.

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

**70. LIAISON WITH RBT**

There were no issues to report.

**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, as amended (information relating to financial affairs).

## **72. COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION ACTION PLAN**

Further to Minute No. 63 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Customer Services and Innovation, held on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2007, consideration was given to a joint report of the Revenues and Benefits Client Officer and of the RBT Service Leader – Revenues and Benefits concerning the action plan for the collection of Council Tax. Included with the report were specific details of:-

(a) the benefits of payment of Council Tax by direct debit, instead of bank standing orders (a promotional leaflet about payment direct debits was distributed and copies would be made available for all Members of the Council);

(b) the review of the use of bailiffs, including their work during December.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That, subject to the concurrence of the Deputy Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance:-

(a) the promotion of direct debit as a means of paying Council Tax by instalment be approved;

(b) the proposed strategies and actions for the collection of Council Tax, as detailed in the report now submitted, be adopted and implemented, excepting that the arrangements for the bailiffs' work during December, 2007, shall be the same as in 2006; and

(c) the strategies and actions for the collection of Council Tax and also the role and work of the bailiffs, as now discussed, shall be reviewed after three months of the 2007/08 financial year and a further report submitted to Elected Members in July, 2007.

## **73. E GOVERNMENT BOARD SUMMARY - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2006**

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services submitted a report outlining the issues which had been considered by the E Government Board during the period October to December, 2006.

Resolved:- That the contents of the report be noted and the report be submitted to the Cabinet for further consideration.





<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
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1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	a) Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods b) Cabinet Member for Customer Services
2.	<b>Date:</b>	a) 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2007 b) 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2007
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Service Provision from Police Stations</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

### 5. Summary

This report is a follow-up to the one received by Cabinet Member on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006, which outlined Neighbourhoods position in relation to the DDA Service Plan target of ensuring “all customer service points are fully wheelchair accessible, with hearing loops, and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act by March 2007”.

That report raised issues in relation to the services provided from the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Offices. Although the majority of the SNTs are based in local Police Stations, rather than Council owned buildings, the Council is nevertheless providing a service from those buildings and needs to ensure adequate access to those services. This report provides an outline of what this means for the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate and South Yorkshire Police.

### 6. Recommendations

Cabinet Member is asked to:

- **NOTE THE CONTENT OF THIS REPORT**
- **AGREE THAT A MEMBER OF THE DIRECTORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM LIASE WITH SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE SERVICE IN RELATION TO THE ISSUES ARISING FROM THE ACCESS OFFICER’S AUDIT (OUTLINED IN ANNEX 1).**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

### **The DDA and service provision**

The DDA does not just address the responsibility of employers, but also addresses issues for those bodies providing services to the public, including the Police Service. From October 2004, service providers should have made improvements to the physical features of their premises to ensure that it is not unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use the services provided there.

All of these duties are underpinned by the concept of reasonableness, so factors such as the scale of the problem that is making it difficult for disabled people and the resources of the service provider would be significant factors to consider when deciding what course of action should be taken.

Issues were raised about the services provided by the SNTs following the DDA progress report received by Cabinet Member on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006. Although the majority of the SNTs are based in local Police Stations, rather than Council owned buildings, the Council is providing a service from those buildings and needs to ensure adequate access to those services. This report aims to outline the implications for the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate and South Yorkshire Police.

### **What does this mean for the police service?**

In practice, for the Police Service, the implication is that they should be giving consideration to:

- Ensuring information available to the public is accessible for disabled people;
- Providing meeting venues with adequate accessibility for disabled people
- Ensuring methods of contacting the police can be used by disabled people, including those with a hearing impairment;
- Having seating in the waiting area;
- Communication aids like an induction loop at the reception and in interview rooms, and;
- Communication support. For example British sign language interpreters, should be considered when you have to interview disabled people who require this.

From October 2004 the physical changes that might be required should also have been given due consideration. This will mean looking at physical access to police stations for a range of disabled people, including wheelchair users, but also people that are hard of hearing, have a visual impairment or a learning disability. Some issues are obvious - like looking at the front entrance to see if there is a way of providing step free access with wider doors that are easy to open. However other issues should be considered like the signage, counter height and whether improvements could be made to lighting. The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) would recommend that anyone considering improvements to physical access takes professional advice, and access auditors are usually best placed to provide this.

The DRC would emphasise that these duties apply only when an agency is providing services to members of the public or sections of the public - so the

court process itself for example would not be covered by this legislation and, at present, the duties would not apply in most situations where someone had been arrested.

### **SNT Offices**

Although the majority of the SNTs are based in local Police Stations, the Council is providing a service from those buildings and needs to ensure adequate access to its services. In relation to service provision, **it is the service provider that is responsible for providing access to the service users not the landlord.** However, as South Yorkshire Police are themselves providing services from the offices shared by the SNTs, they have a duty to ensure reasonable access to the Police Stations in this instance.

The Police Stations, incorporating the SNT offices (Maltby, Rawmarsh, Wath, Main Street) would need to conform to the duties outlined above. Specifically, they would need to address the following basic criteria:

1. Is there car parking?
2. Is there level access from public transport?
3. Is there level or ramped access preferably with steps?
4. Is the reception accessible and with appropriate equipment e.g. Induction Loop?
5. Are the corridors wide enough?
6. Are any interview/meeting rooms accessible and with appropriate equipment?
7. Is information available in alternative formats?
8. Is contrast good between walls, floors etc?
9. Is appropriate seating available?
10. Are there accessible toilets available?
11. If any rooms are above ground level, is there an accessible lift provided?
12. Are there clear emergency routes with level access?
13. Are procedures in place for the above for employees and visitors?
14. Is there clear information and directional signage?
15. Are there reasonable alternatives should any of the above be a problem?

BVPI156, if the council uses that as its standard, does not consider points 2, 7, 8, 9, 11,12 and 13. It is important to note that discussions are taking place corporately regarding what standard should be used and the current position is that it will almost certainly be above BVPI 156. However, the timescale for this decision is, as yet, unclear.

## **8. Finance**

There are no significant financial implications arising from this report. However, there would be significant financial implications should South Yorkshire Police request that the Council contribute to meeting the costs of any required works. It is therefore vital that the Directorate explores how South Yorkshire Police plan to address the required works and in what timeframe.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Failure to address the DDA agenda within the context of SNT offices would almost certainly prevent the Directorates achievement of its service plan target of ensuring “all customer service points are fully wheelchair accessible, with hearing loops, and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act by March 2007”. However, it is likely that this agenda will be high on the Police Service’s agenda as a provider of services from its various local police stations. It is vital that there is effective liaison with South Yorkshire Police, to establish their plans to address the physical features of their premises to ensure that it is not unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use the services provided there.

