

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.

Date: Thursday, 13 December
2007

Time: 4.00 p.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 and Communications.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Questions from members of the public and the press.

For Decision:-

6. Scrutiny Review of Area Assemblies (report herewith) (Pages 1 - 23)

For Monitoring:-

7. Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (c. 28) – Duty to Involve Local People and Action Plan for Community Empowerment (report herewith) (Pages 24 - 29)
8. Legal LPI Refresh (report herewith) (Pages 30 - 34)
9. Quarter 2 Performance Report (herewith) (Pages 35 - 45)
10. Strong and Prosperous Communities - The Local Government White Paper October 2006 - Making Assets Work, The Quirk Review Findings and Area Asset Management Plans (report herewith) (Pages 46 - 64)

Minutes - For Information:-

11. Minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 18th October, 2007 (herewith). (Pages 65 - 70)
12. Minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 28th September, 19th October, 9th and 23rd November, 2007 (herewith). (Pages 71 - 107)
13. Minutes of a meeting of the New Arrivals Working Party held on 21st November, 2007 (herewith) (Pages 108 - 109)

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 17 January 2008**

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor Whelbourn
Vice-Chairman – Councillor Austen
Councillors:-Cutts, Dodson, Foden, J. Hamilton, Johnston, Littleboy, Mannion,
Pickering and Sangster

Co-opted Members

Debbie Heath (Voluntary Action Rotherham)
Councillor A. Buckley (Parish Council Representative)
David Morton (Parish Council Representative)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL
2.	Date:	13TH DECEMBER 2007
3.	Title:	SCRUTINY REVIEW OF AREA ASSEMBLIES
4.	Programme Area:	CHIEF EXECUTIVES

5. Summary

The Scrutiny Review of Area Assemblies is attached to this report. The report sets out the findings and recommendations of the review group and is submitted to the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel for its consideration.

6. Recommendations

That the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel support the recommendations from the Area Assembly Review Group.

That the Scrutiny Panel forward the report and their comments to Performance Scrutiny Overview Committee (PSOC) to determine what action PSOC wish to take in light of the review recommendations.

7. Proposals and Details

A review group was formed in August 2007 consisting of Cllr Whelbourn, Cllr Austen, Cllr Lakin, Cllr McNeely and Cllr Pickering. The review was initiated because Members had agreed that Area Assemblies would be reviewed again one year after the new ways of working had come into practice. This was a recommendation from the "Member role in Area Assemblies" Scrutiny Review in April 2006.

The Review Group undertook an intensive five week period of interviews and consultation from a wide range of organisations, partners, Members and officers. Questionnaires were also given to members of the public at three Area Assemblies, three coordinating groups were visited and interviewed, all Area Chairs contributed and partners such as the Primary Care Trust and Parish Councils were interviewed.

It was important in the review to acknowledge the expectations in the recent White Paper which has received royal assent as the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act. There are many community empowerment commitments and the White Paper promotes community and neighbourhood engagement. It argues that involving citizens and communities in local decision-making leads to better service provision and stronger, more confident communities.

The findings of the review were that progress has been made but there are some specific areas that need addressing. Overall it did not seem clear that there is a consistent, shared vision on what role Area Assemblies are meant to play and how coordinating groups fit into the Council's decision making structure. The terms of reference for coordinating groups and Area Assemblies are not in the Council constitution and there isn't widely held knowledge of their existence. There is clarity needed on where Area Plans fit into the Council planning process including their relationship with the Local Area Agreement, Compact and Sustainable Community Strategy.

Recommendations include a review of the terms of reference for Area Assemblies and coordinating groups to establish a shared understanding of their purpose. There also needs to be a clear referral route for complex or recurring issues from Area Assemblies into the Council structure. In terms of the coordinating groups they have all developed differently but the review group felt there needed to be a more open and transparent process to the election of community representatives onto the groups. In terms of the Area Assemblies the review group felt that, in line with the White Paper, there should be the consideration of larger devolved budgets with at least a one year notice of planning, preparation and support. If the idea of devolved budgets is endorsed they should occur incrementally.

8. Finance

A number of the report's recommendations may have financial implications if adopted. This would require further exploration by the Council and relevant partner agencies on the costs, risks and benefits of implementing the recommendations

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There is the apparent risk that if Area Assemblies are not strengthened in terms of establishing a shared purpose and understanding then they could suffer from a lack of democratic participation and not be adequately equipped to address local issues.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

See Section 5 of the report

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The report has been circulated to senior management within the Council, the PCT, Police, VAR, 2010, Cabinet Members, Area Chairs and Area Partnership Managers for their comments and to check for factual accuracy.

Contact Name : *Angela Power, Scrutiny Adviser, angela.power@rotherham.gov.uk*
tel: 01709 822790

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The review was initiated because Members had agreed that Area Assemblies would be reviewed again one year after the new ways of working had come into practice. This was a recommendation from the "Member role in Area Assemblies" Scrutiny Review in April 2006.

1.2 The terms of reference for the review were:

- Have the recommendations from the first review been implemented?
- Have the recommendations been successful?
- Is the chosen model working?
- Has the style of coordinating groups worked? Is the decision making effective in this structure?
- Have the public attended meetings?
- Are there any ways we could change the way of working that would improve Area Assemblies?

The review group recognised that as the review progressed additional issues would be raised that needed to be incorporated into the review.

1.3 The review group was made up of the following Members:

- Chair: Cllr Glyn Whelbourn
- Cllr Jane Austen
- Cllr Rose McNeely
- Cllr Paul Lakin
- Cllr Dave Pickering

Michael Clark, Partnership Manager, Chief Executives Office was co-opted onto the Review Group.

1.4 The review drew evidence from a variety of sources, a full list of individuals is included in Section 9 of the report. These included:

- Wentworth North, Rother Valley West and Wentworth South coordinating groups were all visited and questionnaires sent to the partners of these groups (including amongst others the Police, Primary Care Trust, 2010, Parish Councils, business sector, voluntary sector) to feed in their views so far of the new Area Assembly structures.
- Cllr Austen gave a presentation at the Parish Council Network where Parish Councillors were consulted on their views of Area Assemblies and how they felt about their own role and inclusion in the structures.

- The review group invited the contribution of all Members via a questionnaire. Opposition Members were invited to contribute via interview although none took up the opportunity. The group interviewed the seven Area Chairs, three Cabinet Members and eleven Members responded to the questionnaire. With five Elected Members on the review group the review saw the involvement of twenty six Members.
- Area Partnership Managers for Rotherham North, Rotherham South and Rother Valley West supported the review group in taking a questionnaire to their public meeting for members of the public to fill in on their opinions of the Area Assembly meeting and their understanding of its purpose.
- The review group received a paper submitted by the PCT for evidence which contained a number of useful suggested ways forward for Area Assemblies. Evidence was also received from the Neighbourhoods directorate in the form of a number of briefing papers that identified aspects of Area Assemblies that needed addressing, again with suggested ways forward. All the evidence was considered by the review group and contributed directly to the findings and recommendations.

The help and co-operation with the review of all the Members, officers and organisations who contributed is gratefully acknowledged.

2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 The Review Group undertook an intensive five week period of interviews and consultation from a wide range of organisations, partners, Members and officers. Throughout this period it was clear that progress has most definitely been made for Area Assemblies in the new ways of working and in some areas there was very positive feedback. There are now seven functioning coordinating groups engaging a wide range of partners into Area Assemblies. There was the consensus that the Area Partnership Managers are highly regarded by Elected Members and members of the coordinating groups. It was also clear that all Area Assemblies display a strong commitment to seeking the engagement of their local communities and have developed a variety of methods to do this. All these achievements have taken place in a relatively short period of time and it is recognised that Area Assemblies are still very much in a developing, transitional process.
- 2.2 The Review Group felt there were some specific issues that need addressing.
- 2.2.1 The evidence from partners was challenging on the structure of Area Assemblies although they acknowledged the progress that has been made in this transitional year. Evidence from coordinating groups illustrated that whilst every coordinating group operates differently they all face similar challenges in making the group feel like a true partnership for all members. There was a consensus that partners and members did not understand the terms of reference for the coordinating groups, were not meaningfully consulted on them and one year on were still unclear how coordinating groups fit into the Council structures.

- 2.2.2 Similarly in terms of the Area Assemblies overall there was not a consensus on what their role and purpose is. It seemed unclear to the review group whether there was shared understanding from Members, officers and partners of what role Area Assemblies are meant to play. There was a lack of clarity whether Area Assemblies should focus their work in terms of community empowerment, democratic representation or local service delivery. It is vital to the future of Area Assemblies that this shared understanding is established at Executive, Non-Executive and officer level within the Council and amongst partners.
- 2.2.3 The terms of reference for Area Assemblies and coordinating groups do not currently appear in the Council constitution. There was also lack of clarity around the decision making powers of the coordinating group as a whole and of the contribution of individual partners within this decision making process.
- 2.2.4 The original review recommended a model of coordinating groups that consisted of nine Elected Members. However it has been demonstrated it has been difficult to maintain this level of attendance on a consistent basis.
- 2.2.5 The Area Assembly Chairs and Coordinating Group members felt that they did not always have ownership of the Area Assembly agenda and the presentations given at these meetings were not always relevant to the local area.
- 2.2.6 There was also concern over how issues or problems raised at Area Assembly meetings are elevated into the Council process to be addressed. There are clear links here with the Councillor Call for Action.
- 2.2.7 It was acknowledged that the Area Plans were developed in a small space of time, however Members felt more time should be allowed in future with clearer linkages into the Community Strategy from locally identified issues.
- 2.2.8 The Area Chairs wanted greater clarity about the purpose of the Area Assembly Chairs meeting and a direct role in determining the agenda. The Review Group recognised that much like Scrutiny Panels, the Area Assembly Chairs should be an influencing group. Their view was the purpose of the Area Assembly Chairs meeting is to share good practice and challenges, for example being a route for Councillor Call for Action, and to elevate such issues to Performance Scrutiny Overview Committee (PSOC) for further action.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) If accepted all recommendations made by this Review Group should be in progress by May 2008 and an Action Plan brought to the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel for monitoring on a regular basis.

Coordinating Groups

- 2) A review of the coordinating group terms of reference should be undertaken in consultation with all key partners and coordinating groups to ensure that there is a shared and agreed understanding and ownership of the coordinating groups role, purpose and decision making powers. The terms of reference should be included in the Council's Constitution once agreed.
- 3) Cabinet should consider developing clear routes for referral of issues, concerns and pressures from the coordinating groups to the relevant Council body such as the Performance Scrutiny Overview Committee or Cabinet Member.
- 4) All Members and partners in coordinating groups should be given clear opportunities to feed into agenda setting for the coordinating group meetings and the Area Assembly meetings.
- 5) Community representatives should be elected in an open and transparent process, good practice of the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) electing representatives onto the Local Strategic Partnership theme boards could be considered. It would need to be clear that any member of the community could apply, not just those specifically from a voluntary or community sector organisation.
- 6) Each Area Assembly should consult with the Parishes in their area about Parish representation on coordinating groups. This should link where appropriate to the Local Parish Network.
- 7) Good practice should be shared in undertaking task and finish groups to ensure they are used consistently in all Area Assemblies.
- 8) In light of the concerns raised about coordinating group membership, Cabinet should revisit the options proposed in the first Scrutiny Review and consider whether the current level of Councillor representation on coordinating groups is still appropriate.

Area Assemblies

- 9) A review of the Area Assemblies terms of reference should be undertaken in consultation with all key partners and coordinating groups to ensure that there is a shared and agreed understanding and ownership of the Area Assemblies role, purpose and decision making powers. The terms of reference should be included in the Council's Constitution once agreed.
- 10) The agenda should be set by the Area Assembly Chair and coordinating group, supported by the Area Partnership Managers, with suggestions from the local community. Where there are presentations they should be specifically shaped towards that local area and deemed relevant by the Coordinating Group and Area Assembly Chair.
- 11) Area Assemblies should receive increased and wider devolved budgets by May 2009 in line with the emphasis on devolved budgets and locality working in the 2006 White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous' Communities. Any budgets given should be clearly aligned to the priorities in the Area Plans. There should be a one year notice of mandatory training, support and planning given

to relevant Members, staff and partners. If Cabinet support this concept there is a need for further work by the Council in terms of identifying the structures, accountability and decision making routes for how this could be done.

- 12) Local communities should be consulted on how devolved budgets are spent.
- 13) Should there be a move to parish all the Borough through the Parish Boundary Review, the Council should review the role of Area Assemblies.

Area Plans

- 14) All partners in coordinating groups need to have full involvement and agreement in the production of a meaningful Area Plan. Where there are particular actions that relate to a Council or partner service appropriate officers need to be involved to assist the process.
- 15) The current Community Strategy refresh should evidence that the local issues and actions identified in the Area Plans have been incorporated. The service planning process should reflect the priorities identified in the Area Plans.
- 16) Greater links should be made between the priorities in the Local Area Agreement and actions in the Area Plans.
- 17) The time allocated to the development of Area Plans should be reviewed with Members, partners and officers to ensure the timescales are realistic.
- 18) Area Plan consultation currently taking place, and in the future, needs to involve all communities of interest including BME communities.

Area Assembly Chairs

- 19) A development programme of training should be provided for Area Chairs, Vice Chairs and coordinating groups to address gaps in support in conjunction with the Member Development officer.
- 20) Area Assemblies should consider giving specific areas of responsibility to Elected Members (see good practice at Tameside) with particular attention given to strengthening the role of the Vice Chair. Should this strengthening of the role of the Vice Chair take place there should be an appropriate review of Special Responsibility Allowances by the Independent Remuneration Panel
- 21) Area Assembly Chairs should shape and control the agenda of the Area Assembly Chairs meeting, raising relevant issues and concerns that need to be addressed.
- 22) PSOC should have a standing item on its agenda where Area Assembly Chairs and Area Assemblies can directly refer issues of importance for consideration. (However this recommendation will need to ensure it is in line with the protocols for the Councillor's Call for Action that are currently being developed.)
- 23) Area Assembly Chairs meeting should meet 6 times a year.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 Why Members wanted to look at this issue

4.1.1 A Scrutiny Review of Area Assemblies was undertaken and completed in April 2006. This review was set up because there was the concern that there had not been sufficient consultation with Members on the proposed Area Assembly structures and so Members requested a scrutiny review. Recommendations were endorsed by Cabinet that established the role and structure of coordinating groups and the role of Area Assemblies. These were seen as the “new ways of working”. Since the initial review was undertaken the 2006 White Paper ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’ was published setting out an enhanced role for local councillors. It is therefore timely to look at how this role could be reflected in Area Assembly structures.

4.1.2 As part of this review it was recommended that:

“9.9 That this new way of working be reviewed at the end of the first municipal year to evaluate its effectiveness and any changes which might be needed.”

4.1.3 The new ways of working came into practice in September 2006. This review began in late September 2007 and comprised a series of interviews with Council officers, officers from partner agencies, visits to three coordinating groups, a presentation at the Parish Council network, questionnaire to all Members and a questionnaire to the public. There was also a series of briefing papers prepared by officers in Neighbourhoods which the review group received and considered (see item 8). In most areas these briefing papers supported the evidence and findings of the Review Group. It should be noted the review group felt a few of the briefing papers fell outside of their terms of reference so these were not used, but it was encouraging to see progress being made in so many areas.

5 OVERVIEW OF POLICY FRAMEWORK

5.1 National Level

5.1.1 The Local Government Act 2000 sought to give councillors a more powerful role and at the heart of documents and speeches from the new Department of Communities and Local Government is the democratically elected councillor. The Government emphasised Members’ representational roles with the expectation that Members would take on roles of community leadership, neighbourhood representation and effective communication between citizens and councils about local needs and priorities.

5.1.2 This has become increasingly relevant with the publication of “Strong and Prosperous Communities- Local Government White Paper 2006”. This has received royal assent as the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act. There are many community empowerment commitments in the Local Government White Paper which strongly relate to this review. The White Paper promotes community and neighbourhood engagement with

councillors working more in their communities and less in the Town Hall. The White Paper is built upon the assumption that public services need to be made more personal and so community engagement at the neighbourhood-level is paramount. It argues that involving citizens and communities in local decision-making leads to better service provision and stronger, more confident communities.

5.1.3 Responsive service and empowered communities is the second chapter of the White Paper and is broken down into sections detailing the strengthened role citizens and communities should expect in shaping the places they live. It has been summarised by the Local Government Information Unit as follows:

- More choice – including widening choice in childcare, other social care and in social housing;
- More say – through extending the duty on local authorities to inform, consult, involve and devolve to local communities;
- More information – on the quality and performance of local services;
- More answers – when communities put forward suggestions or demand action of public service providers;
- More power – to manage, own and scrutinise local services;
- More support – to build the capacity of communities and local authorities to engage and empower.

5.1.4 On 19 October 2007, Communities and Local Government published "An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success". The Action Plan, produced in partnership with the Local Government Association, sets out how the government will deliver on its commitment to bring about greater devolution and empower communities. The plan indicates Government's intention to "enable all community members including third sector, elected representatives and local businesses to flourish and prosper and give local government the freedom and flexibility to work with their communities. Government is committed to ensuring that it does not place unfunded new burdens on local authorities"¹. This has meant at a local level an increasing emphasis on local area working. Many local authorities now have some form of Area Assembly with a variety of structures. With some councils this has led to the decision to Parish the whole area such as in Milton Keynes, or to promote parishes as in Bradford. From national government policy there is a clear expectation and requirement that working at a local level and engaging communities should be a focus to service delivery. A report released on the 23rd November 2007 from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation "Ward councillors and community leadership" says "Councillors and community organisations want elected members to be able to tackle local issues

¹ An Action Plan for Community Engagement: Building on Success. Department for Communities and Local Government.

directly, especially persistent problems concerning local public spaces such as fly tipping, graffiti or unkempt parks and green spaces.”²

- 5.1.5 The Council is performance assessed by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). Targets within the key lines of enquiry for the CPA include issues around consultation and engaging the public in service delivery. The Council must demonstrate it has engaged with the public and that they are aware of the Council aims. The key lines of enquiry states that a Council must ensure “Communities and partners are regularly consulted, with a view to building a shared vision for the area for citizens, users and partners”. As a way of measuring a Council’s performance local authorities must demonstrate they have used effective community engagement mechanisms to understand the views and needs of its citizens.
- 5.1.6 In 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) will supersede the CPA of local government. CAA will continue to provide assurance about how well-run local public services are and how effectively they use taxpayers’ money. The upcoming CAA will also include a similar target, with the emphasis on how well the Council can evidence that it knows its communities at a local level and their varying needs. Within Rotherham, Area Assemblies will be expected to form part of this evidence. Consultation on the new CAA has proposed that it is going to be structured with the following vision:

“Relevant to local people. In keeping with the move to more local targets, CAA will focus on what matters here, and to whom. It will challenge how local public service priorities have been set alongside national ones and whether they are rooted in a genuine understanding of diverse local needs. It will also continue to provide local people with assurance about how well run local services are, providing accountability for use of public resources³.”

5.2 **Local Level**

5.3 **Community Strategy (refresh of this strategy is in process)**

- 5.3.1 A key theme from the Community Strategy of relevance for this review is Rotherham Proud. The Strategy envisages that by 2010: *“Rotherham people, businesses and pride in the borough are at the heart of our vision. The borough will have a positive external image and its people will be renowned for their welcome, friendliness and commitment to the values of social justice. Active citizenship and democracy will underpin how Rotherham works. Achievements and diversity will be celebrated. Rotherham will be a caring place, where the most vulnerable are supported. It will be made up of strong, sustainable and cohesive communities, both of place and interest, and there will be many opportunities for people to be*

² Ward Councillors and Community Leadership. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation November 2007.

³ Evolution of regulation. Comprehensive Area Assessment and the changing face of public service involvement

involved in civic life and local decision-making. The means to do this will be clear, well known and accessible.”

- 5.3.2 The Strategy goes onto to say in the aims “Through the development of Area Assemblies, Community Planning, the Rotherham Community Empowerment Network, and other borough-wide and local initiatives, such as the Eastwood and Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Management Pilot, there are now more opportunities for local communities to be involved in local decision-making. However, there is still further work to be done to enable greater engagement of communities of interest.”

5.4 **Corporate Plan**

- 5.4.1 As part of its commitment to ensuring the success of the Community Strategy the council has the following commitments in its Corporate Strategy:

“Ensure that Rotherham people are able to influence decisions and feel confident their views will be listened to and where possible acted upon. Methods of ensuring this include:”

- Publish annual report of consultation
- Develop more robust methods of consulting on key strategic issues, including regeneration programmes
- Develop more effective means of involving communities, particularly developing Area Assemblies.

5.5 **Corporate Consultation and Community Involvement (CCI) Framework**

- 5.5.1 The Framework has 6 guiding principles on CCI that follow best practice. These will help to ensure that the council consistently applies a common and high standard for consulting and involving people and communities. There is the expectation that all council services, including Area Assemblies, should be complying with these standards to ensure effective consultation and community involvement takes place.

5.6 **Partnership Corporate Consultation and Community Involvement Framework (Draft)**

- 5.6.1 The following standards are building on the combination of the RMBC CCI Framework and the Compact, which have been identified as good practice nationally. These will help to ensure that the partners consistently apply a common and high standard for consulting and involving people and communities. The Area Assembly Team are working with the Chief Executives Directorate on developing a database that coordinates CCI across Directorates and partners and it will also be used to evaluate impact on service and policy development.

6 FINDINGS

The Review Group felt that the evidence they received divided into four key areas: Coordinating Groups, Area Assemblies, Area Plans and Area Assembly Chairs. Findings and evidence are themed under these key areas

6.1 Coordinating Groups

- 6.1.1 Evidence received on coordinating groups came from all officers and organisations interviewed, most particularly the questionnaires received from the coordinating groups and interviews conducted with the PCT, Police, 2010 and Voluntary Action Rotherham. The terms of reference of the review examined if the current model chosen for coordinating groups was working and whether decision making had been effective. Area Chairs were also questioned on how they felt about coordinating groups, their structure and ability to reach a consensus on decisions.
- 6.1.2 Overall there is an acknowledgement that Area Assemblies are still in a developing year and an attempt has been made to modernise the Area Assemblies structures, in response to Government initiatives. Coordinating groups have made a clear effort to involve partners and it is important that key bodies such as the PCT are recognised as essential partners.
- 6.1.3 Many coordinating groups have made use of task and finish groups to good effect such as the children and young people's task and finish group in Rother Valley South. The membership of this task group includes two Elected Members, South Yorkshire police, RMBC Extended Services, Children and Young People Service Representative, Community Representative, Rotherham PCT, RMBC Community Arts, Detached Youth Worker and Rotherham Wardens. One of the primary aims of the group was to look at ways of establishing diversionary activities for young people in Dinnington, to allocate funding into activities for children and young people and to monitor the projects when they were established. The group were also responsible for the acquisition of a temporary youth shelter for the area and the organisation of activities that took place during Local Democracy Week. This is just one example of many across the coordinating groups where Area Assemblies are bringing Members, Council officers and partners together to work on local projects and the review group felt strongly that they should occur in all Area Assemblies.
- 6.1.4 In some areas, processes have been developed to record issues raised, agree action points, identify a lead person and record recommendations so that it is clear to everyone how the issue will be addressed. However this is not occurring across all coordinating groups and the feedback from the questionnaires and the interviews with the PCT, 2010, VAR, Police and Parish Councils suggested there are very mixed experiences with some coordinating groups clearly working better than others.
- 6.1.5 The 'Scrutiny Review of the Member Role in Area Assemblies' was charged with developing the structure of coordinating groups. The subsequent model endorsed by full Council had nine Members on each coordinating group. However interviews with partners in this review raised concerns over this number and whether it is too many. A paper submitted for evidence from the PCT said: *"The Area Assemblies do not function as a true partnership. The*

Co-ordinating Groups are dominated by Borough Councillors.” Feedback from the questionnaires to coordinating groups said in response to the question ‘How do you feel the structure of coordinating groups work? Does it have the appropriate make up?’ included:

“I feel the structure is top heavy with councillors. There should be more community groups represented.”

“I believe the management structure was preconceived by the Council. It seems good, with the right representatives generally”.

“I feel it doesn’t work, mainly because it is unclear what the function of the group is, what are we coordinating, what do we influence?”

- 6.1.6 Responses were varied but clearly there are concerns over not only the structure of coordinating groups but the purpose and powers of them. The Review Group felt that in light of this evidence from partners that Cabinet should revisit the model chosen and decide whether 9 Members in a coordinating group is still appropriate.
- 6.1.7 It is unclear for members of coordinating groups where they fit into the Council structure. There was a lack of consistency in understanding and clarity over what the coordinating group was there to achieve. This experience does differ between the Area Assemblies but overall it is an issue. This needs to be rectified by a clear terms of reference in the Council’s Constitution.
- 6.1.8 The review group supports the work taking place in Neighbourhoods to establish link officers in the Council directorates (so for example where this is a specific problem concerning children and young people there will be a link officer in Children and Young Peoples Services). It is also worth noting the progress being made with Councillor Call for Action and the joint meetings that have taken place between Area Partnership Managers and Scrutiny Advisers to try and ensure closer joint working.
- 6.1.9 In terms of Parish Councils there is a lack of clarity for Area Assemblies in how to elect representatives. This was raised by evidence from Area Chairs, individual members and from the consultation with the Parish Council Network. It has been recognised that this is an issue and reports have been submitted to Area Chairs in how this can be rectified. However the review group recognises a one size fits all approach is not appropriate as some Area Assemblies have higher numbers of Parishes. A Parish Council representative consulted at the Parish Council Network event had declined an invitation to sit on a coordinating group as the individual felt unable to represent all the Parish Councils of that area.
- 6.1.10 In line with work already being undertaken at Area Assembly Chairs meeting it was felt by the review group that each Area Assembly should consult with the Parishes in their area over how Parish representation on coordinating groups takes place. In the areas where there is a Local Parish Network it could be appropriate for the network to elect a representative to the

coordinating group. For those areas without a local network these elections could take place at the Parish Council Network annual meeting.

- 6.1.11 The review group felt that every coordinating group is different and supported that the membership of each has developed in its own way, with guidance from the first scrutiny review on structure, taking into account what is appropriate for that area. However for the election of community representatives there were concerns over how representatives were chosen and elected. It was suggested that consideration is given to the model used by the Local Strategic Partnership where representatives are elected from the Community Empowerment Network onto theme boards. If this model was adapted for Area Assemblies it would need to be clear that any member of the community could apply, not just those specifically from a voluntary or community sector organisation.
- 6.1.12 Partners felt the agendas at coordinating group meetings and at Area Assembly meetings were not always relevant to the local area and they had not helped set the agenda. The review group felt it was important they were involved in this process.
- 6.1.13 It is important to note that there is an increased emphasis on locality working, the progress of the Children and Young Peoples locality teams will need to tie in closely with the development of Area Assemblies so the coordinating groups are clear where their role sits within this.

6.2 **Area Assemblies**

- 6.2.1 Area Assemblies encompass more than just the open public meeting and this section of findings will refer specifically to the Area Assembly meeting and to the work of Area Assemblies as a whole.
- 6.2.2 Overall there was not a consensus on what the role and purpose of Area Assemblies is. It seemed unclear to the review group whether there was shared understanding from Members, officers and partners of what role Area Assemblies are meant to play. There was a lack of clarity whether Area Assemblies should focus their work in terms of community empowerment, democratic representation or local service delivery. It is vital to the future of Area Assemblies that this shared understanding is established at Executive, Non-Executive and officer level within the Council.
- 6.2.3 When revisiting the recommendations from the first scrutiny review on the Member role in Area Assemblies from April 2006, the review group found that not all Members and partners were aware of the terms of reference for Area Assemblies and furthermore these were not included in the Council Constitution. As with the coordinating group terms of reference, the review group felt that they needed to be written in consultation with the relevant key partners, Members and officers so there is a clarity of purpose for the Area Assembly meetings and practices. Once agreed these need to be put in the Council Constitution.
- 6.2.4 The view was given by Area Chairs, Members and partners that the Area Assemblies as a whole would be more meaningful and have a clearer purpose if they had larger, individual, devolved budgets outside of the

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Streetpride allocations. When issues are raised by the local community at meetings it can be challenging to find local solutions with such limited pots of money. However Members were very clear that any such devolution of funds could only work if the money allocated is clearly aligned to the priorities in the Area Plan. Furthermore the review group felt mandatory training should be provided to all relevant officers and Members with sufficient preparation, planning and support. Within coordinating groups there had been few cases where partners had contributed money towards area projects, the view given by most partners was that they didn't feel that Area Assemblies were ready to take on larger allocations of money. Therefore the review group felt that if budgets were devolved there would need to be at least a year's notice where sufficient preparation could take place.

- 6.2.5 Rotherham South and Wentworth South are examples of Area Assemblies who have worked very effectively on allowing residents to influence the spending of devolved budgets. With the NRF they have invited suggestions from the local community on how it can be spent. But this is not replicated in all areas and the review group would encourage that this good practice on consulting the local community on local budgets is shared. Results from Member questionnaires showed support for this is in line with the 2006 White Paper which emphasized greater involvement of local community groups in local budget setting priorities.
- 6.2.6 The evidence suggested that outside of the Chair and Vice Chair no other councillors had specific roles or responsibilities within the Area Assemblies. Attendances at coordinating groups vary; Member attendance is not always very strong and on occasions Members are outnumbered by the partners who attend. The assignment of specific areas of responsibilities could encourage higher attendances from Elected Members and clearer lines of responsibility in how local issues are resolved. Area Chairs raised concerns that engagement by opposition Members in Area Assemblies has not been consistent across all areas. Area Assemblies need to find a way of engaging all Members in the process in a way that benefits local people and the effective running of the Assembly.
- 6.2.7 Good practice at Tameside from the first Scrutiny Review showed that each District Assembly in Tameside appoints the following champions:
- Community Safety
 - Environment (eg grounds maintenance)
 - Youth Issues
 - Local Liaison (eg Economic Development.)

This has proved to be a useful way of giving Members a specific role that ensures issues get addressed and also engages them clearly in their roles as local community leaders.

- 6.2.8 It has been noted by the review group that some Members gave the view that Parish Councils should be used for local area working rather than the current Area Assembly model and therefore the borough should be parished

as a whole. This is a process that has been used in areas such as Milton Keynes. The 2006 White Paper '*Strong and Prosperous Communities*' gives power to local people to request a Parish Council in their area where there is not already one. If through this or a parish boundary review Rotherham became an entirely parished Borough, then the Milton Keynes model could become viable for consideration.

- 6.2.9 Results from the questionnaires that went to Members of the public were positive in many areas. Twenty eight questionnaires were completed. 86% of those that responded had attended an Area Assembly meeting and 96% said they understood the procedure of the meeting which suggests there is consistent attendance and the meeting procedure is widely understood. However 54% said they did not think they could influence what the Area Assembly does and how it sets its priorities which suggests there could be scope for more public involvement at meetings.

6.3 Area Plans

- 6.3.1 The members of the review group felt the production of Area Plans was a success and the hard work put into these should be recognised. However the view was given that the Area Partnership Managers and the Area Assemblies were not given sufficient time initially to put together the Area Plans. It was raised by partners from the PCT that the first round of Area Plans had included targets around health for instance, where the appropriate officer had not been consulted on the preparation of this target.

- 6.3.2 Interviews with officers from within Chief Executives Office at the Council also raised strong concerns that at a strategic level the Area Plans were not sufficiently linking upwards to the Community Strategy. The Community Strategy itself was not sufficiently reflecting locally identified issues in the Area Plans, it was difficult to demonstrate how Area Plans have informed service delivery at a corporate level. The paper on 'Ward councillors and community leadership' says "Councillors must have real opportunities to influence strategic decisions about how mainstream services are allocated spending, and at a point where local priorities and intelligence can be fully reflected in how services are planned and delivered"⁴. The Corporate Performance Assessment for Rotherham in 2006 said:

"Changes are needed because the use of area assemblies for community engagement has had only mixed success. While some are effective, exploiting devolved budgets and local action plans based on good quality local intelligence gathering, they have not been entirely successful in engaging with the full diversity of local communities and gaining local ownership".

- 6.3.3 The review group are aware that the Area Plans are currently being rewritten and would want to be clear that as expected in the upcoming Corporate Area Assessment, engagement with all communities of interest at a locality level

⁴ Ward Councillors and Community Leadership. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation November 2007.

is evidenced. This should include current key NRF priority areas is Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME) but the review group were concerned that not all the Area Assembly consultation plans were listing this group for consultation. It is also important that other communities of interest such as the LGBT community are not overlooked.

6.4 Area Assembly Chairs

6.4.1 This section will refer to the individual role of Area Assembly Chairs and to their collective role in the Area Assembly Chairs meeting. Area Assembly Chairs were all interviewed individually with the exception of Cllr Lakin who was on the review group. The evidence received was very positive on the progress of the new ways of working and particularly the support and hard work the Chairs receive from the Area Partnership Managers. The Chairs were passionate about their roles with an enthusiasm to continually develop as individuals and the Area Assembly as a whole.

6.4.2 In terms of the Area Assembly Chairs meeting, Area Chairs all vocalised that they were unclear on its purpose, their role in the meeting and the outcomes from it. The evidence suggested they did not individually feel they had controlled or shaped the agenda for this meeting. The phrase often used was "control from the centre" which suggested they did not feel ownership over the proceedings of this meeting in terms of agenda setting. This perception also extended on occasion for some to their own Area Assembly meetings. The Chairs felt that whilst the meeting was sometimes helpful they were not seeing the value sufficiently to support monthly meetings.

6.4.3 Both partners in coordinating groups and Area Chairs themselves, were unclear on the role of the meeting and how it can refer issues that need addressing to the relevant officer or body. When asked in the coordinating group questionnaire "How does your Area Assembly feed information up to Scrutiny or Cabinet?" some of the answers were

"I don't know how it is fed".

"I believe this is via the Area Partnership Manager. Not sure".

"I don't know".

6.4.4 There was a similar lack of clarity in the questionnaires that went to all Members, this is demonstrated by answers such as:

"Not sure"

"I imagine the process is informal in that issues requiring action are taken forward by officers or the Chair"

"Directly through normal channels"

"It doesn't"

"Through the coordinating group"

6.4.5 There needs to be a process where Area Assembly Chairs have a clear route to raise issues of importance from their Area Assemblies and these

issues are elevated into the Council structure. The disparity between answers shows that there is not a widely held view on how this is done.

- 6.4.6 Evidence from Elected Members in the questionnaires raised concerns over Area Assembly meetings becoming dominated by surgery items from the public. Where it is a single surgery issue then Members should be using the established mechanisms for dealing with this. Good practice includes using the surgery form for Members of the public to fill in individual issues for Elected Members to pass to the relevant Council service. The absence of an established process becomes more apparent when dealing with more complex or strategic issues. There should be a route via Area Assembly Chairs and/or PSOC for action to be taken. Similarly for those issues that require Cabinet attention then this can be raised through the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods from the minutes of the Area Chairs meeting. Complex issues that require PSOC attention could be raised via a standing item on the PSOC agenda to give Area Assemblies and coordinating groups a channel through which to make referrals. A similar mechanism could be developed for Cabinet Member. The establishment of these channels will need to be in line with the development of the Councillor Call for Action.
- 6.4.7 It is particularly important that any decisions made by Area Chairs over the future direction of Area Assemblies are communicated clearly to coordinating groups.