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

Recent inspections by the Audit Commission have consistently raised the issue of DDA compliance. Effectively addressing the DDA agenda relating to the services provided from the SNT offices will make a significant contribution towards the Service Plan Target, and place the directorate in a very strong position in relation to BVPI156 when compared to the council’s overall performance against this indicator.

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

N/A

### **Contact Name:**

Eric Stowe: Access Officer, EDS

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**SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICES AND BV156 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR**

These offices/locations presented a variety of problems and vary from excellent at Maltby to unbelievable at Dinnington. The issue here is about are they accessible to the public at all times: the ones in the police stations certainly, but the other ones were closed or only open at certain unadvertised times.

**Maltby – Wentworth Valley Team**

This office is in the new police station and does not fully meet even BV156 due to the location of one accessible toilet that does not allow sufficient turning room in front of the toilet and the lift has no voice indicator. The office also would not meet Part M 2004 as the ramp/path to the main entrance is extremely long with no resting places, no handrails and no signage from the accessible parking places. These spaces are not marked out correctly and have no signage and are too far from the main entrance. The internal doors are only 760 – 770mm and not 800mm as required in Part M, however, the meeting rooms are accessed by wheelchair users. The accessible toilets have no contrast and are white on white and the location of the upper toilet is virtually inaccessible to wheelchair users due to the turn required to access the door.

**Dinnington – Rother Valley South**

This was manned now and again apparently and it is in a really run down building that the public do not access. The office is moving to the new One Stop Shop.

**Wharncliffe Place – Rotherham South**

This is only manned either morning or afternoons and there is no signage to indicate when. The majority of contact is by telephone and if not direct is rerouted from the main police station. The office is accessible to wheelchair users via a ramp, however, the intercom needs to be lowered to 900mm and would then meet the basic BV156 standard for access. The problem here is signage for location and details of opening times.

**Rawmarsh Police Station – Wentworth South**

Once again access was difficult if we were members of the public. The facility does not fully meet BV156 as there was no Induction Loop fitted, no vision either side of internal doors and the accessible toilet required new handles, the flush handle lowered and the hand drier relocated.

**Main Street – Rotherham North**

Although not a requirement of BV156 the following have been raised:  
An issue around car parking for disabled people as there is no parking in front of the building and no signage to indicate where any parking spaces are. A problem that was highlighted by a member of the public and confirmed during the visit was the ramp is out of sight if you approach from the town side and there is no signage to tell you it is there.

(The facilities meet BV156 for the public; however, the office for the Community police was slightly overcrowded and had a ratio of something like 1 cubic foot per person!).

**Wath Police Station – Wentworth North Team**

The position of this building makes it unlikely that any disabled person would visit as it is located on a very steep hill. There is one parking space for disabled motorists at the top of the hill. The signage for the location of the station and the parking is very poor. There is a ramp to the entrance but the layout of this and the steps are very interesting and do not meet any guidelines or standards.

**Brinsworth Police Station – Rother Valley West**

This is closed for refurbishment and a visit will be arranged on completion of the work.

**Minute No. 198 of Meeting of Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2007**

Further to Minute No. 154 of 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2006, the Access Officer submitted a report on issues that had been raised with regard to services provided from the Safer Neighbourhood Team offices.

Although the majority of the SNTs were based in local police stations, the Council was providing a service from the buildings and needed to ensure adequate access to those services. In relation to service provision, it was the service provider that was responsible for providing access to the service users not the landlord. However, as South Yorkshire Police was providing services from the offices shared by the SNTs, they had a duty to ensure reasonable access to the police stations in this instance. Accordingly, the stations would have to conform to the duties set out in the report.

It had since been ascertained that, under the South Yorkshire Police's Equality Scheme, all their buildings would be fully inclusive and accessible and to a higher standard than that of BVPI156.

It was noted that the Safer Neighbourhoods Team Manager had had no involvement in the report or the visits to Offices. Discussion took place on Annex 1 which set out all the Safer Neighbourhood Offices and how/if they met BVPI156. Particular reference was made to the office accommodation situation at Dinnington and how it fitted in with the Council's Customer Services Strategy and Accommodation Strategy.

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

(2) That the Safer Neighbourhoods Team Manager liaise with South Yorkshire Police in relation to the issues arising from the Access Officer's audit as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report submitted.

(3) That further investigation take place of the office provision at Dinnington.

(4) That the report be referred to the Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Innovation and attention drawn to the different customer access and protocols of the various agencies going into a One Stop Shop.

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Customer Services &amp; Innovation Cabinet Audit Committee PSOC</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> March 2007 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007 21<sup>st</sup> March 2007 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>BVPI 8 – Payment of invoices within 30 days</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Corporate Services</b>

## 5. Summary

BVPI 8 measures performance of payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days. The Council has agreed the following average annual targets for performance of BVPI 8 with RBT:

2006/07	95.90%
2007/08	97.00%

Performance against BVPI8 dropped radically in May 06 (see appendix A) and the Council is currently on schedule to miss the 06/07 target by 4.04%.

A series of measures have been put in place by the Council to correct the performance and situation has steadily improved. However, our BVPI8 performance is not as consistent as it should be and it is recognised that the Council should act to instil and embed good practice in this area.

The national figures for 05/06 Quartile Information have recently been released: Metropolitan Councils:

Average	90.21%
Top Quartile	96.31%
Median	91.58%
Bottom Quartile	87.43%

## 6. Recommendations

**That performance of BVPI 8 is noted and the current course of rectifying action is approved.**



## 7. Proposals and Details

There are a number of reasons why the Council's performance against BVPI8 has dipped.

- 1) Many Council staff do not GRN (Goods Receipt Note) receipt of goods on a timely basis on the procurement system meaning that RBT cannot pay the invoice within 30 days. In addition many do not advise RBT on a timely basis if there is a dispute which would allow them to discount that invoice from BVPI8.
- 2) Some Council staff completely bypass procurement procedures leading to invoices arriving at P2P without any indication of order number or authorising officer, causing inevitable delay in payment.
- 3) RBT has put in place automatic email reminders following input of an invoice onto the system. The requisitioner will receive 3 reminders to receipt and failing a subsequent GRN both the requisitioner and the authoriser will receive 3 more prompts. Despite the prompts many Council staff still do not GRN on a timely basis. However RBT have redeployed 3 out of 8 members of staff who were chasing receipts full time and the remaining officers are concentrating on non-e-procurement GRNing or chases close to the 30 day deadline.
- 4) Following the SLA review with RBT in June 06 the measurement of PR03 has stripped out Council behaviour from the measurement so RBT are no longer financially penalised for failing BVPI8, as long as they are fulfilling their part of the process.

Preliminary work in August 06 involved Procurement Champions contacting requisitioners on a list of "repeat offenders" to find out what the issues are. What they found was a mixture of staff not being aware of the reasons to receipt immediately; a lack of know-how of the receipting process; and requisitioners not being told by their manager that the goods have arrived. In fact one of the major problems of the list is that it targeted the requisitioners and generally it seems that it is middle managers who are neither advising their staff of receipt of goods or inputting the receipt themselves.

Following a report on BVPI8 which was presented to the Procurement Panel in November 06 a comprehensive print out was developed by RBT listing all transactions which did not meet BVPI8 timelines. This report was compiled in time for the December Panel meeting and handed to the Procurement Champions for action. Champions contacted requisitioners from the GRN report where it was evident that the GRN had caused the delay in payment of invoice and results from the last phone around were logged.

Big areas causing problems were as follows:

- Receipts not showing on the system – although P2P advised that people were not checking the cross on the screen before exiting, meaning that the receipt didn't register.
- Call-off orders requesting no receipt – RBT are working to reduce the number of call-offs on the system - (the swift implementation of procurement cards would help this happen).
- Copies of invoices are requested causing delays – the Champions group agreed that this should only be necessary in the following cases:
  - When procurement is externally funded

- Keeping track of costs in social care
- When backing information is required – such as consultancy work
- When auditors request copies
- Goods delivered to remote sites meaning that requisitioners are unsure of whether delivery has occurred (dial up is an issue here).
- Requisitioner changing jobs / holidays etc
- It was discovered that Cedar is not sending prompts to authorisers

Actions that came out of the Champions meeting were:

- For all Champions to report on a standardised template so that issues can be collated and actions can be prioritised (ready for the next Champions meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb) (see appendix B)
- For RBT to ensure that Cedar fix the authoriser prompt urgently
- To organise budget holder training including receipting (planned for April 07)
- RBT to reduce the number of call-offs on the system – helped by the roll-out of procurement cards.

At the February 07 Procurement Panel it was agreed that the Champions should continue with the work in this way and that a report should be sent to Cabinet about the BVPI8 issue.

### **8. Finance**

There will be a cost / resource implication of continuing to chase GRNs from officers. The Council and RBT could also miss out on early payment discount savings whenever GRNs are delayed. The amount targeted for early payment discount savings in 2006/07 is £180,000.

### **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

If the Council continues to perform badly on BVPI8 then this may have an affect on our next CPA score. Vulnerable smaller suppliers may also experience financial difficulties due to delayed payment, and this goes against our commitment to the SME Friendly Concordat that the Council has signed.

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

BVPI 8 performance  
RBT SLA performance  
SME Friendly concordat

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

None.

### **12. Contact Name:**

Sarah McCall  
Sarah.mccall@rotherham.gov.uk

**Appendix A**

**BVPI 8 Performance**



BVPI8 Nov 06

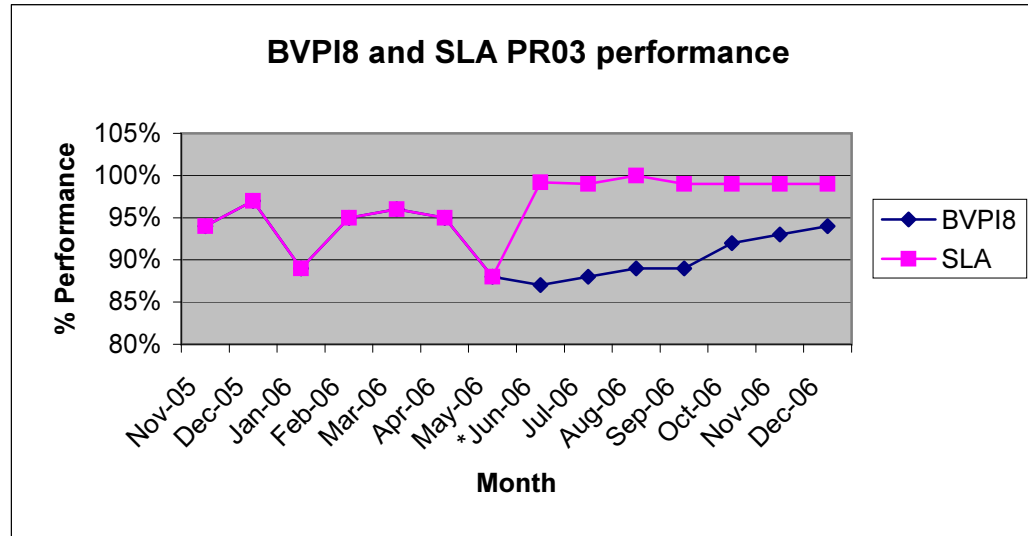
**Appendix B**



G:\Procurement\BVPI  
8\Appendix C.xls

Month	BVPI8	SLA
Nov-05	94%	94%
Dec-05	97%	97%
Jan-06	89%	89%
Feb-06	95%	95%
Mar-06	96%	96%
Apr-06	95%	95%
May-06	88%	88%
*Jun-06	87%	99%
Jul-06	88%	99%
Aug-06	89%	100%
Sep-06	89%	99%
Oct-06	92%	99%
Nov-06	93%	99%
Dec-06	94%	99%

\*New SLA measurement commenced





<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
------------------------------------------------------

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Corporate Management Team Cabinet Member and Advisers for Customer Services and Innovation</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2007</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Extending the use of IVR (Interactive Voice Response) In the Contact Centre</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Corporate Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

The report seeks agreement to extend the use of IVR (Interactive Voice Response) software used within Rotherham Connect for other services following the successful piloted use last year.

### **6. Recommendations**

- a) Approve the use of IVR approach for the Streetpride service and across all Contact Centre services where it is deemed necessary, having the facility to place up to 3 options, one of these being continue to hold.

## 7. Proposal and Details

From the outset of opening the Rotherham Connect Contact Centres the Council was clear that the guiding principles for its operation would always be:

- To provide customers with a 'golden' service number in the knowledge that they would be able to speak to an adviser straight away who could resolve their request first time.
- Have a Contact Centre that didn't involve navigating through a mass of caller options.

However, for the first time last year the Contact Centre successfully piloted for Revenues and Benefits an IVR push-button system. This system enabled the high volumes of calls received following the issue of the new Council Tax bills to be managed more effectively. Such was the success of the operation that it is to be run again this year.

Given the successful trial of IVR it is proposed that this now be extended where appropriate to other services delivered through Rotherham Connect, starting with the Streetpride service. It is expected that by introducing IVR for this service will help to significantly address the high abandonment rates and high volumes of calls related to single incidents.

It is expected that use of IVR for Streetpride services will allow a telephone caller to select an option using their phone keypad from a voice menu, with no more than three options being available to choose from at any one time. The system will then direct the customer to an appropriately skilled member of staff capable of dealing with their enquiry.