7 DIFFERENT MODELS OF WORKING

7.1 Derby City Council

- 7.1.1 Area Committees at Derby City Council were used as an example of good practice in the first Scrutiny Review. Since then Derby have dismantled their Area Panels and changed to 17 Neighbourhood Boards, based around their wards. This is very similar to the Rotherham structure but at a much more local level.
- 7.1.2 Each Neighbourhood Board comprises all of the ward Councillors (3 per neighbourhood) resident and community group representatives – with the number to be determined by the Neighbourhood Board to reflect the communities within the neighbourhood. An interesting aspect is that a minimum of 50% of the resident and community group representatives should be local residents who live in that neighbourhood. Nominations for resident representatives to serve on the Neighbourhood Board are sought through the Neighbourhood Forum, which is the open meeting. Residents wishing to serve on the Neighbourhood Board must complete a nomination form and be nominated by a minimum of ten local residents from more than one household.

7.2 Nottingham City Council

- 7.2.1 Nottingham City Council has nine Area Committees that focus on specific parts of the City. The review group saw it as good practice in terms of devolved budgets. Each Area Committee has a small budget to support local

projects that aim to improve their areas, for example in tackling crime, improving the environment and addressing health needs. Each Area Committee receives £18,180 per ward. Some Areas have 2 wards and some have 3 so it varies between £36,360 and £54,540 per Committee. Each Committee agrees a spending profile at the beginning of the year through their Local Community Plan. Additionally, the community and voluntary sector can apply to Area Committee for funding. Area Committees can make grants of up to £5,000. These projects contribute to achieving the ambitions of the city-wide Community Plan. These devolved budgets are outside of budget costs for the day-to-day of the Area Committee including salaries, computers, stationery, phones, rent, training etc -about £215,000 per Team.

7.3 **Kirklees Council**

7.3.1 The first review visited Kirklees Council to see how their area committees work in practice. This review revisited the progress made in the interim period and remarked that the success of Kirklees Council coordinating groups was attributed partly to the fact that they were allowed to develop more incrementally than taking a “big bang” approach. Their equivalent of the coordinating group originally just consisted of Elected Members who co-opted partners, voluntary and community sector organisations and local residents as and when there was an identified need. This has meant their coordinating groups have a clearer focus and purpose to what they would like to achieve and which partners would be ideal to contribute to this. This structured process over a longer period of time has allowed partnerships to consolidate with a shared purpose.

8 **INFORMATION SOURCES/REFERENCES**

- An Action Plan for Community Engagement: Building on Success. Department for Communities and Local Government
- Evolution of regulation. Comprehensive Area Assessment and the changing face of public service involvement
- White Paper 2006 ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’. Department for Communities and Local Government
- Ward Councillors and Community Leadership. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation November 2007.
- Local Government White Paper Implementation Plan: One Year On (LGIU and STEER)
- The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter. ODPM, 2005.
- Frontline councillors and decision making: Broadening their involvement. Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2006.

- Vibrant Local Leadership. ODPM, 2005.
- Neighbourhoods Briefing Papers- Community Involvement
- Neighbourhoods Briefing Papers- Election/Selection Process for Community Representatives for Area Assembly Coordinating Groups
- Neighbourhoods Briefing Papers- Structure of Area Assembly Themed Meetings
- Neighbourhoods Briefing Papers- Relationship between Parish Councils and Area Assemblies- Parish Council Perspective
- Neighbourhoods Briefing Papers- Area Assemblies Link Officers
- Neighbourhoods Briefing Papers- Communication Links between the LSP and Area Assemblies

9 THANKS

- Cllr Lindsay Johnston, Area Assembly Chair
- Cllr Jennifer Whysall, Area Assembly Chair
- Cllr Barry Dodson, Area Assembly Chair
- Cllr John Swift, Area Assembly Chair
- Cllr Frank Hodgkiss, Area Assembly Chair
- Cllr Glyn Robinson, Area Assembly Chair
- Cllr Sue Ellis, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods
- Cllr Ken Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Innovation
- Cllr Mahroof Hussain, Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement
- Andrea Peers- Area Partnership Manager
- Diane Hurst- Area Partnership Manager
- Shaun Mirfield- Area Partnership Manager
- Nosober Latif- Area Partnership Manager
- Darren Smithson- Area Partnership Manager
- Tanya Stanley- Area Partnership Manager
- Jackie Ingham- Area Partnership Manager

- Michelle Musgrave- Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods
- Paul Webb- Director of Neighbourhood Management, 2010
- Joyce Thacker- Senior Director, Children and Young Peoples Service
- Zafar Saleem- Equalities and Diversity Manager, Chief Executives Office
- Asim Munir- Principal Community Involvement Manager, Chief Executives Office
- Shafiq Hussain- Voluntary Action Rotherham
- Steve Hawkins- Deputy Director Public Health, Rotherham Primary Care Trust
- Caroline Simpson- Public Health Specialist Rother Valley West, Primary Care Trust
- Gill Harrison- Public Health Specialist Rotherham South, Primary Care Trust
- Sue Smith- Public Health Specialist Wentworth North, Primary Care Trust
- Steve Tattershall- Inspector Wentworth Safer Neighbourhood Area, Police.

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	13 th December 2007
3.	Title:	Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (c. 28) – duty to involve local people; & Action Plan for Community Empowerment
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's

5. Summary

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (c. 28) provides a duty to involve local people, the detail of which will be set out in “Best Value” guidance. A consultation on this new guidance has been published, which will be the subject of a further report. The provision in the Act builds on the objectives set out in the Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities”. In addition to the “Best Value” guidance, the Department for Communities & Local Government and the Local Government Association have published a joint report “An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success”, which sets out twenty-three action streams to be piloted with a number of authorities.

6. Recommendations

That

- a) **The panel receive the information set out in the report and comment / identify issues as appropriate**
- b) **Further reports be presented on the detailed guidance consultation and specific proposals in relation to these for implementation in Rotherham.**

7. Proposals and Details

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (c. 28) received Royal Assent on 30th October. The Act will bring into force many of the provisions previously set out in the Local Government White Paper "Strong and Prosperous Communities". Additionally, provisions are made for the future of securing public engagement in matters of health and social care through a Local Involvement Network (LINK), to be procured by the Council by the end of March 2008.

The White Paper makes specific reference to "inform, consult, involve, and devolve" in engaging local citizens. The Act translates this into a new "duty to involve". Details of the new duty are to be set out in "Best Value" guidance. The new duty to involve seeks to ensure people have greater opportunities to have their say. The aspiration for the new duty is to embed a culture of engagement and empowerment. This means that authorities consider, as a matter of course, the possible information provision, consultation and involvement opportunities they need to provide people across all authority functions.

The new duty, due to come into force on 1 April 2009 will apply to all best value authorities in England except police authorities. A draft of this guidance is currently out for consultation. A further report will seek approval to a response to the consultation paper.

The culture of public participation and empowerment is also being taken forward by the Government's Green Paper "The Governance of Britain" published in July. This is set to feed into the Constitutional Reform Bill announced for the current parliamentary session.

Aligned to the Government's broader public participation agenda, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Local Government Association (LGA) have produced a joint report "An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success" published in October. This report provides a list of twenty-three actions including those to be taken by government departments' and a number to be piloted by local authorities. A summary of each of the actions is set out below, with indications, where available, of potential dates for future developments:-

- **Secure more citizen-focused services:** Publish statutory guidance to accompany the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill in draft for public consultation in winter 2007 with final guidance in Spring 2008;
- **Implement the new Sustainable Communities Act:** In autumn 2007 Communities and Local Government and LGA to consult on shaping the regulations and guidance for implementation of the new Sustainable Communities Act;
- **Give tenants a greater role in housing management:** Simplify the process for establishing tenant management organisations and consider options for Arms Length Management Organisations.
- **Give citizens a greater role in planning:** Build an e-consultation hub: 2007 link every local authority and 2008 open the hub to the general public. Publish national policy statements for infrastructure sectors that require scheme promoters to consult local communities before submitting an application; and Increase grant funding to Planning Aid to £1.5 million per year;

- **Embed community empowerment in cohesion activities:** Publish guidance on Citizens' Day soon; and Continue with actions arising from the Commission on Integration and Cohesion report;
- **Develop more community kitties:** Announcement of more Participatory Budgeting Schemes in November 2007; Early in 2008 consult on a strategy with the aim of it being offered everywhere by 2012; and Continue to work with the parish and town council sector;
- **Establish citizens' juries to help shape policy:** Winter 2007 – Public consultations on number of significant policy areas: housing growth, English language and migration;
- **Consult on petitions:** Publish a Communities and Local Government consultation document in Autumn 2007;
- **Develop more local charters:** Voluntary agreements between local authorities and communities: Publish guidance and a toolkit in autumn 2007 and a trial programme to run to March 2008;
- **Continue to develop online tools to support empowerment and democracy:** Continue to develop www.peopleandparticipation.net with Ministry of Justice and the Sustainable Development Commission; and Work across Government to encourage use of new forms of information and communication;
- **Support the National Empowerment Partnership:** Ongoing – Develop more and better quality empowerment activities across the country;
- **Facilitate a national network of empowering authorities:** Announcement and launch in October 2007; Publicise examples of best practice and work with IDeA on learning programmes for local authorities from early 2008;
- **Develop a 'Take Part' campaign:** opportunities people have to make a difference at the local level; Produce a menu of the different opportunities and series of 'how to' guides for people to get involved formally in their local community;
- **Mainstream empowerment as an improvement priority:** Publication in the autumn of a National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy which will be implemented in March 2008; and Communities and Local Government, IDeA and LGA will continue to support councils;
- **Open up direct dialogue with local activists:** Autumn 2007 and throughout 2008 – organise a series of roundtable discussions and regional events between the Secretary of State and community activists;
- **Transfer more assets to communities:** The Development Trusts Association is supporting partnerships in 20 areas to demonstrate what works in asset transfer and the creation of sustainable community enterprises which strengthen communities and create local jobs; In winter 2007/08 there will be asset transfer workshops for local authorities and community organisations. Spring 2008 – publication of guidance on local authority asset management and risk management toolkit; and April 2008 – further demonstration areas to be supported;
- **Provide timely information about performance:** Commission research into what practices are effective in helping citizens gain 'real-time' information about local services;
- **Invest in local community anchor organisations as resources to support local community activity:** Over the next three years, invest with the Office of the Third Sector in the long-term sustainability of the third sector through

supporting community anchors to develop their role in stimulating opportunities, attracting resources and supporting community sector organisations at a neighbourhood level;

- **Support Community Land Trusts:** Monitor pilots and publish evaluation;
- **Measure empowerment and make it visible:** Ongoing – encourage empowerment through LAAs, and with the Audit Commission and through the CAA;
- **Establish a concordat between central and local government:** During autumn/winter 2007 develop a concordat to guide relations between central and local government;
- **Strengthen the role of local councillors:** In December 2007 publish the Councillor's Commission Report; and
- **Increase local accountability and have clearer local leadership of public services:** In partnership with other government departments and the LGA consideration of how to improve local accountability and leadership for a range of public services, including the police and NHS.

Whilst the actions are largely being driven by the Government to achieve its policy objectives, it will be for local authorities to shape how they are implemented at the local level.

Here in Rotherham, a detailed set of workstreams have been produced for the implementation of the White Paper proposals and associated documents. The workstreams reflect the fact that there are a complex set of inter-related issues and actions making up a broad reform agenda. The scoping of work against each of the workstreams in a co-ordinated approach is ensuring that the Council is fully on track with all detailed developments. This is enabling the Council to develop its own proposals, maximising the robust policy intelligence, advice and support available.

Critically, the approach being taken is enabling progress on key components of reform around the leadership role of the Council in:-

- Refreshing the Community Strategy and further developing the LAA;
- Community governance through consultation, communication and developing the "Councillor Calls for Action";
- Developing members leadership and scrutiny roles;
- Community cohesion;
- Improved performance and efficiency; and
- Providing alignment between the Government's policy proposals and taking forward the Council's "Our future" commitments.

Taking forward the LSP CCI (Community Involvement & Consultation) Framework plus work at the Area Assembly level provide key actions to progress and prepare for the duty to involve when it comes into force. Further detailed report will also be produced on detailed government guidance and the Council's responses to consultations.

8. Finance

The Government's own costs assessment states that there will be some fiscal costs to the public sector and that the vast majority of these will fall initially on local government. Over the years 2007/08 to 2012/13 the Government's forecasts predict that additional costs will be met by savings, except in 2008/09 where there is a net cost of £17 million nationally. New costs arise mainly from reforms in governance including community empowerment and engagement. The Government has given a commitment that this will be funded. There is no indication at this stage of how this sum will be distributed and / or what formula will be used.

The cost of establishing Local Involvement Networks is to be funded from the savings arising from the abolition of the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health and Public and Patient Forums. This is set at £28 million per annum nationally. There is no indication at this stage on the distribution of these resources.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Risks are being identified on an ongoing basis as work on each of the implementation workstreams is developed. Key risks at this stage relate to a number of uncertainties over detail. These will become clearer as draft Regulations and Guidance are published together with other Government reports.

There is still some uncertainty over resource streams that have previously supported community empowerment and engagement in Rotherham. A new Area Based Grant will be provided in future that will include a number of the previous grant regimes. It should become clearer in December what level of resources the Council is likely to receive from Government for the next three years.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The White Paper and the "Local:vision" agenda that preceded it together with the outcomes of the Lyons Inquiry set out ambitious and challenging policy expectations for local government. The implications arising from the resulting legislation will have a significant influence on the future policy and performance management of the Council. Government policy directly emerging from "Local:Vision" and the White paper have already been incorporated into the Council's policy direction through "Our Future". This year's "Year Ahead Statement" "Transforming the Borough Together" incorporates provisions to take forward the implications of the White Paper and Bill. This has been endorsed by Cabinet Members.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

All background papers can be found in the Council's resource library at:
<http://intranet.rotherhamconnect.com/C9/C18/LG%20White%20Paper/default.aspx>

The Council will be responding to consultations and is providing evidence to the Councillors Commission as part of their work.

Contact Names:

Steve Eling, Principal Policy Officer, extension 2789, steve.eling@rotherham.gov.uk

Asim Munir, Principal Community Involvement Officer, extension 2786,

asim.munir@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Democratic and Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	13 th December, 2007
3.	Title:	Legal LPs
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's Directorate (Legal and Democratic Services)

5. Summary

The Quarter 1 performance report submitted to Deputy Leader (03.09.07) and Democratic & Renewal Scrutiny Panel (18.10.07) reported that the Legal Services performance indicator suite was under revision with a view to being rationalised.

The revised suite is presented to Members in this report for consideration and approval.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the rationalised list of Legal Services Local Performance Indicators (LPs) and performance of these LPs.

7. Proposal and Details

There are no national performance indicators for Legal Services. The Service has therefore over the past two years developed a suite of LPIs against which to monitor its own performance. This information has been subject to challenge at performance clinics and reported to Members on a quarterly basis.

Rationalisation of the suite of LPIs was based on the need to provide more meaningful and relevant performance information to management, Members and Client Directorates and to establish a number of indicators to be compared against other Local Authorities.

The rationalisation exercise noted that the original list of LPIs: -

- included information that was useful for internal management purposes only.
- that some indicators relied on a third party to provide information i.e. HM Land Registry, which often caused delays.
- that there were no indicators compared against other local authorities.
- that some LPIs were always achieving 100% and were providing meaningless performance information due to the low volumes being measured.

The outcome of the rationalisation exercise has resulted in the following: -

- More streamlined and relevant LPIs reported to Members.
- A suite of indicators for internal management purposes.
- A suite of 6 LPIs to be compared against other Local Authorities within the Yorkshire and Humber.
- Alignment of LPIs to timeframes important to Client Directorates.
- Investment and utilisation of the case management system enabling performance above national levels.

The revised suite of indicators is listed at Appendix A along with Quarter 1 performance information.

8. Finance

There are no financial implications arising from the rationalisation of Legal Services LPIs.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Without performance monitoring and action on lower performance areas, the Council could be at risk of having failing services resulting in poor inspection/audit reports and public reporting of its shortcomings.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Performance management enables the CEX Directorate to build on its areas of good practice and address any shortcomings identified, in order that customers get the best service possible. In addition, it enables the Council to identify weaker areas for action and improvement.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix A – Legal Services LPIs

Contact Names: Tim Mumford, Assistant Chief Executive
tim.mumford@rotherham.gov.uk
Robert Parker, Business Support Manager, Chief Executive's
Directorate ext 3501
robert.parker@rotherham.gov.uk

2007/08 Local Performance Indicators: Legal Services

Appendix A

<u>LPI's</u>	Volume 2006/07	Target 2007/08	2007/08				Status	Comments
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Right to Buy – Average turnaround time from receipt of plans to the position to issue of plans	246	Average no. of working days (10)*	27 Matters 6.56 Days	41 Matters 3.90 Days			Green	This indicator is benchmarked against LA's in Y&H and will be reviewed throughout the year to ensure it remains challenging and in line with performance across the region.
Grant of Leases – Average turnaround time from receipt of full instruction to sending out of first draft to instructing officer	39	Average no. of working days (10)*	2 Matters 3.50 Days	4 Matters 1.50 Days			Green	This indicator is benchmarked against LA's in Y&H and will be reviewed throughout the year to ensure it remains challenging and in line with performance across the region.
Lease Renewals – Average turnaround time from receipt of plans to sending out first draft	Same Matter Type as above	Average no. of working days (10)*	6 Matters 8.33 Days	5 Matters 1.20 Days			Green	This indicator is benchmarked against LA's in Y&H and will be reviewed throughout the year to ensure it remains challenging and in line with performance across the region.
Advice on Title – To provide title advice within 10 working days of receipt of full instruction and taking into account 3 rd party provision of information	117	10 Working Days	89%	100%			Green	This LPI relies on the provision of information from 3 rd parties. Any actions of the 3 rd parties will be monitored to ensure there is no impact on performance.
Number of Planning Regulatory – Enforcement notices issued and served within 10 working days following receipt of full instruction and taking into account 3 rd party provision of information	9	10 Working Days	100%	100%			Green	This LPI relies on the provision of information from 3 rd parties. Any actions of the 3 rd parties will be monitored to ensure there is no impact on performance.
Rent Possession Cases – Average turnaround time from receipt of full instructions to issuing proceedings	372	Average no. of working days (8)	93 Matters 1 Day	33 Matters 1.50 Days			Green	This indicator is benchmarked against LA's in Y&H and will be reviewed throughout the year to ensure it remains challenging and in line with performance across the region.
Non School Attendance – Average time between receipt of full instructions to laying information at court	22	Average no. of working days (5)	12 Matters 1 Day	10 Matters 1.20 Days			Green	This indicator is benchmarked against LA's in Y&H and will be reviewed throughout the year to ensure it remains challenging and in line with performance across the region.
Successful outcomes – As a % of criminal litigation where Legal Services has recommended that legal proceedings are to be pursued	142	100%	100%	100%			Green	

2007/08 Local Performance Indicators: Legal Services

<u>LPI's</u>	Volume 2006/07	Target 2007/08	2007/08				Status	Comments
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Childcare – Issue care proceedings within 3 working days of receipt of full instructions	47	3 Working Days	100%	100%			Green	
Gas Injunction Cases – Issued within 10 working days of receipt of full instructions	710	10 Working Days	100%	100%			Green	
Customer Rating - % rating of “excellent”		50%	N/A	N/A				Annual Satisfaction Survey is currently being issued.

* Actual number of days to be determined through comparison with other Local Authorities

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	13 th December, 2007
3.	Title:	Quarter 2 Performance Report
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's Directorate (Strategic Human Resources/Legal and Democratic Services)

5. Summary

This is the quarter two performance report for performance of Corporate Best Value Performance Indicators (Corporate Health Indicators) and Local Performance Indicators monitored and reported on by the Chief Executives Directorate.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the performance of these key Corporate Best Value Performance Indicators and Local Performance Indicators.

7. Proposal and Details

Corporate Health Best Value Performance Indicator Information and Local Performance Indicator information is reported and presented by the Chief Executive's Directorate to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel on a quarterly basis, with quarter 4 providing a year end report.

This report sets out quarter 2 performance in respect of both national and local targets.

Best Value Performance Indicators

Overall there are 8 measurements against 6 national Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) which the Chief Executive's Directorate is charged with reporting on (BVPI 11 has 3 targets to meet – **Appendix A** attached). Where appropriate, staff numbers are given in brackets following percentage figures. Discrepancies between targets and actual performance are due to the calculation methodology and ongoing changes in the establishment.

Of the 8 measurements, 5 are categorised as green stars, 1 as amber and 2 as a red triangle (categorisation in accordance with performance plus). It should be noted that categorisation is based on comparisons between quarter 2 actual figures and the end of year target.

Status Green Star

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

Target 45% (125 people) TQ Mets 46.17% TQ All Eng 42.45%

Performance against this measure is currently well within the top quartile for All England Authorities.

As at Quarter 2, performance against this measure stands at 43.9% (122 people) against a locally set target of 45% (125 people).

During 2006/07 this indicator slipped a quartile position and performance has declined when compared to 2005/06. This decline was largely due to restructuring within the organisation and re-drawing of pay lines, resulting in an increase in the 'Bar' for the top 5% threshold from salary scale PO10 to the top of salary scale PO12. However, quarter 2 has seen an improvement in reported performance due to a data cleansing exercise relating to how various staffing groups such as Education Advisors and some Casual employees were being represented within the overall establishment levels. This exercise has resulted in an increase in the organisation's overall FTE (full time equivalent) head count and Education Advisors now being included within the top 5 %

BVPI 11c % of top 5% of earners with a disability

Target 3.5% - TQ Mets 3.96% All Eng 4.83%

Performance against this measure is currently well within the top quartile for Metropolitan Authorities.

As at Quarter 2, performance against this measure stands at 4.06% (10.6) against a locally set target of 3.5% (9) with a Top Quartile Mets position of 3.96% and a Top Quartile All England target of 4.83%.

BVPI 12 Days/shifts lost to sickness

Target 9.25 days – TQ Mets 10.50 days TQ All Eng 8.34 days

Performance against this measure is currently well within the top quartile for Metropolitan Authorities

The green status shown against this indicator reflects a projected year end position of 7.92 days based on sickness levels during the quarters 1 and 2, against a locally set target of 9.25 days. Actual sickness for quarter 2 stands at 1.9 days.

Performance continues to increase against this indicator due to a number of factors including sickness performance clinics and improved reporting mechanisms. This increase in performance also contributes significantly to our efficiency agenda.

BVPI 15 Ill Health Retirements

Target 0.2% (25 people) TQ Mets 0.21% All Eng 0.10%

Performance against this measure currently stands at 0.07% (8) against a locally set target of 0.2% (25). As previously reported, the target for 05/06 was set as an all England target by ODPM, rather than by Authority type. From 06/07 Local Authorities have been allowed to set local targets.

BVPI 17a % of BME Employees

Target 2.9% TQ Mets 6.9% TQ All Eng 4.8%

The green status shown against this indicator reflects performance of 2.9% (371) during the second quarter against the locally set target of 2.9% (389 as at March 07).

Up until March 2007 this indicator was made up of two parts, defined as:

17a) The % of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities compared with the % of:

17b) economically active minority ethnic community population in the authority area

This target has therefore been set against historical data held in the 2001 Census. However, with effect from 1st April 2007 the second element of this indicator, 17b, has been deleted. It is important to understand the rationale for setting this target when comparing Rotherham's performance with that of Top quartile authorities.

Status Amber

BVPI 16a % of Employees with a disability

Target 3.5% (470 people) TQ Mets 3.06% TQ All Eng 3.89%

Performance against this measure is currently well within the top quartile for Metropolitan Authorities

As at Quarter 2, performance against this measure stands at 3.26% (366) against a locally set target of 3.5% (470) with a Top Quartile Mets position of 3.06% and a Top Quartile All England figure of 3.89%.

It should be noted that this indicator is categorised as status amber in relation to the locally set target only, current performance is well within top quartile for Metropolitan Authorities.

Status Red Triangle

BV 14 Early Retirements (excluding ill health)

Target 0.44% (54 people) TQ Mets 0.41% TQ All Eng 0.17%

Performance against this measure currently stands at 0.46% (56) against a locally set target of 0.44% (54).

In 2005/06 the All England target for this indicator was imposed by ODPM (as was). From 2006/07 Local Authorities have been allowed to set local targets and the 2007/08 target for Rotherham reflects that Metropolitan Councils are required to include teachers taking early retirement within this measure, whilst being unable to influence the number of teachers who wish to retire early.

Early indications for quarter 2 performance suggested that 40 teachers would give notice of early retirement with effect from 31st August 2007. However, in reality a total of 49 teachers gave notice of early retirement.

Actions to improve: This indicator is irrecoverable from its red status for this financial year.

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

Target 3.5% (9 people) TQ Mets 3.96% TQ All Eng 4.83%

Performance against this measure currently stands at 1.62% (4) against a locally set target of 2.8% (7) with a Top Quartile Mets position of 4.83% and a Top Quartile All England target of 4.33%.

As per BVPI 11a this indicator also suffered in performance as a direct result of restructuring within the organisation and re-drawing of pay lines, resulting in an increase in the 'Bar' for the top 5% threshold from salary scale PO10 to the top of salary scale PO12. The effect of this 'raising of the bar' was clearly demonstrated in quarter 2 last year when performance against this indicator dropped from 7 people to 3 people.

Actions to improve:

A performance clinic with members was held on 10th July 2008 to analyse performance against BVPIs 11 a and b. The Assistant Chief Executive, Strategic HR informed the panel of actions being taken to improve performance against these measures, these include:

- Introduction of a standard statement on all adverts for posts at PO10 or above to encourage applications from BME, female and disabled individuals
- Management Development programme in partnership with Leeds Met University to support staff in developing management skills to enhance their ability to progress to jobs in the top 5%
- Involvement in South Yorkshire Projects – Talent Management and Workforce Planning
- Each directorate receiving improved performance data relating to each element of BVPI 11
- The Investors In Education initiative which involves the council working with young people to think about potential careers

However, it will take time before improvements against the two measures are seen. The council does have a low turnover rate of managers therefore restricting the opportunity to increase the top 5% earners from these specific groups.

Local Performance Indicators

Strategic Human Resources

Details of local performance indicators measured and reported on by Strategic HR are attached at **Appendix B**. Of the eight indicators, two are status red:

M3 Managers (total 168) attending management development centres – Annual target 56, performance as at Qt 1: 10 performance as at Qt 2: 17.

% Response to Reach-in survey - Annual target 65%, performance as at Qt 1: 49.5% performance as at Qt 2: 56%

Legal and Democratic Services

As at quarter 1 the Legal and Democratic Services Local Performance Indicator suite was under revision with a view to being rationalised. As at quarter 2 all eleven indicators are status green.

8. Finance

Decreased sickness levels provide a financial saving for the Council which has been reported as a Gershon efficiency saving. The reduction in the number of staff retiring on the grounds of ill health, due to the stringent processes now in place, also provides a financial saving.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Without performance monitoring and action on lower performance areas, the Council could be at risk of having failing services resulting in poor inspection/audit reports and public reporting of its shortcomings.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Performance management enables the CEX Directorate to build on its areas of good practice and address any shortcomings identified, in order that customers get the best service possible. In addition, it enables the Council to identify weaker areas for action and improvement.



11. Background Papers and Consultation

Not applicable.

Contact Names: Alan Swann Head of Strategic Hr
Alan.swann@rotherham.gov.uk
Tim Mumford, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Tim.mumford@rotherham.gov.uk
Steph Dockerty, Performance Manager, Chief Executive's Directorate ext 6538
Steph.dockerty@rotherham.gov.uk


Appendix A

Corporate Health Best Value Performance Quarter 2 2007-08

Ref. No	P.I Definition	Links	05/06 Top Quartile	06/07 Year End Actual performance (total)	1 st Qtr Apr 07 - Jun 07		2 nd Qtr July 07 - Sept 07		3 rd Qtr Oct 07 - Dec 07		4 th Qtr Jan 08 - Mar 08		Year End Target – 1.04.07 – 31.03.08	Year end outturn	Rag status	Direction of Travel from the last quarter.	Comments
					Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 30.6	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 – 30.9	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 – 31.12	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4.07 - 31.3.08					
Corporate Priority – A Place For Everyone																	
BV 11	a) The % of top 5% of earners that are women	CPA LPSA (CE)	All Eng 42.45% Mets 46.17%	41.78% (101)	41.5% (105)	na	43.9% (122)	na	na	na	na	45% (125)		Green		This indicator is measured overall at year end as a snap shot of our position. Discrepancy between target & actual performance in numbers of staff is due to calculation methodology and changes in the establishment	
	b) The % of top 5% of earners from minority ethnic communities	CPA LPSA (CE)	All Eng 4.33% Mets 4.83%	1.27% (3)	1.62 % (4)	na	1.47% (4)	na	na	na	na	2.8% (7)		Red		This indicator is measured overall at year end as a snap shot of our position. Discrepancy between target & actual performance due to calculation methodology and changes in the establishment	

Ref. No	P.I Definition	Links	05/06 Top Quartile	06/07 Year End Actual performance (total)	1 st Qtr Apr 07 - Jun 07		2 nd Qtr July 07 – Sept 07		3 rd Qtr Oct 07 – Dec 07		4 th Qtr Jan 08 – Mar 08		Year End Target – 1.04.07 – 31.03.08	Year end outturn	Rag status	Direction of Travel from the last quarter.	Comments
					Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 30.6	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 – 30.9	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 – 31.12	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4.07 - 31.3.08					
	c) Top 5% of Earners: with a disability	CPA LPSA (CE)	All Eng 4.83% Mets 3.96%	2.99% (7)	3.75% (9)	na	4.06% (10.6)	na	na	na	na	3.5% (9)		Green	↑	This indicator is measured overall at year end as a snap shot of our position. Discrepancy between target & actual performance due to calculation methodology and changes in the establishment	
BV 16	a) The % of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition compared with the % of:	CPA LPSA (CE)	All Eng 3.89% Mets 3.06%	3.2% (355)	3.26% (366)	na	3.26% (369)	na	na	na	na	3.5% (470)		Amber	↑	This indicator was set using census data showing the economically active disabled population of Rotherham. Discrepancy between target & actual performance due to calculation methodology and changes in the establishment.	
	b) economically active disabled people in the authority area		Met top Q 19.93	18.9%	18.9%	na	18.9%	na	18.9%	na	18.9%	18.9%	18.9%	N/A	N/A	Figure derived from the 2001 census. This indicator definition is out to consultation because it does not accurately reflect those covered by DDA.	

Ref. No	P.I Definition	Links	05/06 Top Quartile	06/07 Year End Actual performance (total)	1 st Qtr Apr 07 - Jun 07		2 nd Qtr July 07 - Sept 07		3 rd Qtr Oct 07 - Dec 07		4 th Qtr Jan 08 - Mar 08		Year End Target – 1.04.07 – 31.03.08	Year end outturn	Rag status	Direction of Travel from the last quarter.	Comments
					Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 30.6	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 30.9	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 31.12	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4.07 - 31.3.08					
BV 17	a) The % of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities.	CPA	All Eng 4.8% Mets 6.9%	2.8% (353)	2.9% (371)	na	2.9% (364)	na	na	na	na	2.9% (389)		Green	↑	This target is set against the economically active BME population of Rotherham.	
Corporate Priority – A Quality Service Provider																	
BV 12	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence	CPA CP	All Eng 8.34 Mets 10.50	9.62 days	2.05 days	2.05 days	1.9 days	3.95					9.25 days		Green	↑	
BV 14	The % of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a % of the total work force This indicator is limited to the staff in the official pension scheme.	CPA	All Eng 0.17% Mets 0.41%	0.47% (58)	3 retirees	0.02% (3)	(53) 0.43%	0.46% (56)					0.44% (54)		RED	↓	Early indications for quarter 2 performance were that 40 teachers had given notice of early retirement with effect from 31 st August 2007 (as reported in qt 1). However, in reality 49 teachers gave notice.

Ref. No	P.I Definition	Links	05/06 Top Quartile	06/07 Year End Actual performance (total)	1 st Qtr Apr 07 - Jun 07		2 nd Qtr July 07 - Sept 07		3 rd Qtr Oct 07 - Dec 07		4 th Qtr Jan 08 - Mar 08		Year End Target – 1.04.07 – 31.03.08	Year end outturn	Rag status	Direction of Travel from the last quarter.	Comments
					Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 30.6	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 30.9	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4 - 31.12	Actual performance	Total to date 1.4.07 - 31.3.08					
BV 15	The % of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a % of the total workforce	CPA	All Eng 0.10% Mets 0.21%	0.26% (32)	1 retirees 0.01% (1)	0.06% 7	0.07% 8						0.2% (25)		Green		

G:\Performance\BVPIs\BVPIs\07-08\Q1\Appendix A.doc

Strategic HR Local Performance Indicators

Appendix B

LPI	Supports Service Action Plan	2006/7 Outturn	2007/8 Target	2007/8				Status
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
				Heart nominations (Team & Individual)	Achieving (Fairness, Excellent)	74	70	
Submissions to employee suggestion scheme	Achieving (Fairness, Excellent)	324	300	72	112 (184)			
M3 Managers (total 168) attending management development centres	Achieving (Fairness, Alive, Learning, Excellent)	49	56	10	17			
Leavers % (voluntary in brackets)	Fairness (Proud, Alive, Achieving, Excellent, Learning)	10.8% (6.8%)	11%	8.2% (4.8%)	12.2% (6.7%)			
PDR's completed	Achieving (Fairness, Alive, Learning, Excellent)	71%	90%	71%	71%			
% Response to Reach-in survey	Achieving (Fairness, Excellent)	61.5%	65%	49.5%	56%			
Employees aged 16-24	Fairness (Proud, Alive, Achieving, Excellent, Learning)	4.8% (643)	5.75%	5.5% (753)	6.2% (823)			
Employees achieving level 2 (skills for life) in literacy or numeracy	Achieving (Fairness, Alive, Learning, Excellent)	483	500	42 (525)	24 (549)			

Note: Reach in survey – average response through the year assessed against annual target

Employees 16 – 24, 82 newly qualified teachers were set on for the new academic year in September

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	13th December, 2007
3.	Title:	Strong and Prosperous Communities The Local Government White Paper October 2006, Making Assets Work, The Quirk Review Findings and Area Asset Management Plans All Wards
4.	Programme Area:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

This report provides an update on the Council's agreed way forward to address the Local Government White Paper October 2006, the Quirk Review Findings, the Government's Response to the Quirk Review, the Community Assets Fund, the proposed CPA and CAA requirements and the Development of Area Asset Management Plans.