A phased action plan has been agreed with members of the Streetpride Management Team for piloting for 3 months, at which point the results will be evaluated and decisions made on continuation of the facility.

The set up of the IVR for the Streetpride service would be done in such a way that the customer will not need to determine the urgency of their call, and that the IVR could be turned off if not required. There are three phases proposed as follows:

- **Phase 1 For Campaigns in Streetpride** - Prior to campaigns being run IVR will be set up to direct people ringing about the campaign to a dedicated team; this team will be trained only on the campaign processes within the Siebel CRM system, instead of the full 70+ processes as at present. This will enable RBT to set up quickly a small focused team that will require less training.
- **Phase 2 Messages for problems that affect large volumes of customers** - Where there is a problem that affects a large volume of customers e.g. winter maintenance, it is proposed that IVR is used to direct customers to a phone message. This will advise them that we are aware of the problem and the actions that are being taken.

If the message does not answer their query they will have the option of speaking to an adviser.

- **Phase 3 Create e-form/e-service for high volume processes** - create on-line customer access for a high volume process. IVR will enable a message to advise customers in the queue that at busy times they may wish to go on-line to submit their query. It is intended that this e-Service would integrate directly with the Siebel CRM system.

This is a facility that Council staff would be encouraged to use with a view to reducing the 10% call volume they make in relation to Streetpride services.

## 8. Finance

The current call centre technology employed RBT has a facility to enable IVR, therefore, it is not envisaged that there will be any additional cost to the Council to extend this to other services.

In the case of the Streetpride service however, it is likely that there will be an additional cost for Phase 3 to integrate the e-service, which could be funded from the ICT Capital Programme budget.

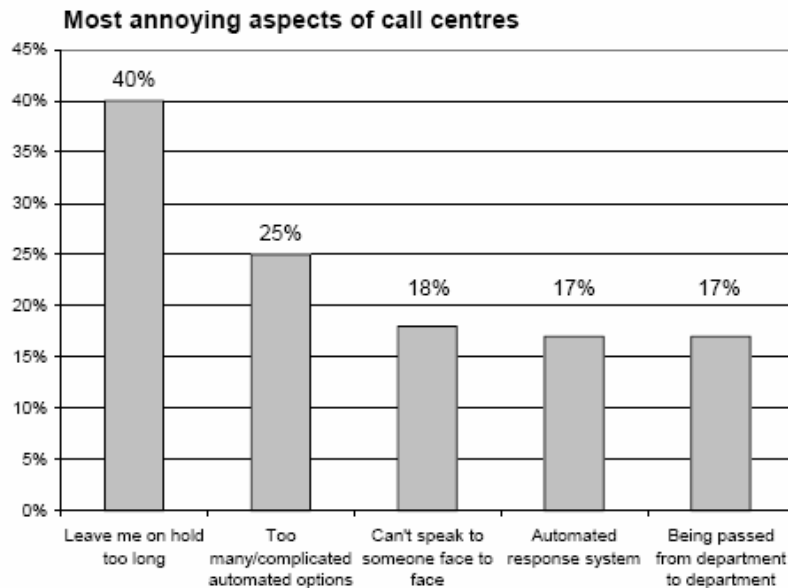
## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

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

This was a key finding from the MORI research commissioned by Citizens Advice and published in their 2004 report entitled "*Hanging on the Telephone*". The report looked into the effectiveness of both public and private sector call centres and the following graph highlights what survey respondents regarded as being the most annoying aspects with today's modern call centres.

The general view of those surveyed by MORI was that automated telephone services such as IVR fail to provide any alternative to a restricted list of possible responses, and people find that they can get stuck in automated loops with a risk of disconnection.





*Source: Citizens Advice, 2004*

This is backed up from the findings of a 2006 survey of 50 local authorities conducted by SOCITM (Society of Chief Information Technology Managers). Only four authorities in total offered push-button options, reflecting a general wariness of using this type of technology. None of the four had more than five options for callers to choose between and all but one offered the opportunity to hold for an adviser.

However, as mentioned earlier it would be expected that at those times when the IVR was not required it would be turned off. For the times when it was in use a telephone caller would only ever be expected to select from no more than three options at any one time, one of which would be to hold to speak to an adviser.

Should the endorsement not be given to extend the use of IVR to other services then it is anticipated that Rotherham's customers will continue to experience the current difficulties in contacting the contact centre for services.

## 10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- The actions proposed support the implementation of the approved Customer Access Strategy.
- Implementation of IVR to promote e-service is a contributor to the Gershon efficiency savings programme and supports the National e-Services Take-up Campaign.
- Improving public sector call centre performance is a key feature of the Varney Report "*Service transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer*".

## 11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Customer Access Strategy 2005-2007.

- Pilot of IVR (Interactive Voice Response) in the Contact Centre, Customer Services & Innovation Cabinet, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.
- Better answered? A snapshot of local authority telephone responses, SOCITM Insight, December 2006.
- Service transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer, Sir David Varney, December 2006.
- Hanging on the telephone, Citizens Advice, September 2004.

**Contact Name:** Mark Evans, Strategic Partnerships, Corporate Services. Ext 6540  
Carol Mills, Strategic Director, Corporate Services. Ext 3554

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	Customer Services & Innovation Cabinet
2.	<b>Date:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2007
3.	<b>Title:</b>	RBT – Performance Update
4.	<b>Programme Area:</b>	RBT

**5. Summary**

The report presents the progress and performance of RBT for the period January 2007.

**6. Recommendations**

That the information in the report be noted

## 7. Proposals and Details

### Highlights

Highlights for the period have been:

- RON Pilot live within Registrars section
- RBT Cashiers take over ½ a million transactions by 31/01/07
- 99.68% Payroll accuracy achieved
- Payroll Accuracy SLA target achieved for ninth consecutive month
- Procurement Savings ahead of schedule 1.524million at Dec 06
- Revenues and Benefits achieve 3 annual targets ahead of schedule

### 7.1. Service by Service Overview

#### 7.1.1. Customer Services / Public Access

Within Rotherham Connect activity continues around process mapping of the Planning service, with the service take-on for Social Services currently being under review. Work has recommenced on the Planning maps whilst additional work is required on the maps for Neighbourhoods, Adult Social Services and Children and Young People Services. A workshop has been planned in order to finalise their requirements. Planning maps have now been built into the system and a decision on the staffing FTE is with the programme area and training will be delayed until this has been agreed; this will delay the delivery date of this service. Neighbourhoods are the next service to be included. A change request has been submitted to take on some services early and a communications plan is being developed in conjunction with the client team to engage with the directorate in a structured way.