6. Recommendations

To note the Council's agreed way forward as detailed in appendices 1, 2 and 3.

7. Proposals and Detail

On the 11th July 2007 the Regeneration and Asset Board considered a report, presented by the Asset Manager, which proposed an integrated comprehensive strategy and implementation programme to address the Local Government White Paper October 2006, the Quirk Review Findings, the Government's Response to the Quirk Review, the Community Assets Fund, the proposed CPA and CAA requirements and the Development of Area Asset Management Plans,.

The report set out detailed actions in response to the various initiatives.

It was resolved that approval be given to the proposed items listed below which are detailed in appendix 1 to this report.

1. Strategy, principles and governance
2. Next steps
3. Standard reply to asset transfer requests

On the 23rd October 2007 the Regeneration and Asset Board considered a further report, presented by the Asset Manager, which set out details of proposed quality criteria and methodologies, together with a programme and identification of a pilot community (Maltby) for the production of Community and Area Asset Management Plans covering the whole of Rotherham Borough.

The report also included proposals for updating the Council's land and buildings records. Proposals were also considered for the dealing with requests made to the various Directorates of the Council for transfers of assets and details of the new procedure were set out within the body of the report submitted.

It was pointed out that this work was necessary in order that the Council was adequately prepared to respond to Community Calls for Actions and Public Request to Order Disposal powers.

The Board considered a proposal to carry out a pilot in Maltby in order to assess how long the process for the whole of the Borough might take and what the associated resourcing requirements and cost might be.

It was resolved that

1. The Community Involvement Team in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate produce a pilot community plan for Maltby in accordance with the quality criteria and methodologies detailed in appendix 2 to this report.
2. The Corporate Property Management Team in the Environment and Development Directorate produce a pilot area asset management plan for Maltby in accordance with the quality criteria and methodologies detailed in appendix 2 to this report.
3. On completion of the pilot the Community Involvement Team in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate and the Corporate Property

Management Team in the Environment and Development Directorate report the resources implications of implementation for the whole borough.

4. The proposals for updating the Council's land and buildings records outlined in the report be approved; these are included in appendix 3 to this report.

5. The actions for dealing with requests for transfer of assets, as detailed in the report be noted; these are included in appendix 3 to this report.

8. Finance

Implementation of the proposed programme for the production of Community and Area Asset Management Plans and enhancing and updating the ownership records of Council land and buildings will have significant financial and resource implications across the Council. This is currently unknown and very difficult to quantify. Implementing a pilot scheme and monitor the ensuing demands on resources will enable a more accurate assessment of the resource implications.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The major risk is that the Council does not develop, approve and adequately resource an integrated comprehensive strategy and implementation programme. Therefore issues such as Community Calls for Actions and 'PROD' powers will not be addressed in a robust consistent manner and decisions will be made on an ad hoc basis.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The development of an integrated comprehensive strategy and implementation programme will impact on all the Council's policies, strategies, priorities and inspections and the Council's total performance.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- The Local Government White Paper – Strong and Prosperous Communities (October 2006)
- Making Assets Work – The Quirk Review of community management and ownership of public assets (May 2007)
- Opening the transfer window – The government's response to the Quirk Review of community management and ownership of public assets (May 2007) (DCLG)
- Circular 06/2003: Local Government Act 1972 general disposal consent (England) 2003 disposal of land for less than the best consideration that can be reasonably be obtained
- Towards Better management of Public Sector Assets: A Report to the Chancellor of the Exchequer – Lyons, M. 2004

Contact Name : *Arnold Murray, Asset Manager, Environment & Development Services. Ext. 2103*
arnold.murray@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 1

The Council's Agreed Way Forward

Aim

To develop one integrated comprehensive strategy and implementation programme to address the Local Government White Paper October 2006, the Quirk Review Findings, the Government's Response to the Quirk Review, the Community Assets Fund and the Development of Area Asset Management Plans.

Objectives

Address

- The key issues outlined below in the Local Government White Paper October 2006 as they relate to property
 - Promotion of greater choice in services by a variety of means
Including
 - Neighbourhood based participatory budgeting
 - Area based property reviews
 - Ensuring participation of local citizens in Council activities
 - Empowering local people to manage their own neighbourhoods and community facilities
 - Community Calls for Action
 - A new performance framework intended to make the public's views on service quality the core test of local performance
 - A more radical and ambitious value for money programme with effective and direct challenges for more efficiencies and transformation of local services
 - Asset Management is vital to achieving cost savings for local authorities and helping them to deliver better outcomes for citizens.
The Beacon councils for Asset Management are highlighted as exemplars of good practice
- The principal conclusions of the Quirk Review
 - Asset Transfer should take place where it can realise social or community benefits, without risking wider public interest concerns
 - The benefits of community ownership of assets can outweigh the risks involved, in appropriate circumstances and
 - Risks can be minimised and managed by drawing on the experience of others.
- The Government's outline proposals for implementing the Findings of the Quirk Review
 - Raising awareness of the review findings and sharing ideas on how to apply them
 - Demonstrating how Asset Transfer can be done
 - Strengthening Bottom up pressure
 - Developing Specialist Advice
 - Resources
 - Promoting the Benefits
 - Reviewing Achievements and Measuring Success

- The key principles that will govern the Community Assets Fund
 - A flexible approach is required
 - Grants will be made to strong partnerships between local government and the third sector reflecting the range of needs of the local community
 - Partnerships must demonstrate strong community endorsement
 - Any proposal needs to be part of a strategic/corporate approach to asset management
 - Approaches need to have robust business cases that aim at long term financial stability
 - Risk will be managed using safeguards such as business planning, independent expert advice, feasibility studies, ongoing financial agreements and robust governance arrangements
 - Refurbishment must include consideration of environmental issues and the reduction of running costs
- The 2008 KLOE which were published in April 2007 for consultation; consultation closed in June 2007
- The move from comprehensive performance assessment comprehensive area assessment
- Develop Community and Area Asset Management Plans to
 - Are to an agreed minimum consistent 'Rotherham' standard
 - Provide maximum outcomes for the total community
 - Use all Rotherham's assets and resources efficiently, effectively and in a sustainable manner
 - Maximise value for money expenditure on assets

Maintain Rotherham's status as an exemplar of good asset management practice.

Establish and operate a proactive delivery framework to ensure that issues are addressed and decisions made in a robust consistent manner and not ad hoc.

Strategy

The Community Involvement Team in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate will ensure that Community Plans covering the whole of Rotherham Borough are produced

The Corporate Property Management Team in the Environment and Development Directorate will produce Area Asset Management Plans supporting the above Community Plans

The Corporate Property Management Team in the Environment and Development Directorate will drive implementation of the above Area Asset Management Plans

Principles

The Community Involvement Team in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate will ensure that the Community Plans are

- Produced to an agreed minimum consistent 'Rotherham' standard in partnership with the total community

- Representative of the views of the total community as evidenced by robust consultation processes
- Approved by the total community

The Corporate Property Management Team in the Environment and Development Directorate will

- Ensure that the Area Asset Management Plans
 - Include all Rotherham's assets not just Council assets
 - Support the Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan, the approved Community Plan and all the Partners' and Stakeholders' strategies and service delivery plans
 - Are developed in consultation with all service deliverers both within and outside the Council as evidenced by robust consultation processes
 - Are developed in consultation with the total community as evidenced by robust consultation processes
 - Be informed by area asset reviews undertaken to a consistent standard
 - Be informed by all the available geographic and property data
 - Are developed in accordance with the project procedures currently being developed in the Asset Management Service, this will ensure that the plans
 - Are to an agreed minimum consistent 'Rotherham' standard
 - Provide maximum outcomes for the total community
 - Use all Rotherham's assets and resources efficiently, effectively and in a sustainable manner
 - Maximise value for money expenditure on assets
- Develop, in consultation with all service deliverers both within and outside the Council, a programme for the production of area asset management plans which will take into account
 - Potential short, medium and long term changes in the communities
 - Identified strengths and weaknesses of the communities
 - Identified opportunities and threats to the communities
 - Timescales in the Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan, the approved Community Plans and all the Partners' and Stakeholders' strategies and service delivery plans
- Drive implementation of the Area Asset Management Plans in consultation with all service deliverers both within and outside the Council and the total community

Implementation of the above strategy and principles will have significant financial and resource implications across the Council, these will be identified in more detail in a future report to the Board.

Governance

The Community Involvement Team drive production, consultation and approval of the community plans.

Community plans approved by the total community and Cabinet members for Communities and Involvement and Neighbourhoods.

The Corporate Property Management Team drive production, consultation and approval of area asset reviews and area asset management plans

Area asset management plans approved by all service deliverers, total community, capital and asset review team, ward members and Regeneration and Asset Board

Current Position

- Community Plans have been produced for some areas of the Borough
- The standards of the plans are variable
- The involvement of, consultation with and approval by the total communities has been variable
- No area asset management plans have currently been developed

Next Steps

The Corporate Property Management Team in the Environment and Development Directorate in consultation with the Community Involvement Team in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate are producing a further report for the Board which will include

- A Community Plans production programme
- An Area Asset Management Plans production programme
- Criteria for the Rotherham standard for the
 - Community Plans
 - Area Asset reviews
 - Area Asset Management Plans
- Methodologies for the Area Asset Reviews and production of the Community and Area Asset Management Plans
- Financial and resources implications of implementing the strategy for the Council, its partners and the community

It should be noted that the appropriate implementation of the above strategy will take time.

It is likely that the Council will start receiving requests for transfer of assets before the production programmes and plans are developed therefore it was agreed that the two short term actions below are implemented

- When specific requests for transfers of assets are received by the Council they will be referred to the Corporate Property Management Team who will
 - Log the request for use when the area asset management plan is developed
 - Inform the Community Involvement Team
 - Send the standard reply below to the requester

The Council is currently developing an integrated comprehensive strategy and implementation programme for the production of Community and Area Asset Management Plans for the whole of the Borough. Your request has been noted and will be considered as the Plans are developed for your area.
- A short briefing note is produced and issued to all the communities in Rotherham outlining the Council's strategy and implementation programme

The short briefing note will need to be updated and reissued to all the communities at regular intervals.

Appendix 2

Community and Area Asset Management Plans Quality Criteria and Production Methodologies

Community Plans

The Community Involvement Team in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate has identified that Rotherham Borough consists of 44 communities as shown on the map attached later and will ensure that consistent high quality Community Plans are produced for each community as outlined below.

Quality Criteria

The community plans will

- identify and include
 - the needs and aspirations of the Community
 - major issues, priorities and actions as identified by the Community
 - community profiles
 - all the major Community assets
 - key achievements over the previous 3 years
 - need to be sustainable
 - be reviewed and updated tri-annually
 - a SMART action plan outlining the key priorities and actions over the next 5 years grouped under the 7 Community Strategy themes
- The SMART action plan will include
 - community objectives and priorities
 - actions, milestones, outcomes and targets
 - partnership organisations delivering actions and lead officers
 - barriers, resources and risks
- support the Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan, all the Partners' and Stakeholders' strategies and service delivery plans and reflect local priorities
- be developed in consultation with the Community and all major service deliverers both within and outside the Council using existing consultation processes
- be informed by all the available geographic and statistical data
- take into account
 - potential known short, medium and long term changes in the communities
 - identified strengths and weaknesses of the communities
 - identified opportunities and threats to the communities
 - proposed and approved proposals, actions, outputs, outcomes and timescales in the Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan and all the Partners' and Stakeholders' strategies and service delivery plans

The Community

The Community in this context is defined as all the residents in and all the statutory, non statutory, voluntary and community organisations and groups operating in the Community Plan area.

Consultation and involvement of the Community will include all the above as far as is practicable within appropriate timescales.

Major Community Assets

Major Community assets in this context are defined as all the assets within the community plan boundary which have a major impact on the quality of life of the residents including

- Council assets
- Community Strategy Partners' assets
- Parish Council assets
- Voluntary sector assets, such as church halls, scout huts, etc.
- Private sector assets, such as major supermarkets and post offices

Production and Implementation of the Community Plans

The Community Involvement Team in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate will

- identify and agree with the Community and all major service deliverers within and outside the Council
 - the needs and aspirations of the Community
 - the major issues, priorities and actions as identified by the Community
 - community profiles
 - all the major Community assets
 - key achievements over the previous 3 years
- develop a draft community plan in accordance with the quality criteria above which aims to provide maximum outcomes for the Community within appropriate timescales
- consult the Community, Ward Councillors and all service deliverers within and outside the Council on the draft community plan
- incorporate the consultation results into the community plan
- obtain the support of the Community, Ward Councillors and all major service deliverers within and outside the Council for the amended community plan
- Forward the agreed community plan to the appropriate area partnership manager

The area partnership manager will

- ensure that the community plan is amalgamated into the area assembly plan
- drive and monitor implementation of the area assembly plan using existing arrangements and procedures
- Review and update the community plan tri-annually

Area Asset Management Plans

The quality of the area asset management plans are totally dependent on

- the production of high quality Community Plans which have widespread support of the Community, Ward Councillors and all major service deliverers within and outside the Council
- all the parties involved in the community plans being prepared to work in a true partnership
- the quality and availability of the data on the property assets both within the Council and that of external partners

Quality Criteria

The area asset management plans will aim to

- include all the identified and agreed major community assets
- identify, for each asset, the major issues, physical and funding proposals and proposed outputs and outcomes
- include proposals for the proper corporate management of the Council's land and buildings
- provide maximum outcomes for the Community as identified in the agreed community plan
- support the agreed Community Plan, the Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan, and all the known major Partners' and Stakeholders' strategies and service delivery plans
- be monitored annually
- be updated tri-annually
- be developed in consultation with the Community and all major service deliverers both within and outside the Council using Neighbourhoods' and VAR's existing consultation processes
- be informed by property asset reviews undertaken to a consistent standard
- be informed by all available geographic and property data
- take into account
 - potential known short, medium and long term changes in the communities
 - identified strengths and weaknesses of the communities
 - identified opportunities and threats to the communities
 - proposed and approved proposals, actions, outputs, outcomes and timescales in the Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan, the agreed Community Plan and all the known major Partners' and Stakeholders' strategies and service delivery plans

Production and Implementation of the Area Asset Management Plans

The Corporate Property Management Team in the Environment and Development Directorate will

- carry out property asset reviews on all the identified and agreed major community assets
- develop a draft area asset management plan in accordance with the quality criteria above
- consult the Community, Ward Councillors and all major service deliverers within and outside the Council on the draft plan using Neighbourhoods' and VAR's existing consultation processes
- incorporate the consultation results into the area asset management plan
- endeavour to obtain widespread support from the Community, Ward Councillors and all major service deliverers within and outside the Council to the amended area asset management plan using Neighbourhoods' and VAR's existing consultation processes
- obtain agreement of the Regeneration and Asset Board to a final area asset management plan
- drive implementation of the area asset management plan in consultation with the Community, Ward Councillors and all major service deliverers both within and outside the Council using Neighbourhoods existing involvement processes
- monitor implementation of the area asset management plan on an annual basis

- review and update the area asset management plan tri-annually

Property Asset Reviews

Every property asset will be reviewed using the template attached later.

Reviews of Council assets will use information from the Council's Tribal asset database. Reviews of non Council assets will use all information available from the asset owners modified by the Corporate Property Management Team if appropriate.

All the property asset reviews will be recorded on the Council's Tribal asset database.

Production Programme for the Community and Area Asset Management Plans

It is not possible at the present time to estimate how long it will take and how much it will cost to produce an agreed community plan, carry out property asset reviews and produce an agreed area asset management plan for a community.

It is therefore proposed to complete the whole process for 1 community as a pilot before developing a programme for the whole borough.

A programme for the whole borough will then be developed taking account of the

- lessons learnt from the pilot
- standard of current community plans
- capacity and strength of community organisations in the individual communities
- Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan, the approved Community Plan and all the major Partners' and Stakeholders' strategies and service delivery plans priorities
- funding, outcome and implementation opportunities

The timescale for each area will be different dependent on the factors above.

Bearing in mind the above factors it is proposed that Maltby is the pilot community.

Resources Implications

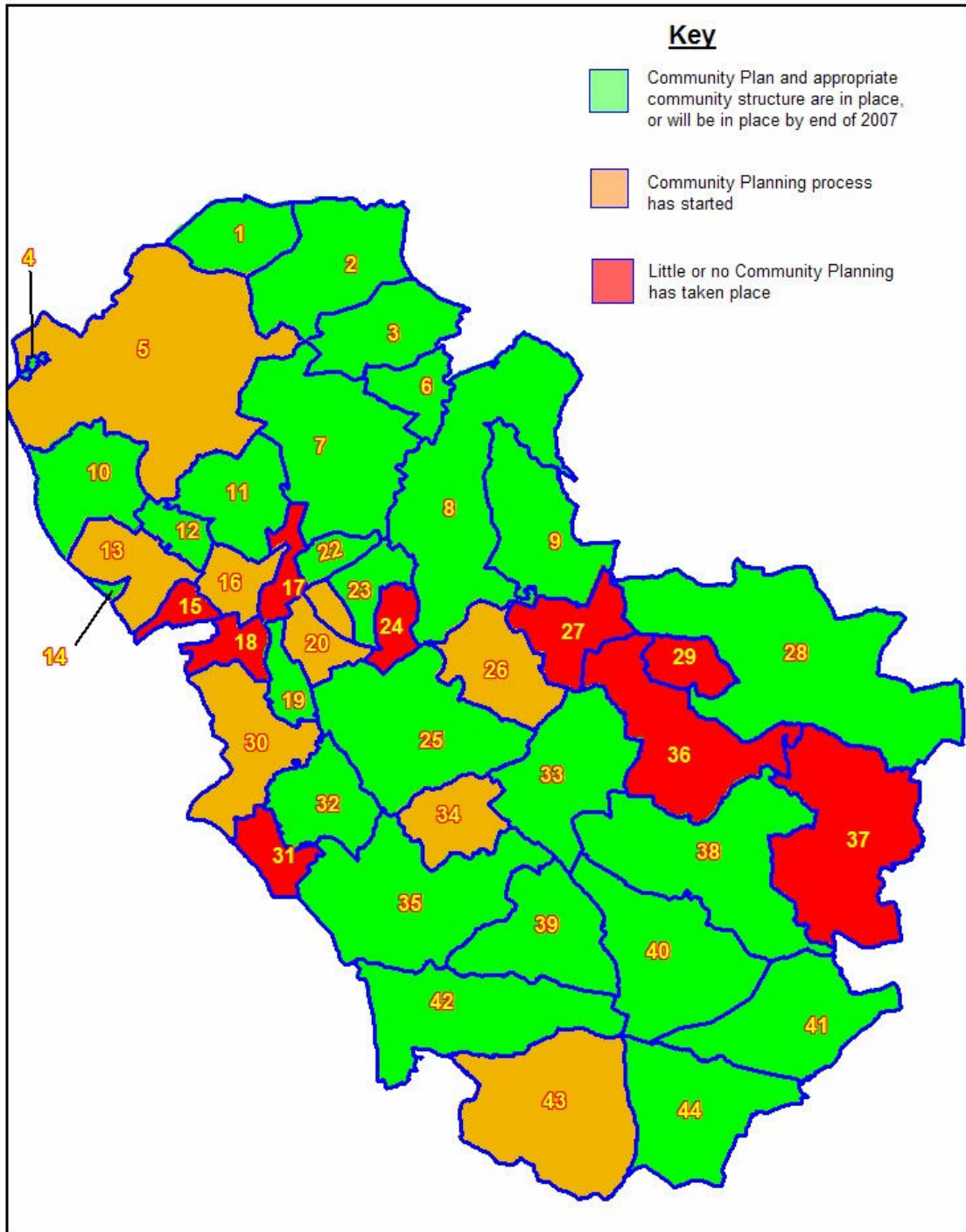
It is proposed that

- the pilot is carried out using existing resources within the Environment and Development and Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorates
- full resources records are kept by the Directorates for the pilot and used to assess the implications for implementing a programme for the whole borough

Reporting

It is proposed that the Corporate Property Management Team will report to the Regeneration and Asset Board

- Progress of the pilot on a quarterly basis
- Requests received for the transfer of assets monthly



This map is based on the Ordnance Survey map with the sanction of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright Reserved.



**Community Plans
Appendix B**

Rotherham MBC
Executive Director: Adam Wilkinson
Land Terrier, Facilities Management Section
Environmental & Development Service
Bailey House, Rawmarsh Road
ROTHERHAM S60 1TD



M:\land terr\drawings\bernice\community plans

Community Plans Key

Wentworth North Area Assembly

1	Brampton Bierlow and West Melton
2	Wath-upon-Dearne
3	Swinton
4	Harley
5	Wentworth
6	Kilnhurst

Wentworth South Area Assembly

7	Rawmarsh and Parkgate
8	Dalton, Thrybergh and Hooton Roberts
9	Ravenfield

Rotherham North Area Assembly

10	Thorpe Hesley and Scholes
11	Greasborough, Munsborough, Rockingham and Wingfield
12	Kimberworth Park
13	Kimberworth and Richmond Park
14	Blackburn
15	Meadowbank, Jordan, and (part of) Kimberworth
16	Masbrough, Bradgate, Ferham, Thornhill, Fenton Fields, Henley and Holmes

Rotherham South Area Assembly

17	Rotherham Central, New York and Northfield
18	Templeborough and Ickles
19	Canklow
20	Wellgate, Broom and Moorgate
21	Clifton
22	Eastwood and Springwell Gardens
23	East Dene, Herringthorpe and East Herringthorpe
24	Stag and (part of) Herringthorpe
25	Whiston

Wentworth Valley Area Assembly

26	Wickersley
27	Bramley and Hellaby
28	Maltby
29	Hooton Levitt

Rother Valley West Area Assembly

30	Catcliffe and Brinsworth
31	Orgreave
32	Treeton
33	Thurcroft
34	Ulley
35	Aston, Swallownest and Aughton

Rother Valley South Area Assembly

36	Laughton-en-le-Morthen, Brookhouse, Slade Hooton and Carr
37	Firbeck, Letwell and Guildingwells
38	Dinnington and Laughton Common
39	Todwick
40	North and South Anston
41	Woodsetts
42	Kiveton Park and Wales
43	Harthill and Woodall
44	Thorpe Salvin

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Property Asset Review

Property Name:

Address:

Asset Register Number(s):

Community: (Defined in geographical terms by Neighbourhoods –there are 44 communities identified. Find by logging onto the Council web site, click on Your Home tab, click Area Assembly, click Community Planning, click Community Plans Map and then click on the community area you wish to identify)

Ward:

Function(s) / Service(s) Delivered

Summary Review Results

Criteria	Score	Assessment
1) Need for Facility	xx	<i>High, medium, low need</i>
2) Economic Performance of Facility	xx	<i>Poor, medium, good</i>
3) Technical Performance of Property	xx	<i>Poor, medium, good</i>
4) Environmental Performance of Property	xx	<i>Poor, medium, good</i>

- 1) The higher the score the more need for facility
- 2) The higher the score the better its economic performance
- 3) The higher the score the better technical performance
- 4) The higher the score the better the environmental performance

- If no data is available for any information needed to complete the review an average score is entered.

Outcome of Review

This is a summary of all the information gathered on the asset and a recommendation on its future use

DEFINITIONS

Need for Facility			
Impact Criteria	Description	Potential Score	Score
<i>This criteria is based on the current use of the occupied or vacant building/land and is a subjective assessment</i>			
1) Vision Themes and Corporate Priorities (I) Support 1 – 2 (II) Supports 3 – 5 (III) Supports 6 or 7	1) Establish the current use/service provision of the property and establish which of the 5 Vision Themes and 2 cross cutting priorities it supports.	0 4 8	
2) Statutory Requirement (I) No (II) Partial (III) Yes	2) Is there a statutory requirement for this service? The service provider will know this if in doubt.	0 4 8	
3) Has the Community identified a need for the services provided by/in the facility in the agreed Community Plan (I) No (II) Yes	3) The Community Plans are known as Area Plans. Log onto the Intranet Home page, click onto Neighbourhoods and Adult Services (left hand side column), click onto Area Assemblies (under title Services in Neighbourhoods), click on Area and then click on Area Plan.	0 8	
4) Community Satisfaction (I) Not Satisfied (II) Satisfied (III) Very Satisfied	4) Ask the Service for the last community feedback/satisfaction survey; when it was done and what the results of the survey show.	0 4 8	
Total	(Maximum score = 32)		

Economic Performance of Facility			
Economic Criteria	Description	Potential Score	Score
	<i>This is based on the running costs divided by the hours the land/building is in use.</i>		
1) Full Running Costs (Rent, rates, BCIS, insurance, management)÷ hours in use (I) High (II) Medium (III) Low	1) For buildings look at the Tribal Enterprise Property Management System, for vacant land consider the economic costs of maintaining the land	0 4 8	
2) Potential Value (I) High (II) Medium (III) Low	2) The difference between the Existing Use Value and the Open Market Value (RICS Red Book definitions)	0 4 8	
3) Capital Investment Required (I) Major (II) Moderate (III) Minor	3) Take information from the Tribal Enterprise Property Management System and discuss with the Building Manager. This is not applicable to land so apply an average score.	0 4 8	
4) External Funding Potential for existing use (I) Minor (II) Moderate (III) Major	4) Gather this information from the service user(s) possible grants etc. Vacant unused land will be zero i.e., Minor	0 4 8	
5) Life Expectancy (I) Low (II) Medium (III) High	5) This is not applicable to land so apply an average score – use Asset Register for source of information	0 4 8	
6) Utilisation of Facility (I) Low (II) Medium (III) High	6) Examine asset as a whole. How much of it is being used? How often?	0 4 8	
Total	(Maximum score = 48)		

Technical Performance of Property		Potential Score	Score
Technical Criteria	Description	Potential Score	Score
	<i>These are AMP Categories – A, B, C and D, refer to the Tribal Enterprise Property Management System. A is good i.e. low cost up to D which is poor i.e. high cost. If the property is land a zero score is applied.</i>		
1) Condition (I) Category C & D (II) Category B (III) Category A	a. See Tribal Enterprise Property Management System	0 4 8	
2) Suitability (I) Category C & D (II) Category B (III) Category A	b. See Tribal Enterprise Property Management System	0 4 8	
3) Sufficiency - Location (I) Major difference to optimum (II) Minor difference to optimum (III) Optimum location	c. See Tribal Enterprise Property Management System. Is the building in the right place to provide this service?	0 4 8	
4) Accessibility (DDA part III compliance) (I) Under 50% (II) 50% and over (III) 90% and over	d. See Tribal Enterprise Property Management System – if in doubt seek advice from the Access Officer, EDS	0 4 8	
5) 25 year Maintenance Forecast – cost per square metre (I) High (II) Medium (III) Low	e. See Tribal Enterprise Property Management System	0 4 8	
6) Running Costs – cost per square metre (I) Major (II) Moderate (III) Negligible	f. See Tribal Enterprise Property Management System	0 4 8	
Total	(Maximum Score = 48)		

Environmental Criteria	Description	Potential Score	Score
<p>1) Utilities Efficiency – per square metre</p> <p>(I) Poor</p> <p>(II) Average</p> <p>(III) Good</p> <p>2) CO² Production</p> <p>(I) Major</p> <p>(II) Moderate</p> <p>(III) Negligible</p> <p>3) Contaminants (Asbestos, Legionella, Pollutants etc)</p> <p>(IV) Major</p> <p>(V) Minor</p> <p>(VI) None</p>	<p><i>If land 1) and 2) will both have a zero score, but 3) is site specific</i></p> <p>1) Seek advice from Property Environmental Manager.</p> <p>2) Seek advice from Property Environmental Manager.</p> <p>3) Seek advice from Property Environmental Manager.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>4</p> <p>8</p> <p>0</p> <p>4</p> <p>8</p> <p>0</p> <p>4</p> <p>8</p>	
Total	(Maximum score = 24)		

Appendix 3

Proposals for updating the Council's land and buildings records

Currently the Council does not manage property, both land and buildings corporately and landholdings records are inadequate.

It is proposed that the Corporate Property Management Team will examine and update the records on the Terrier and Tribal asset database of all the Council's land and buildings. The special local knowledge of Ward Councillors on the historical ownership of land within their communities will be utilised.

This can be done as a separate programme of work or combined with the community and area asset management plans production programme; it is proposed to combine it.

It is not possible at the present time to estimate how long it will take and how much it will cost to examine and update the records; it is therefore proposed to carry out a pilot using the same community used for the community and area asset management plans pilot, that is Maltby. This can then be used to assess the resource implications for implementation across the whole borough.

Actions for dealing with requests for transfer of assets

It is likely that the Council will start receiving requests for transfer of assets before the community and area asset management plans are produced for the particular areas.

As agreed at the 11th July Regeneration and Asset Board meeting Directors of Council Departments have been requested to refer all requests for transfers of assets to the Corporate Property Management Team who will

- Log the request for use when the area asset management plan is developed
- Inform the Community Involvement Team
- Send the standard reply below to the requester
The Council is currently developing an integrated comprehensive strategy and implementation programme for the production of Community and Area Asset Management Plans for the whole of the Borough. Your request has been noted and will be considered as the Plans are developed for your area.
- Report all requests received to the Regeneration and Asset Board and relevant Ward Members

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL
Thursday, 18th October, 2007

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Cutts, Foden, Pickering and Sangster.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Johnston and Littleboy.

Also in attendance:- Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Innovation and Mr. D. Morton (Parish Council Representative)

32. COMMUNICATIONS

The following events were noted :-

(a) Wednesday, 31st October, 2007 at 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. – a visit to the Asylum Seeker Team

(b) Tuesday, 20th November, 2007 at 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. in the John Smith Room – a training session in relation to EU Migration.

33. MEMBERS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP

Resolved:- That Councillor Sangster be this Panel's representative on the Members Sustainable Development Advisory Group.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

35. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

36. DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL - CO-OPTION

Consideration was given to the inclusion of Mr. Ray Noble as an additional co-optee from the voluntary sector on this Scrutiny Panel.

Resolved:- That Mr. Noble be co-opted onto this Scrutiny Panel for the remainder of the municipal year.

37. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD APRIL – AUGUST, 2007 AND BUDGET 2007/08

Julie Slatter, Head of Policy and Performance, with the aid of powerpoint, presented the submitted report which detailed the latest Budget Monitoring Report for the Chief Executive's Directorate for 2007/08. The service was currently forecasting a balanced budget after management

actions against a net revenue budget of £8.5 million by the end of March, 2008.

This report covered the period up to the end of August, 2007 and showed that the Directorate was currently forecasting an overspend of £87,000 which after management actions was forecasted to be a balanced budget by the end of the financial year 2007/08.

Management actions were being put in place to address the potential shortfalls of £87,000. Income from the ALMO was formalised through a Service Level Agreement and was, therefore, expected. The original Savings target in respect of advertising in Rotherham Matters was unlikely to be achieved in 2007/08. However, additional income from other areas within the Directorate, including LAA and NRF funding should offset this shortfall. The additional costs associated with the Rotherham Show were to be recouped from contributions from other Directorates.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered :-

- cessation of advertising in Rotherham Matters and the links to discussions regarding a partnership newspaper
- need for an income stream from advertising whether in-house or agency based
- areas of underspend
- ongoing negotiations with 2010 Rotherham Ltd. regarding service level agreement (SLA)
- job implications of SLA with 2010 Rotherham Ltd.
- impact on other service budgets
- SIPs and BIPs
- SLA with Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR): expectations, dialogue, funding
- role of, and contributions from, other partners
- earnings through workshops

Resolved:- (1) That the latest revenue forecast outturn position for the Chief Executive's Directorate for 2007/08 be noted.

(2) That a further report be submitted in January, 2008.

INVOLVEMENT) FRAMEWORK

Asim Munir, Principal Community Involvement Officer, presented the submitted report seeking endorsement from the Scrutiny Panel for the Draft Partnership CCI Framework which aimed to deliver improvements in community involvement and consultation activity across the Partners.

The Framework set out the Partner's vision, aims and objectives for consultation and community involvement. It also set out a range of actions to ensure that consultation and community involvement underpinned and was built into Partners policy and service delivery.

This developed the submitted draft that had been the subject of internal and external consultation.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- application of framework performance indicators across all partners
- concerns that not all partners appeared to be involved across the board
- framework and decision making at local level
- involvement of area assemblies
- elected member involvement
- availability of resources across all partners
- performance indicators and the Quality of Life survey
- database of all work going on at directorate level
- themed area assembly meetings
- need to make role of elected member more explicit
- Adult Services : LINKs
- involvement of partner organisations in the draft
- involvement of 2010 Rotherham Ltd. in the consultation process

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the submitted Framework be noted and agreed as far as this Panel is concerned.

(2) That the Framework should capture the necessary actions to deliver CCI across partners.

(3) That the report be referred for consideration to meetings of CMT, Cabinet and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement.

(4) That consideration be given to the role of elected members and the need for elected member representation on the Local Area Agreement Core Group.

(5) That any suggested additions to the draft be notified to Asim Munir as soon as possible.

39. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Assistant Chief Executive, Human Resources, presented the submitted Quarter 1 report on the performance of Corporate Health Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) monitored and reported on by the Chief Executive's Directorate and the Local Performance Indicators (LPI) owned by the Chief Executive's Directorate.

The report set out Quarter 1 performance in respect of national and local targets.

Overall there were eight measurements against six national BVPI's which the Chief Executive's Directorate was charged with reporting on. BVPI 11 had three targets to meet.

Attached as an appendix to the report was a summary of performance against BVPI's.

Of the eight measurements, five were categorised as green stars, one as amber circle (previously blue circle) and two as red triangles (categorisation in accordance with PerformancePlus).

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- BVPI 11a % of top 5% of earners that were women
- BVPI 11b % of top 5% of earners from minority ethnic communities
- BVPI 11c % of top 5% of earners with a disability
- BVPI 12 Days/shifts lost to sickness
- BVPI 14 Early retirements (excluding ill health)
- BVPI 15 Ill Health retirements

- BVPI 16a % of employees with a disability
- BVPI 17a % of BME employees
- LPI PDR's completed
- LPI % response to Reach In survey

Resolved:- That the performance of the key Corporate Best Value Performance Indicators and Local Performance Indicators be noted.

40. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS

Consideration was given to a report presented by Zafar Saleem, Community Engagement and Cohesion Manager, which consolidated a number of ongoing work streams relating to the Council's interaction with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and proposed a number of key actions, which aimed to support the development of a sustainable VCS in Rotherham.

The report covered:-

- introduction and policy context
- base budget review
- Council vision for the VCS in Rotherham
- The Local Government White Paper
- Rotherham Compact
- commissioning/local area agreements
- next steps

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- composition of the VCS
- readiness of the VCS
- VCS being fit for purpose
- funding for VAR and other key infrastructure organisations
- promotion of social enterprise
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- agreeing a Compact champion and impending review of the value of champions
- Working Neighbourhoods Fund

Resolved:- (1) That the action plan to implement the proposals arising from the Base Budget Review be noted.