The main focus within Rotherham Connect, 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. Additionally the impact of the Christmas Closure in December and adverse weather conditions in January resulted in the Contact Centre receiving an increase in calls during January. Both the Repairs and Streetpride services received significant increases in volumes of calls in comparison to the previous year. An internal performance clinic has been held within RBT and an action plan has been formulated in order to improve the performance. However, it is evident that filling the vacant posts will have the biggest impact on these 2 SLA's.

To fill this gap RBT agreed to fund up to 10 agency staff in the contact centre to assist with call volumes, 9 agency staff were recruited, 3.3 FTE are now effective, 3 are currently in training and the remainder are no longer with the Service due to being unreliable/unsuitable. Additionally sixteen Agency staff from Adecco will be employed from the 5th March 2007 for up to six weeks. They will handle the increase in calls as a result of the 110,000 Council Tax Bills being issued.

In addition Customer Service Centre (CSC) staff have temporarily moved into the Contact Centre to try and minimise the impact on customers. It has been encouraging to see interest being shown in the intranet advert for the Customer Services Representative vacancies which require RMBC backfill (3.7FTE). One FTE

has been appointed and interviews have been scheduled for the remaining positions. 3.2 FTE have been appointed (some temporary) across the contact centre to positions which do not require RMBC backfill. The successful candidates will commence training in February 2007. A further advert has been placed for 2.5 FTE Customer Service Representatives which do not require RMBC backfill.

However, in contrast to this we have been informed by RMBC that funds will not be available after 31st March, 2007 for the 2.2 FTE re-deployees within the Streetpride team.

In response and in recognition to the ongoing recruitment issues RBT have submitted a Change request to suspend financial penalties, and will provide additional management information to the client in support of the change request.

The Waste Management Customer Advice Line, previously within Neighbourhoods, has been successfully transferred to the Streetpride golden number within the Rotherham Connect Contact Centre.

Within the Civic Contact Centre staff continue to provide cover for other internal RBT services. The take on of Adult Social Services has been postponed at their request as they require further BPR work. This may affect Social Services work already taken on at Swinton, and services to be delivered at Dinnington. We are in consultation with Adult Social Services.

Seven Customer Service Advisors have been appointed for the new Dinnington CSC with start dates between 12th & 15th February 2007. They will undergo training from our Service Development Section, followed by a period of coaching and mentoring at the Civic CSC before integration at Dinnington. However, initially these staff will be utilised in the Streetpride Connect team to support that service and that other CSC staff will provide cover at the Dinnington CSC initially. The position of Dinnington Team Supervisor remains unfilled after initial interviews proved unsuccessful. This post may possibly be ring fenced to Social Services but due to the take on of Adult Social Services being on hold the post may be advertised elsewhere.

The 'go-live' date for the Dinnington CSC has been postponed to 10th April 2007 (from 31st March 2007).

The RON pilot went live in Registrars on 22nd January 2007. Work continues on the pilot with selected staff having completed champion training which they then cascaded to all Register Office staff during week commencing 15th January. Despite concerns over network capability the hospital site is working well with registrations taking no more than twenty minutes from day one.

The Service will be holding 'learning days' for Registrars from other local authorities over the coming months to share our experiences and knowledge before the national 'go live'. These are proving very popular and are fully booked. The training plan and user guides that Louise Sennitt and Gill Richards produced are being publicised as good practice on the LACORS website.

Finally it is worth noting that the RBT Cashiers Service has topped the half a million mark for number of payment transactions taken for the 2006/07 financial year. By the end of January 532,140 transactions had been taken by RBT Connect Cashiers – Civic and District Offices. The Civic Office takes approximately 40% of these transactions.

### 7.1.2. HR and Payroll

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

Performance for January within the Payroll team around accuracy stood at 99.70% with 80 errors reported out of 26,730 payslips generated. This was a substantial increase over the 39 errors reported in December and is due to the pay dates over the Christmas and New Year period. However it is worth noting that the Payroll Accuracy SLA target of 99.50% has now been met for nine consecutive months. Overall payroll accuracy is dependant upon everyone involved complying with the process, and the client is working with HR & Payroll to encourage managers to do so.

January saw an exceptionally busy period. The Payroll Team were processing all Bank Holiday payments following Christmas and New Year plus any adjustments to the estimated week's wages paid prior to the holidays. In addition 600 Catering employees saw their final week's payment made on 11<sup>th</sup> January before being transferred to the monthly payroll for payment on 18<sup>th</sup> January. Further discussions with other Service Directors are now underway with a view to moving other groups of employees to monthly pay in the near future. It is anticipated that the School Crossing Patrol Service will be the next group to move to monthly pay.

In relation to SLA performance there is only one area to highlight this month in 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) which underperformed at 74.17%. Extensive discussions have taken place between RMBC and RBT and as a result of the increased level of demand in comparison to the original baseline RBT funded extra operators and RMBC suspended financial penalties against HR17 until the end of Dec 06.

During this period RBT improved the service and a temporary threshold target of 70% of calls answered by the First Line Team has now been agreed. However, given the volumes at key times, employees and managers will continue to find it difficult to get through and therefore have to redial. It is expected that in time a Call Queuing System will help to improve this situation. It is worth noting, that the team handling enquiries have been complemented on the quality of their responses and are handling many more calls at first contact rather than passing them off to one of the other teams.

Re-structuring of the HR Service Centre is still on track and the interview and appointments process has been completed. The result is eleven individuals have declined jobs or declined to be considered for a lower grade job and instead have opted to end their secondment with RBT and have requested that they be returned to the Council to be re-deployed. Two individuals were not appointed and one did not complete an expression of interest form. Re-deployment will be actively pursued for all these people. Any not re-deployed by the end of the required three months notice will be released back to the Council as per their request.

Final changes to the Job Evaluation (JE) proposals were provided by Strategic HR at the end of January. This prompted a series of briefing sessions to all Service Centre employees to cascade the changes to processing that are required from 1 February. This is a major project and is likely to impact on normal delivery of service over the next few months. JE changes will only be implemented to those employees who

have accepted the variations to contract; therefore, processing of pay will be complicated by the administration of two sets of terms and conditions.

### **7.1.3. ICT**

The revised pricing structure is now agreed with the client for the Schools Support service and SIMS support/licensing. A letter was distributed to Schools with the revised prices during week commencing 12th February.

With regards to the ongoing Refresh issue RBT has now submitted a revised Change Request dealing with the proposed 'mini refresh'. Additionally the ICT client has indicated that there will be a reduction in budget for next years refresh although no CR has been submitted. They have also indicated that they wish the overall refresh to be suspended after the mini-refresh is completed. This will have financial implications for RBT as older computers take significantly more support and maintenance resources, and it may have an impact on performance of some of the SLA's.

Agreement has been reached to bring HR & Payroll ICT support staff into RBT ICT on a 6 month trial basis. This move will look to formalise the support for the HR & Payroll systems and ensure long term strategies are in place for their support and development.

Finally the majority of the new SLA targets are now being fully measured and all targets have been achieved for January. However, our MFD & printer supplier, IKON, has suffered from internal issues which have resulted in them being unable to supply performance information for ICT11 (Percentage of availability of MFD's and print queue servers supported by RBT). IKON has been made aware of the complications this has caused and they are taking steps to ensure they keep to future deadlines for providing this information. There are no indications to suggest this measure has been missed for January however the correct figure will be supplied in next months report. Work is ongoing within the agreed timescales to monitor & baseline the remaining SLAs.

### **7.1.4. Procurement**

The procurement service continues to work with the remaining 4 suppliers on the e-Invoice list to deliver the contracted benefit. The Supplies Team, YPO and OSI have now each supplied test files. 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.

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. The Client has been awaiting the outcome of "Our Futures" before approving several RBT/RMBC joint projects. However, as this is a special case, an exception report with a change request to close Procurement cards was rejected. The Procurement Client recognises that the full investment for the pilot has been made, the benefits

are compelling and RMBC support through the Champions is undiminished. It is recognised there is no reason to keep this initiative on hold. In consultation with the Procurement Client, a re-start is planned for w/c Monday 12 February 2007.

The dip in SLA performance in December due to the Christmas Closedown has been rectified this month with all measured SLAs on or above the required target.

Performance on the Council's BVPI8 target of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days is reported for the month as 90% and it is highlighted that this historic issue in gaining commitment from Council Officers in the GRN process is essential to any further improvement.

Having been advised that 2010 have served notice to stop taking a procurement service from the Council (provided by RBT) from the end of June 2007, 2010 and RBT have opened up a direct communication channel and begun negotiating a direct service contract for the provision of a procurement service.

Despite a number of 2010-based initiatives having stalled, annual savings to date (excluding Construction savings) remain ahead of target, though under increased pressure with many Directorates now eliminating non-essential expenditure and a consequent downturn in savings generated. Cumulative BIGS savings in December were £59K ahead of target at £1.524M.

Initial contact has been made with Sandwell Procurement regarding the intended shared service provision. Over the coming weeks, and leading up to contract signature, due diligence and baselining leading to 'As Is' and 'To Be' documentation is now underway. A BT project team is being built to complete these tasks. The first face-to-face meetings are set for early February.

Finally, work supporting the Council's Beacon status is on-going. The final two Beacon events are planned for February (at BT Tower) and will complete RBT's Beacon obligations as the Council is not taking up it's option to extend activities into a second year.

### **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 continued through January 2007.

Progress around the E-Benefits project continues and training within the CSC has been completed with all Customer Liaison Officers trained and an e-Benefits Champion nominated to provide ongoing assistance. The self-serve element has been provided and a change request has been issued to ICT for its installation. The next release of e-Benefits has been tested and findings have been returned to Northgate. The final version of the release should arrive imminently and enhanced functionality will enable Customer Liaison Officers to identify changes of circumstances and incorrect claim details more easily.

With regard to the SLAs, performance continues to be monitored closely on a monthly and in some cases weekly basis and SLAs remain on target with the following exceptions:



- **RB02 / BV09 (percentage of Council Tax collected for the year).**

The percentage of council tax collected at the end of January 2007 is 1.04% down on performance at the same time last year and this is wholly attributed to the number of customers opting to pay council tax over twelve months. Work continues on the Council Tax collection action plan, however, it is acknowledged that this will not fully impact the current year's performance, which is forecast to achieve 97.22% and this can be attributed to the new management structure and the recent restructuring within the team.

- **RB14 / BV78(b) – Time taken to process changes in circumstances.**

Performance continues to fall outside the current target for this measure. A number of new workflow arrangements have been developed for managing changes of circumstances; however its success has been dependant on reducing the large volumes of work outstanding before implementation. Recent targeted overtime has achieved this and the new workflow arrangements will be implemented by week ending 9th February 2007. Success against this will be monitored on an ongoing basis. It is worth noting that as a consequence of the targeted overtime and the reduction in the volumes of work outstanding, a significant improvement has been seen in performance against this measure which may suggest that a longer term solution may be in a review of existing staffing levels.

- **RB08 – Number of benefit fraud investigations carried out per 1000 caseload**

Performance against this measure falls significantly behind target. The Fraud Investigation Team has been successful in achieving its contractual targets against all other measures and its priority is now focused on bringing this measure within target. This is likely to include commencing investigations on fraud referrals that score low in risk assessment and this is not considered by Performance Standards to be good practice. In view of this, investigations of low risk referrals is not a long term solution towards achieving this measure and alternative initiatives will be reviewed for 2007/08.

On a more positive note the following SLAs have now achieved their annual, contractual targets:

- **RB07 – The number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1000 caseload.**

96 prosecutions and sanctions have been achieved equating to 3.64 per 1000 caseload against a contractual target of 3.2 based on a current caseload count of 26,370. This figure is subject to fluctuation as the annual average caseload figure used for the official year end submission to DWP cannot be identified until the end of the reporting year.

- **RB19 – The number of claimants visited per 1000 caseload**

7242 visits have been completed to date equating to 274.59 per 1000 caseload based on a current caseload count of 26,370 against a contractual target of 200. Again, this figure is subject to fluctuation as the annual average caseload figure used for the official year end submission to DWP cannot be identified until the end of the reporting year.

- **RB20 – The number of annual claim interventions**

12,675 interventions have been completed against a target of 11,750. This figure is forecast to increase as approximately 700 interventions are in the process of being completed resources are focused on achieving this prior to the end of the year.

On a final note, 24,000 direct debit promotional leaflets are being issued to all cash payers during January and February encouraging customers to move onto one of the eight available direct debit payment plans.

## **7.2. Progress against Corporate Initiatives**

### **7.2.1. Consultation/Complaints**

The RBT Consultation Steering group has been formed with the service representatives initially looking at ways of addressing employee feedback. Each representative is responsible for holding a service sub-group to identify the key staff issues, and suggested ways to meet these challenges, and to feed this back through the RBT Steering group. In addition to this each representative has been asked to identify pieces of consultation that would be beneficial in identifying potential customer requirements and service improvement opportunities.

Corporate Complaints - base lining and development work is continuing with a scheduled go-live date of the 2nd April for the new system. Following the introduction of this RBT will be able to manage the registry and referral of complaints, compliments and customer comments across the authority. Until this goes live RBT centrally manage the referral of customer e-mails and web forms and will shortly start to receive the new centralised customer comment form that is due to go live from the 19th February.