(2) That an evaluation report be received in six months on the impact of these proposals.

(3) That the areas listed as the key issues to be progressed as phase two of this work, and an implementation on this second phase in due course, be noted.

(4) That a progress report be submitted to this Panel in January, 2008.

41. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 6TH SEPTEMBER, 2007

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 6th September, 2007 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

42. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2007

The Scrutiny Panel noted the minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 14th September, 2007.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
28th September, 2007

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors Akhtar, Austen, Boyes, Burton, Clarke and McNeely.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Doyle, Jack, G. A. Russell, P. A. Russell and Stonebridge.

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

67. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

68. PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of this Committee held on 14th September, 2007, the Chairman welcomed Stephen Turnbull, Head of Public Health and Dr. John Radford, Director of Public Health who introduced briefly the paperwork as submitted to the last meeting.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- timelines for the areas requiring further work
- significant risks of targets not being met in the Rotherham Public Health Strategy and the Life Expectancy Plan
- impact of what GP's want to deliver against what Government wants GP's to deliver
- desire for the highest standard of preventative care not contradictory with Government desire for improved access priorities
- importance of the links to housing/environmental issues : winter deaths/affordable warmth were key considerations for the Public Health Strategy
- role of elected members in public health : community leadership
- mechanisms for PCT/Council to agree priorities
- need for updated version of the report to cover the incompleting information

- update on achievement of the September, 2007 targets
- importance of linkages to other strategies such as Rotherham Women's Strategy, Rural Strategy and Alcohol Strategy etc.
- progress regarding partnership working
- Strategy impact on reducing falls and hip fractures in the elderly and the need for co-ordinated aftercare when unavoidable
- target achievement/progress in respect of continuing to address "call to needle times" for coronary thrombolysis
- impact of Rotherham being subject to the Yorkshire wide ambulance service
- Council's input to health priorities
- awareness of home visiting staff of the health targets/actions
- high compliance with smoke free legislation
- social marketing
- Council input in identifying needs of BME and communities of interest
- report format
- role of the midwife in respect of the aims re (a) smoking in pregnancy and (b) reducing rates of smoking in pregnancy, particularly in deprived areas
- need to involve the Older Persons' Champion, Councillor Frank Hodgkiss, in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment as part of the commissioning strategy

Resolved:- (1) That Stephen Turnbull and Dr. John Radford be thanked for their informative contribution.

(2) That the information be noted.

(3) That the progress to date, in evolving the public health infrastructure, be noted.

(4) That the progress in implementing the Rotherham Public Health Strategy and the areas for continued action be noted.

(5) That the Council's Older Persons' Champion, Councillor Frank Hodgkiss, be involved with issues relating to older people as appropriate.

69. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT - STRETCH TARGETS PERFORMANCE AND ANNUAL REVIEW 2007

Vince Roberts, Rotherham Partnership Manager, presented the submitted report summarising the position in relation to progress against the stretch targets contained within the Local Area Agreement (LAA) after the first twelve months of delivery and identified progress and areas of improvement.

In addition, the report included Government Office Yorkshire and Humberside's (GOYH) draft assessment of Rotherham's Year 1 LAA performance which was based on the year end performance report submitted by the Partnership and positive discussions between GOYH, the Rotherham Partnership Team and the Performance and Quality Team, (RMBC).

Vince also gave a powerpoint presentation covering :

- Self Assessment Hierarchy of Risk
- Process 2007
- Stretch Target Rating
- LAA Direction of Travel
- Mandatory Targets
- Strong Performance
- What GOYH say in the 2006/07 LAA Year End Report

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- older people helped to live at home : reward monies and assessment timetable
- parties involved in the utilisation of earned Performance Reward Grant
- scrutiny involvement in respect of under performing targets and sustaining the performance of those stretch targets that were on track to achieve the agreed stretch
- need for involvement in monitoring and refresh arrangements
- possibility of an all Member seminar and training sessions

4 PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - 28/09/07

- need for the relevant scrutiny panel to have opportunity to look in depth at areas of red risk
- NEETs pressure points and need to keep Members informed of any trends/themes
- pressure on partners to use wisely pump priming monies
- transferring pump priming resources from one target to another to help support delivery
- pump priming expenditure in respect of anti-social behaviour
- arson reduction
- skills for life
- potential adverse link between increasing the number of people on benefit who enter into sustainable employment and the issue of no jobs for 16 to 18 year olds

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

(2) That an in depth look at areas of red risk and the monitoring of various strands of delivery should be undertaken by relevant scrutiny panels.

(3) That this Committee notes :

(a) Performance Reward Grant earned in relation to the Stretch Targets will be placed within an improvement fund that can be used to enhance delivery in the borough in relation to local priorities from 2009/2010

(b) the GOYH's Highlight Report on Rotherham Local Area Agreement – Annual Review 2006/07.

70. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PUBLIC

Further to Minute No. 20 of the meeting of this Committee held on 29th June, 2007, Councillor Akhtar presented the submitted report and amended action plan in respect of the above, identifying which recommendations needed to be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

Particular reference was made to :

- issuing of press releases at the start of a review
- holding a panel or review meeting in local areas on a themed basis
- reviewing relationship between scrutiny and area assemblies

- producing postcards of every Councillor
- availability of the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions
- scrutiny web pages and links to the Council web site
- training on how the Council works for all new employees
- use of community co-optees for actual reviews

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- lack of public interest in the production of postcards of every Councillor
- funding and delivery issues with regard to the production of postcards of every Councillor
- implications and timescale of Community Call for Action work

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

(2) That the action plan be approved as far as this Committee is concerned.

(3) That the two recommendations now identified be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

71. SCRUTINY SELF EVALUATION FRAMEWORK - ACTION PLAN

Further to Minute No. 24 of the meeting of this Committee held on 29th June, 2007, Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented briefly the submitted report relating to the above, incorporating the requested action plan and progress to date and proposed action to address any outstanding issues.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- clarification of responsibilities regarding recommendations arising from scrutiny reviews and panel meetings
- regular joint meetings between this Committee and the Cabinet

Resolved:- That the action plan be approved.

72. "11 MILLION TAKEOVER DAY"

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented briefly the submitted report relating to the above and introduced Clare Cope, Senior Youth

Officer (Voice and Influence) and Jonathan Cooper, Voice and Information Officer who elaborated on the initiative.

The report indicated that the Children's Commissioner for England, Professor Sir Al Aynsley – Green was asking organisations to participate in a new event, the "11 Million Takeover Day 2007". The day was an opportunity to celebrate the importance of children and young people in society, demonstrating a 'commitment to listening to and recognising (their) talents and contributions'. The guidance to organisations was also submitted.

The day was an opportunity to demonstrate further the Council's commitment to widening the participation of children and young people. As the day coincided with the meeting of this Committee on 23rd November, 2007 it was proposed that a group of children and young people takeover the meeting, being an ideal opportunity for them to be involved with elected Members and the democratic process.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and preliminary consideration was given to the agenda/meeting format.

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted and support be given to the "11 Million Takeover Day".

(2) That the principle of a group of children and young people being invited to 'takeover' the meeting of this Committee on 23rd November, 2007 be supported.

(3) That further reports and briefings on the initiative and suggested format for the day be submitted.

73. LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORKS (LINKS)

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, presented briefly the submitted briefing note updating the Committee on progress regarding the development of LINKs. It was pointed out that further guidance was awaited.

The briefing note covered :-

- background
- key contacts
- early adopter projects
- how LINKs would work
- available guidance and support
- funding
- indicative timescales
- work that could be undertaken before Royal Assent

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- adequacy of funding
- bridging the gaps and lead in times
- pooling of budgets across authorities

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

74. REVIEW OF THE USE OF CONSULTANTS

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, reported the latest position in respect of the above review.

There had been a number of meetings covering scoping and interviews. There was a focus group of officers directly involved in appointing consultants.

A draft report was being prepared for submission to review group members over the next few weeks, following which a report would be submitted to this Committee.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

75. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th September, 2007 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

76. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor Akhtar reported

- the review of the public use of school buildings, including visits was ongoing
- the next meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel would be considering:-
 - budget review
 - town centre renaissance update
 - Christmas events programme
 - leisure packages update

(b) Councillor McNeely reported:

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- the following appointments from the last meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel:

Councillor McNeely – Corporate Complaints Review
Councillor Cutts – Advice Centres Review

- the Chair and Vice-Chair were the Panel representatives on the Decent Homes Steering Group

- reports were requested on the following issues :

- void properties including decent homes
- stock condition survey
- Support and Intervention Team’s withdrawal from 2010 Rotherham Ltd.
- Respect Action Plan
- garage sites in ward format

- assessment pending of whether the proposed scrutiny review of housing allocations was still required

- themed meetings were programmed for the October and November meetings

(c) Councillor Whelbourn reported that the review of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund had been put on hold for the time being

(d) Councillor Austen reported that, at the last meeting, the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel had agreed the following appointments :

- Councillor Whelbourn – Corporate Complaints Review
- Councillor Austen – Advice Centres Review

(e) Councillor Burton reported that the next meeting of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel was to focus on health issues including breast feeding rates and infant mortality.

77. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no format call-in requests.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following item to enable the necessary arrangements to be made)

78. RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR THE TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE POST OF DIRECTOR OF ROTHERHAM INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Resolved:- That Councillors Akhtar and Boyes be the two Scrutiny representatives on the above Appointment Panel.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
Friday, 19th October, 2007

Present:- Councillor Stonebridge (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Boyes, Clarke, Jack, McNeely, G. A. Russell, P. A. Russell and Whelbourn.

Also in attendance was Councillor Wardle (Chair of the Audit Committee)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Akhtar, Burton and Doyle.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

80. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

81. PROPOSALS FOR THE REFRESH OF THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CORPORATE PLAN

Vince Roberts, Rotherham Partnership Manager, with the aid of powerpoint, presented the submitted report setting out proposals for a refresh of the Rotherham Community Strategy 2005-2010 aligned with a refresh of the Corporate Plan 2005-2010.

The presentation covered :-

- Why refresh the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan?
- Why refresh the Local Area Agreement?
- Things to consider :
 - What is the community telling us?
 - What is Government telling us?
 - Existing LAA targets
 - New national indicators
 - What is in existing strategies and plans?
 - Fairness and Sustainability (mainstreaming)
 - Corporate Health/capacity
 - New or revised local plans e.g. CYPP
 - Implications/impact Local Development Framework
- Member Engagement
- Member Development Programme
- LSP Community Strategy Consultation event : Friday, 9th November, 2007

- Timeline

The purpose of the refresh was to ensure that the Community Strategy was compliant in light of the Local Government White Paper and statutory guidance. It would also ensure that both the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan were fit for purpose and that objectives were right given progress since 2005 and reflected new and emerging issues.

There would be no change to the overarching vision or five priority themes. It was, however, proposed that objectives under the cross cutting themes of sustainability and fairness, which were directly relevant to specific priority themes, were mainstreamed.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered :-

- outcomes and what would be the biggest differences
- concerns regarding the lack of recognition of the ongoing joint working and relationships with parish councils
- new funding
- area grant forwarded to the Council or partners in the area
- funding to Government agencies working in Rotherham
- City Region and the use of multi area agreements
- need for refresh to depict a 'golden thread' diagram of where the various plans and strategies fit in
- need for measures to monitor the incorporation of the cross cutting themes of fairness and sustainability
- need for a common consultation programme and potential role for the LSP to sort out the mechanics of such
- process of shared database regarding consultation and directorate activity
- need to highlight the measures we have already in respect of fairness and sustainability
- need for discussions with partners with a view to agreeing common standards for scrutiny

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

(2) That the proposed process including the timing and nature of reporting

to CMT, Cabinet and Scrutiny and links to the budget process be noted.

(3) That the proposals for the objectives under the cross cutting themes of fairness and sustainability to be mainstreamed in the revised plans as appropriate be noted.

(4) That the extension of the timeframe for the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan to March, 2011, in line with the LAA, be noted.

82. POLICY REVIEW PROCESS - POLICY REVIEW 2007

Julie Slatter, Head of Policy and Performance, presented the submitted report which gave an overview of the outcomes of a major review of key strategic policies and strategies that were core to the Council's business and were critical in ensuring effective corporate governance. It also set out proposals for further development and monitoring implementation of the Council's policy framework.

The report included an assessment of a basket of policies and progress in implementation and made recommendations for further policy review and development.

Risk to the overall policy framework had been used to rank policies with a red/amber/green score and recommended actions for each policy where necessary. This provided a baseline for the future of policy review, which would enable the Council to be focused on outcomes delivered.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered :-

- elected Member involvement in the continued Our Future Group work
- Human Resources and Organisation Development Strategy
- concerns regarding the red status of the Local Development Framework
- Communications and Marketing Strategy and concerns that members were not informed regarding events/issues in their ward areas
- concerns regarding the lack of progress and red status of the Green Spaces Strategy : reference to the completed scrutiny review as a starting point for progress
- concerns regarding the amber/red status of the Older People's Wellbeing Strategy and apparent lack of joined up thinking
- budget discussions and incorporation of policies and strategies for delivery

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- concerns that relationships with parish councils were not included as a key strategy
- Community Learning Strategy
- Enforcement Strategy for Traffic Parking : concerns majority of fines related to residents' parking permits
- funding for adult learning
- need to link issues and not just look in isolation e.g. obesity links with Older People's Wellbeing Strategy and Community Learning Strategy
- concerns regarding the interchangeability of, and lack of clarity between, plans/policies/strategies

Resolved:- (1) That the progress on the key strategies and plans reviewed be noted.

(2) That the recommendations set out for each policy assessed in the appendix to the report, and specifically the "key actions" set out in the report, be noted.

(3) That a progress report be submitted in three months publicising the Council's and partners' policy framework/strategies. Such report to include clear ownership of the policy/strategy refresh

(4) That a clear corporate definition of the words 'policy', 'strategy' and 'plan' be established.

(5) That Scrutiny Panels, as appropriate, consider, in more detail, any relevant issues arising from the refresh and that this should not be restricted to those items with a red status.

(6) That a further report be submitted with regard to the progress of elected member involvement in continuing Our Future Group work.

(7) That a report be submitted, for consideration, to the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel with regard to developing an understanding and formalisation of the Council's working relationship with parish councils. Such report to include reference to the 'Charter' and policies and strategies for developing the working relationship with a view to the matter then being referred to Cabinet.

83. CPA DIRECTION OF TRAVEL STATEMENT 2007

Matt Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive, presented the submitted report which detailed how, in June 2005, the Audit Commission published the new framework for CPA 2005 to 2008 'CPA – the harder test'. The framework introduced the approach to producing 'direction of travel'

statements each year.

Direction of travel was an assessment of improvement. It defined the progress made over the previous year and the plans and resources put in place to sustain and strengthen improvement. In particular it :-

- Assessed the track record of achievement of outcomes during the previous year and the robustness and delivery of improvement plans
- Helped keep momentum and focus in delivering improvement priorities
- Signalled further support and improvement work
- Informed audit and assessment programmes to ensure they targeted the right areas
- Provided learning about good and poor practices to inform improvement planning

The deadline for submitting the self assessment was 10th October, 2007.

The report provided further information on the timetable and process and key dates. There were no direct finance implications.

CPA was a key driver and it was important the Council was well prepared for any future changes to the CPA framework. The direction of travel assessment was a key document which was an important communication tool both internally and externally. It was essential that it provided an accurate, up-to-date and honest assessment of progress.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- areas of concern identified in the previous discussion on the policy review process relating to : (a) Community Learning Strategy (b) Green Spaces Strategy (c) Local Development Framework and (d) Older People's Wellbeing Strategy, together with concerns around the ALMO and crime figures and the likely impact on the Council's rating
- acknowledgement of issues but improvement still made
- objective measure of quality and service perception
- need for effective communications and to keep elected Members informed particularly regarding issues affecting their respective wards
- potential for a future scrutiny review regarding the Council/public interface

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Resolved:- That the information, timetable and process for the direction of travel submitted assessment be noted.

84. CODE OF CONDUCT

Tim Mumford, Assistant Chief Executive, Legal and Democratic Services, updated the Committee on the new Code of Conduct and highlighted a current issue for scrutiny surrounding the attendance of executive members at scrutiny meetings and the current requirements for the declaration of prejudicial interests.

The point at which an executive member needed to leave a scrutiny meeting following the declaration of a prejudicial interest was an issue of concern and debate that needed clarification at national level.

Resolved:- That the information be noted and clarification be sought.

85. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MEMBERS CONSULTATION ADVISORY GROUP

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Members Consultation Advisory Group held on 20th September, 2007.

86. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September, 2007 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

87. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor Whelbourn reported that the Area Assembly review group was to meet shortly.

(b) Councillor Austen reported that there had been a small response to the all member questionnaire and that prompts for return were needed.

(c) Councillor Boyes referred to the review of the public use of school buildings and that there had been helpful discussions according to a report at the Building Group.

(d) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that the last meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel had considered :-

- Childhood Obesity
- Infant Mortality
- Breastfeeding
- Budget

(e) Councillor McNeely reported :-

- the October meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel had considered:-
 - updates on the work of Regulatory Services
 - performance of Alcohol Exclusion Zones
 - development of the Noise Reduction Strategy
 - Budget
- the following items would be considered during November and December :
 - revised Bereavement Services
 - Enviro Crime
 - Respect Action Plan
 - delivery of affordable housing in rural sector
 - progress of the HMR programme
 - interim report on the Support Team's withdrawal from 2010 (one day review planned for March, 2008)
- review of the Allocations Policy would now be carried out after the first year of implementation

(f) Councillor Jack reported :

- the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had received training on PerformancePlus
- the review of the dental contract one year on was ongoing
- Domestic Violence Awareness Day was taking place on 25th November, 2007

(g) Councillor Stonebridge reported :

- need for budget information at Panel meetings to include implications/explanations of savings etc. The November/December round of budget considerations should include:
 - current position
 - pressures for next year
 - scrutiny review recommendations through Cabinet factored into the implications
- a request from the Chief Executive of the PCT that scrutiny review recommendations with regard to health be presented to the PCT Board.