## **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:**

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**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL****NOTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING GROUP MEETING  
THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2007, CONFERENCE ROOM, ERIC MANNS  
BUILDING****Present:**

Cllr Ken Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Innovation (Chair)  
Tracy Blakemore, Principal Information Officer, RBT  
Michael Bluff, Environmental Health Officer, Neighbourhoods  
Anne Cocking, Performance and Service Improvement Manager, 2010  
Rotherham Ltd  
Veronica De'Ath, Information Manager, RBT  
Ann Doyle, Communications Assistant, CYPS  
Janet Fletcher, Customer Services Manager, CYPS  
Tracy Godfrey-Davies, Administration Assistant, Corporate Communications and  
Marketing, Chief Executive's  
Emma Hill, Business Support Officer, EDS  
Tracy Holmes, Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing, Chief  
Executive's  
Richard Jackson, Streetpride Area Manager, EDS  
Emma Kirkwood, Human Resources Officer, Strategic HR  
Graham Nicholson, Design Manager, RBT  
Damian Nightingale, Information, Governance, Sharing & Communications  
Officer, Adult Social Services  
Dale Otter, Recycling/Sustainable Waste Officer, Neighbourhoods  
Steve Pearson, Communications Manager, CYPS  
Tom Sweetman, Project Manager, Neighbourhoods  
Ann Todd, Press and Public Relations Officer, CX (for agenda item ???  
Dave Whelan, Project Manager Construction, 2010 Rotherham Ltd

**Apologies:**

Deborah Bicknell, Recruitment and Marketing Officer, CYPS  
Paul Edwards, ICT Client Co-ordinator, Resources  
Marie Hayes, Commercial & Promotional Services Manager, Culture and Leisure  
Clark Herron, Communications Manager, EDS  
Dean Kerry, Communications Manager, Neighbourhoods  
Alison Lilburn, Systems and Information Officer, EDS  
Dawn Price, Consultation Officer, CX  
Ceri Williams, Internal Communications Officer, CX

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Councillor Wyatt welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited introductions around the table. Apologies were noted.

2. Notes of the last meeting

Discussed and agreed with the following matters arising:

- Emma Kirkwood confirmed that the HR and Payroll survey questions had been included within Reach-in but were also being circulated more widely to meet the necessary criteria – being handled by Sarah McCall.
- The Sheffield-based lifestyle magazine, Exposed, was planning to begin distribution in Rotherham town centre.
- Steph Cunningham, Editor of Rotherham Council Matters, left the authority on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January. Recruitment/advertising for post in January. Anne Geldard will be providing temporary cover.
- Julie Roberts to update the group on ‘Anniversary of Royal Charter’ at next meeting.

**Action: Julie Roberts**

- Small amendments have been made to the functionality of the new Image Library, which has been undergoing routine testing. The Library should be finished and signed off by the end of next week. Issues still to be resolved around consent forms and the promotion of the system to all staff. GN confirmed project had been delivered within agreed budget.
- Who’s Who guide not progressed due to leave commitments. TH to progress.

**Action: Tracy Holmes**

- TH again requested early warning of issues, events, initiatives, etc for display on the front page of the website – eg re-registering for postal voting. TH to contact Marie Elliott

**Action: Tracy Holmes**

- The editorial board has seen and approved the next edition of RCM, but there is still space for stories in the May issue. Schedules of future editions to be circulated.

**Action: Anne Geldard**

3. International Indian Film Academy Awards – Implications for Rotherham

Ann Todd attended for this item. She explained that it was hoped that the awards evening at Sheffield Arena would be twinned with a big screen, Bollywood party at Magna. The awards are being led by the Yorkshire Tourist Board, and hope to attract an estimated 10,000 people to the region, with major spin-offs particularly for tourism and potential future film venues. AT was due attend a further meeting later in the day and would report back to the group.

**Action: Ann Todd**

4. Rotherham Show – Planning for 2007

The consensus of opinion – discussed at previous meetings - was that the approach taken by the group had worked well last year but lack of communication and co-ordination between corporate (local authority marquee) and Programme Area-specific activity resulted in duplication of display materials and messages. Key people from Programme Areas have been asked to join the group to ensure a more joined-up approach to the co-ordinating/sharing of information, to make the most of the opportunities presented by the show to promote RMBC and its services.

TH confirmed that a BIP paper had been submitted, seeking funding for corporate marketing next year, and funding to support the Show's local authority marquee had been included in that, building on the activity for 2006.

The idea of a local authority village was discussed with the view to having a group of units/displays in and around the 'Your Council' marquee.

Janet Fletcher explained that the site where the authority marquee stands had been flattened purposely to accommodate the marquee, and is the only site in the park big enough to house the marquee. Space around the marquee was limited and would not accommodate a local authority village.

In addition, it was hoped that the horticultural tent would be relocated to facilitate the provision of a central arena – a focal point – and therefore logistically the “village” approach might not be workable. It was noted that this development would also impact on the sound/music related performance/activity area in the local authority marquee

Dale Otter from waste management and Richard Jackson from Streetpride added that their displays included heavy plant – vehicles, box vans and tents. These items require large sites and are better situated away from the centre of the park on the outskirts. This also made the park appear bigger and encouraged other trade stands to site there, as well as encouraging visitors to take in the whole of the show. However, they were supportive of a more co-ordinated approach.

Anne Cocking also welcomed the co-ordination on behalf of 2010, where a new communications and marketing officer had been appointed and would begin work on 12<sup>th</sup> February. It was agreed she should form part of the group.

In view of these comments it was agreed that the co-ordinated approach would centre on what was being displayed and not where.

Councillor Wyatt said he would also like to see more involvement by the NHS in this year’s show.

Ken Wyatt enquired about the timetable for printing of the show programme which should be used more effectively to promote RMBC’s activities at the show. Janet Fletcher to provide breakdown of requirement with times/dates.

**Action: Janet Fletcher**

**(post meeting note: TGD forwarded timetable for council services’ involvement to all group members)**

#### 5. Council Tax Leaflet – Advertising

TH reported that in previous years the council tax leaflet had been produced by an external company. Income to produce the leaflet was generated by advertising.

The decision had been taken to produce this year’s leaflet in-house, with income from ads for internal RMBC departments to offset the costs of production. The Design Studio has been commissioned to produce a 16 page A5 booklet that is more readable and includes the Leader’s message. Advertising will be internal, communication leads may be called on to assist in the selling of adverts.

The total cost to produce the booklet will be around £10,000. A typical quarter page advert would cost in the region of £900 – artwork charges are extra.

TH said it may be necessary to recruit the help of Programme Area communications leads in identifying potential advertisers. Update to be provided at next meeting.

**Action: Tracy Holmes**

6. Learning from Exercise Twister

The last emergency planning exercise, Exercise Twister, had been the first time the public information rota was used to update the web. Public information officers used 'Word' as opposed to CMS – TH asked if officers could be trained in CMS to ensure this could be used "live" in future exercises and in the event of a real-life incident..

Tracy Blakemore said that most officers on the public information rota were Programme Area Editors and already trained in CMS. However, people in the press office would require training. Access to CMS in the operations room would also need to be checked.

**Action: Tracy Holmes**

7. Network Update

Tracy Holmes and Rob Pett will be attending the Local Government Association New Year media reception on Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup> of January. National media will be represented at the event, TH to report back.

**Action: Tracy Holmes**

8. Any Other Business

Graham Nicholson informed the group that a small steering group was meeting to look at brand guidelines and how to promote them. They will be looking at how the council logo and strapline is used, amongst other associated issues.

The guidelines will be available at the end of March.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm, room 2 at the Town Hall.

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

Meeting Title	<b>Procurement Panel</b>
Date	<b>Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2007</b>
Start time	10.00 am
Venue	Committee Room 1, Rotherham Town Hall
Chair	Councillor Ken Wyatt

Attendees	Init	Programme Area
Ken Wyatt	KW	Councillor
Abi Dakin	AD	RBT
David Finch	DF	Corporate Services
Sandra Greatorex	SG	Voluntary Action Rotherham
Joanne Kirk	JK	RBT
Helen Leadley	HL	Corporate Services
Brian Leigh	BL	RBT
David Lisgo	DL	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services
Sarah M <sup>c</sup> Call	SM	Corporate Services
David Nappin	DN	Environment & Development Services
David Rhodes	DR	Environment & Development Services
Paul Ruston	PR	2010 Rotherham Ltd
Laura Townson	LT	Children & Young People's Services

Apologies	Init	Programme Area
Gerald Smith	GS	Councillor
Robin Stonebridge	RS	Councillor
Carol Adamson	CA	CEX
Brian Barrett	BB	Environment & Development Services
Simon Bradley	SB	RBT Procurement Manager
Teresa Butler	TB	2010 Rotherham Ltd
Bob Crosby	BC	Neighbourhood Services
Lesley Dabell	LD	Voluntary Action Rotherham
Matt Gladstone	MG	Acting Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Hunter	PH	RiDO Investment Team
Gary Ironmonger	GI	2010 Rotherham Ltd
Carol Mills	CM	Strategic Director, Corporate Services
Ian Smith	IS	Director of Asset Management
Keith Thompson	KT	Corporate Services
Jeff Wharfe	JW	RiDO - Rotherham Partnership



Minutes		
Ref	Item or Action	Action Owner
10/07	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting of the Procurement Panel, held on Monday, 22nd January, 2007, were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
11/07	<p><b>Voluntary and Community Sector – Update on Base Budget Review, the Local Area Agreement and the Compact</b></p> <p>The Procurement Panel noted that the need for a consistent approach, across the Council, to communications with the voluntary and community sector, would be determined as part of the Our Future process. There would also be consideration by the multi-agency working group chaired by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>It was agreed that Mr. Tim Gollins, Manager of Supporting People would be included in the membership of the Procurement Panel.</p>	HL
12/07	<p><b>eTendering (Alito-SCMS) and Framework Agreements (Cedar-FA)</b></p> <p>Brian presented a report concerning two aspects of the Phase 3 Transformation process, as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the delivery of an eTendering capability for use by the whole of RMBC and RBT; and</li> <li>- Framework Agreement functionality, key to RBT's operation especially in respect of compliance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that both eTendering and Framework Agreements' functionality are due for completion by the end of March, 2007.</p> <p>It was agreed that a demonstration of this important eProcurement functionality be made by RBT at the Procurement Panel meeting to be held on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2007 and afterwards a working party is to be established to disseminate this functionality across the Council.</p>	BL

	<p>The arrangements for the creation of a central contracts' register data via the framework agreement model for the whole Council, which will effectively store the relevant information for the annual European Union statistical return, were also noted.</p>	
13/07	<p><b>BVPI8 – Payment of invoices within 30 days (Goods Receivable Notification (GRN) - receipt of goods on a timely basis)</b></p> <p>The Procurement Panel noted that the performance in respect of BVPI8 had been considered at the meeting of the Procurement Champions, held on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2007.</p> <p>The main issues of concern appeared to be:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- receipts not showing on the system;</li> <li>- call-off orders requesting no receipt;</li> <li>- copy of invoice requested;</li> <li>- goods delivered to remote sites;</li> <li>- requisitioner unavailable (eg: holiday);</li> <li>- Cedar system not sending prompts to authorisers.</li> </ul> <p>The Procurement Panel noted that action continued to be taken to address these issues.</p> <p>It was agreed that:-</p> <p>(a) the details now discussed in respect of BVPI8 be reported to the Cabinet, to the Audit Committee and also to the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee;</p> <p>(b) the procedure being operated by Cambridge City Council, whereby goods requisitioners are not asked to submit 'goods received notes', but are instead required to authorise 'approvals to pay' for a purchased item, be approved for use within the Council.</p>	<p>HL</p> <p>HL BL JK</p>
14/07	<p><b>Legal Update</b></p> <p>Brian reported that the eTendering capability had been tested through the European Union procurement process and would shortly receive full Council approval.</p>	

15/07	<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 one.</p> <p>Particular reference was made to:-</p> <p>APR1.04 – Procurement Ethics Policy – approval still required. Feedback had been received from EDS – to be resolved, and document finalised for approval.</p> <p>APR1.08 – High Risk and High Value Procurement, scrutiny by Performance and Scrutiny Committee – this item to be the subject of a report to the next meeting of the Procurement Panel.</p> <p>APR3.05 – Document imaging – good progress was now being made and this issue was now being shown as “green”, with a completion date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007.</p> <p>APR4.03 – review tendering processes to ensure elimination of barriers – work was continuing on this action point, although it was heavily dependent upon volunteer time and therefore progress was not as swift as anticipated. SG put forward a request for more Rotherham volunteers for the Change Up scheme. However, as it depends on officers volunteering their own time it was seen as something that the Panel could not enforce.</p> <p>APR4.06 – engagement with the local market – there was to be an appropriate link included within the procurement section of the Council's Internet web site to the Small Business Friendly Concordat; in addition, a sub-regional 'meet the buyer' event was scheduled to take place during May, 2007, in Sheffield and details would be circulated.</p> <p>Members of the Procurement Panel wished the very best for the future to Helen, who would shortly begin her maternity leave.</p>	<p>BL</p> <p>IS</p> <p>BL</p> <p>HL</p>
<b>Next Meeting</b>		
Date	Thursday, 15 <sup>th</sup> March, 2007	
Time	2.00 p.m.	
Venue	Town Hall, Rotherham	

### Dates of Future Meetings

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

Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2007 starting at 10.00 am

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

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

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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