In agreeing a process for such it was felt that consideration could be given to other issues being presented to other partners

- the recommendations from the review of the use consultants were imminent
- the review of advice centres was under way and terms of reference were being defined
- no collective work had yet been done regarding the flooding situation and discussions would be held at the next meeting of this Committee
- the Corporate Complaints group had started to meet
- concerns regarding the lack of implementation of the outcomes from the review of Christmas lights. The present position for this year was outlined

Resolved:- That a joint meeting be sought with Cabinet to discuss this and other issues.

- the future proposals for the monitoring reports on the revenue expenditure of the Chief Executive's Directorate

Resolved:- That future reports on the revenue expenditure of the Chief Executive's Directorate be considered by the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel.

88. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
9th November, 2007

Present:- Councillor Stonebridge (in the Chair); Councillors Akhtar, Austen, Boyes, Clarke, Doyle, Jack, McNeely, G. A. Russell and P. A. Russell.

Also in attendance was Councillor Wardle (Chair of the Audit Committee)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burton and Whelbourn.

89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Councillor Akhtar declared a personal interest in item 91 below (RBT – Performance Update) being the Council's representative on the RBT Board.

90. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

91. RBT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Paul Hamblett, Enterprise Programme Office Manager and Paul Briddock, Head of Information Systems, RBT Connect Ltd., together with Mark Gannon, Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Manager.

Paul Hamblett presented, with the aid of powerpoint, the submitted report detailing the progress and performance of RBT for the period 1st June to 31st August, 2007.

The presentation covered:-

- SLA Performance
- Rotherham Connect Call Volumes
- Human Resources/Payroll
- Human Resources/Payroll : % payroll accuracy
- ICT
- Procurement
- Revenues and Benefits
- Revenues and Benefits : Council Tax Collection
- RBT Complaints :
 - performance
 - outcomes
 - reasons
 - where in the process

Highlights for the period included :

- RBT services responded to the borough emergency in June/July

- Call queuing went live in Human Resources and Payroll in June
- Indications from the BFI of a star benefits service score
- Automated payment line for Streetpride was proving to be a success with an increase to 217 payments taken in August from 71 in July
- Alternate weekly collection resulted in 3,647 calls answered in August
- Money advice sessions in customer services centre proving successful
- Praise received at the South Yorkshire Pensions Authority district meeting
- New link with HM Revenues and Customs live within Human Resources and Payroll
- Time to process contracts improved from eight days in June to three days in August
- Positive feedback received from delegates on courses provided by the Human Resources and Payroll Advice and Guidance Service
- First batch of ICT equipment received to enable refresh to begin
- Richard Copley to commence as ICT Client Manager within the Council
- Procurement savings confirmed as £887,000 to 31st July, 2007
- 93.33% pass rate for exam success in Procurement
- RBT shortlisted in the Annual Association for Public Excellence (APSE) awards in the category 'Best Efficiency Initiative'

The report also set out:

- Service by service overview covering
 - Customer Services / Public Access
 - HR and Payroll
 - ICT
 - Procurement
 - Revenues and Benefits
- Progress Against Corporate Initiatives
 - Equalities and Diversity

- Investors in People
- Consultation/Complaints

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered :

- ICT : no means of communication during the recent emergency – provision made and what would change
- business continuity planning
- RBT20 – number of claim reductions achieved for the year
- structured approach to paperless wage/salary slips and access to ICT facilities
- lessons learnt from the recent floods

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

(2) That a report on business continuity planning be submitted to this Committee as soon as possible.

92. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

Colin Earl, Director of Internal Audit and Governance, presented the submitted report showing the latest position regarding how the Council's most significant risks were being managed.

The report covered:-

- development of risk management arrangements in 2007
- deletion of risk numbered 1
- revision of risk assessments
- corporate risks at a glance
- current risk assessment
- target risk assessments, after mitigating controls put in place

The Register, as refined in line with Member comments, was submitted as an appendix to the report.

Discussion and a question and answer report ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- matrix format

- risks and mitigating actions
- future reports regarding further actions in respect of residual red risks
- crime data
- Neighbourhoods and Adult Services : management capacity
- implementation of Children's Act arrangements
- delivery of the Children's single plan
- timescales
- ALMO performance and delivery of decent homes programme
- Culture and Leisure mitigating controls
- need for scrutiny panels to monitor risks

Resolved:- (1) That the items included in the Register be noted.

(2) That the high residual risks in Neighbourhoods and Adult Services be noted.

(3) That any proposed items identified for inclusion in the Register be notified to Colin Earl.

(4) That the risks be referred to the respective scrutiny panels for consideration/monitoring.

93. UPDATE ON CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY REVIEW

Mark Evans, Customer Services Client Manager, presented the submitted report relating to progress in respect of the above.

The Customer Access Strategy underpinned the Council's drive to improve customer services and provided the vision for dealing with customers and on developing services with the customer at the centre of operations.

To ensure the strategy remained appropriate going forward, the Council had made a commitment within the 2007/08 Year Ahead Statement to review the strategy. At the same time, the Information and ICT Strategy was also being refreshed and both documents were being developed concurrently to provide a co-ordinated and strategic approach to ensuring the delivery of the Customer Access Strategy.

A review of the current strategy document and those from other local authorities had been undertaken and a refreshed strategy was being introduced to commence the consultation in mid November, with a view to complete by mid December.

Set out in the report were dates that had been agreed for the consultation on the Customer Access Strategy and/or Information and ICT Strategy documents with a view to commencing delivery from April, 2008.

The following strategic themes had emerged from the work already undertaken :

- transforming service delivery to improve customer experience
- promoting ways services could be accessed
- customer convenience
- joined up service delivery
- refocusing priorities on the things that mattered most to customers
- learning, development and training

Every opportunity would be taken to personalise services and ensure capability to track customer information.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:

- initiatives to tackle public transport problems in rural areas
- staff development and training
- consultation with the customers the strategy is aimed at and ensuring we know what the people of Rotherham want
- consultation methods
- need for a clear vision
- customer care training facilities
- need to move away from the 'process' report and focus on the overall vision

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

(2) That a further report be submitted identifying clearly the overall vision. Such report to include what the strategy aims to achieve, looks like, feels

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like and what added value it will deliver.

94. THE 11 MILLION TAKE-OVER DAY

Further to Minute No. 72 of the meeting of this Committee held on 28th September, 2007, the Committee considered a report presented by Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, on proposals for, and prior to, the take over of the next meeting of this Committee by children and young people.

The report set out details in respect of :-

(a) a 'meet and greet' session between the children and young people and PSOC members on 13th November, 2007;

(b) a pre-meeting with the children and young people on 23rd November, 2007;

(c) format of the meeting including agenda items and procedure.

Resolved:- That the information be received and the arrangements be supported.

95. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October, 2007 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

96. REVENUE OUTTURN 2006/07: 2007/08 BUDGET - FINANCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Mark Scarrott, Service Accountant (Financial Services), presented briefly the submitted report indicating the 2006/07 outturn position for Financial Services, together with the latest monitoring against the 2007/08 revenue budget as part of the first stage of the budget setting process for 2008/09.

The report showed that the Financial Services Directorate was currently forecasting, after management actions, a balanced budget for 2007/08.

Financial Services had identified already a number of potential savings within service areas with work currently progressing to identify additional savings to contribute to closing the Council's overall funding gap for 2008/09.

Resolved:- (1) That the outturn position, as at 31st March, 2007 be noted.

(2) That the revenue budget monitoring report for the period 1st April to 30th September, 2007 be noted.

97. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows :

(a) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that :

- the last meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel had considered:
 - update of the review on the impact of domestic violence on children and young people
 - safeguarding arrangements : annual review
 - young people with learning difficulties : developing the role of special schools
 - progress of equality impact assessments : Year 2
- the next meeting on 30th November, 2007 was to consider :
 - children and young people's mental health services
 - young carers' strategy
 - review of future challenges of Young People's Service
 - conference on attainment of looked after children
- that the Breathing Space Project had received an award

(b) Councillor Akhtar reported :

- last meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel considered update on the Bramley Traffic Management Scheme survey findings, the results of which were being analysed prior to a report to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development Services
- the review of the public use of school buildings was ongoing and it was hoped to bring a report to this Committee in January, 2008
- upcoming considerations of a renaissance update

(c) Councillor McNeely reported :

- Chair/Adviser to attend conference re affordable housing/low cost ownership support
- the November meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel was to consider:

- Bereavement Services
 - Enviro Crime
 - Respect Action Plan
 - proposed scrutiny reviews
 - Licensing statement policy refresh
 - HMR programme and Rural Housing Strategy and action plan (Regeneration Scrutiny Panel members invited to attend)
- the December meeting was to consider :
- quarterly performance
 - budget monitoring
 - garage sites in ward format
 - Support Team's withdrawal from 2010
 - void properties and stock condition survey
- (d) Councillor Boyes reported that the Tourism Service had just received charter mark status
- (e) Councillor Austen reported that the Area Assembly review group would be considering draft recommendations next Tuesday, 13th November, 2007.
- (f) Councillor Stonebridge reported :
- the review on the use of consultants was progressing well
 - the review of advice services had begun
 - the corporate complaints review had begun
 - upcoming Fourth Annual Conference to consider the development of local area agreements
 - a date for a joint meeting with Cabinet was being pursued

98. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.

99. 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to financial/business affairs)

100. POST INCIDENT REPORT – JUNE 2007 FLOODS

The Chairman welcomed Ian Smith, Director of Asset Management, Graham Kaye, Engineer and Alan Matthews, Emergency and Safety Manager.

Ian presented the submitted report which set out in detail an examination of the response to the flooding events of June, 2007.

A powerpoint presentation was given which covered:-

- Images of the floods of Summer, 2007
- Weather statistics
- Scale of the incident
- Timelines of events from 15th June to 19th July, 2007 and into the recovery period
- Detailed statistical information e.g. numbers of sandbags, school closures, skips, meals provided, affected properties/business etc.
- A case study of Ulley Reservoir
- Media coverage
- Financial impact
- Debriefings
- Positive outcomes
- Improvement observations for partner agencies
- Issues for the Council to progress
- Conclusion and lessons learnt

Further detailed information to support the presentation was provided in a

separate report.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered :-

- debriefings with elected members
- need to tap into local sources of knowledge
- areas affected and need to collect, pool, feed in information
- allocation of sandbags
- communication strategy
- records of land levels/inclines
- residential properties affected
- financial support to the community and claims received
- evacuation areas
- longer term lessons learnt
- cross referencing of action recommendations from the floods in 2000
- works carried out since floods in 2000
- discussions with Yorkshire Water
- gulley cleansing rationale
- early and comprehensive flood warning system
- Bradmarsh Business Park
- communications with, and co-operation of utility organisations particularly in light of action plans emerging from the floods in 2000
- Local Government Act and requirement placed on other organisations to co-operate
- awareness/publicising of action/plans etc.
- partnership working with parish councils
- national review of planning statistical data

- representations to the PCT regarding health issues impact of the floods
- post incident reports from partner agencies
- maintenance of structures that were the responsibility of other organisations

The Chairman summed up the Committee's views as follows:-

- (a) need to debrief elected members at all levels throughout the Council, particularly on a locally affected basis
- (b) need for an effective communications strategy – internally and externally
- (c) need particularly for a strategic plan for communications with elected members during a state of emergency
- (d) need for joint working with parish councils from an emergency planning point of view and for access to local knowledge about flooding
- (e) need to consider failure issues around effective early flood warning systems from the Environment Agency
- (f) need for gulley cleansing to be risk based as well as calendar based
- (g) need to explore the powers in the Local Government Act 2007 regarding the duty placed on other organisations to co-operate with the Council
- (h) need to consider the agreed actions from the floods in 2000 that had not been carried out
- (i) need to request post incident flood reports and learning points from other partner agencies
- (j) need for the Resilience Forum to consider the importance of the Parkway Sub-Station as an absolute priority
- (k) need for regular inspection of old structures located near rivers and large bodies of water
- (l) need for action plans to be signed up and monitored, including those from 2000
- (m) need for consideration of the health impact of the floods psychologically on children and adults who had been displaced twice in less than eight years

Resolved:- (1) That the above views be made aware to Cabinet.

(2) That detailed work be carried out at a later date within the respective scrutiny panels.

(3) That the information be noted and this Committee's thanks and appreciation to all those concerned in dealing with the emergency be placed on record.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
23rd November, 2007

Present:- Lydia Catterall (Youth Cabinet) and Councillor Stonebridge (in the Chair); Councillors Akhtar, Austen, Boyes, Burton, Clarke, Doyle, McNeely, G. A. Russell and Whelbourn.

George Bailey, Joe Bartley, Joseph Bennett, John D'Silva, George Foster, Jawwaad Hussain, Jacob Martin, Robyn Plowright, Charlotte Scothern and Melissa Waterworth (representatives of the Youth Cabinet).

Also in attendance were Councillors Stone (Leader of the Council), Wardle (Chair of the Audit Committee) and S. Wright (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services) together with Mr. John Healey, M.P.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jack and P. A. Russell.

101. INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Stonebridge welcomed representatives of the Youth Cabinet and introduced Lydia Catterall who was to co-chair the meeting as part of the "11 Million Take-Over Day" project.

Councillor Stonebridge also introduced Mr. John Healey, M.P. who offered, on behalf of the three South Yorkshire M.Ps, to be held to account by the Youth Cabinet on issues they wished to raise.

102. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting,

103. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

104. WHAT REALLY GOES ON IN THE COUNCIL - KEY PRIORITIES

Councillor Stonebridge gave a brief presentation on the work of overview and scrutiny and the role of the Committee before handing over to Lydia who called upon the Leader to say a few words and the speakers in turn to give their presentations.

A. Councillor Stone referred to a personal visit recently to Duisberg, Germany and an invitation given to their Youth Cabinet to visit Rotherham early in the new year. The creation of such relationships with Youth Cabinets could lead to a possible future European youth parliament.

B. Karl Battersby, Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services (EDS) gave an overview presentation regarding the Council's key priorities and the town centre renaissance.

The presentation covered:

- Council Priorities
 - Learning
 - Achieving
 - Alive
 - Safe
 - Proud

- Town Centre Renaissance :
 - Guest and Chrimes Site
 - local design influence
 - new civic space
 - Westgate Demonstrator
 - All Saints Square/TV Screen
 - Westgate Demonstrator Public Realm
 - Townscape Heritage Initiative
 - Moorgate Crofts
 - Flood Alleviation Scheme
 - St. Ann's Leisure Centre
 - Public Realm Strategy
 - Railway Station proposals
 - Renaissance contribution to Children and Young People's Services

Handouts were also provided covering the EDS contribution to Children and Young People's Services.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- youth input to the monthly meeting of the Planning Group
- numbers of school buildings
- PFI schemes and rationale
- public awareness of town centre renaissance

C. Joyce Thacker, Senior Director, Children and Young People's Services gave a presentation regarding the involvement of children and young people in the work of the Children and Young People's Services Directorate.

The presentation covered:-

- increased involvement in consultation/evaluation exercises in schools
- involvement of children and young people with the Healthy Schools Team in a recent application for Beacon status
- all 14-19 events being strongly inclusive of children and young people
- trialling of the new 14-19 Prospectus with children and young people, including those with learning difficulties to ensure it was user friendly and information could be accessed easily
- the Fire and Rescue Service working with 'Elite Cruisers', a young driver group, in a bid to reduce road traffic crime
- Rotherham Fire Station part of a joint initiative providing a Homework Club specialising in working with children and young people from the BME community
- input into various plans and inspections
- The Children's Rights Team having regular contact and involvement in the numerous activities organised for looked after children

A handout was also made available covering Rotherham's learning priorities.

D. Sandra Gabriel, Investors in Education Co-ordinator gave a presentation regarding the "Achieving" theme.

The presentation covered:-

- Rotherham Council as an employer
- key activities including : U-xplore
Make £5 Blossom – enterprise scheme
- Valuing young people's views
- The future

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:

- extent of the Make £5 Blossom enterprise scheme
- number of apprenticeships
- shadowing of Council jobs

E. Mark Ford, Safer Neighbourhoods Manager, gave a presentation on the Rotherham Safe theme "Respect".

The presentation covered :

- Imagine . . . (Safer, cleaner, greener neighbourhoods)
- Strategic Alignments – National and Local
- Reducing Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour/Increasing Confidence and Reassurance
- the changing 'Respect' agenda
- Delivering a Safer Neighbourhood
- "Respect" in Rotherham :
 - six key themes
 - 16 key commitments
 - 40+ key actions

includes:-

- Range of activities with young people
- Interventions – end to end approach
- Influence from young people
- Rotherham "Respect"

Particular reference was made to the £35,000 allocation for immediate spend from the Safer Rotherham Partnership's RESPECT Group to the Youth Cabinet.

F. Steve Turnbull, Head of Public Health, gave a presentation regarding the 'Alive' theme.

The presentation covered :-

- Alive: Health and Well-being : Physical, Mental and Social Health
- Approaches to Health : What is wrong with you? Why are you unhealthy? What is stopping you from being healthy?
- Key facts about health in Rotherham
- What we are doing

- Priorities

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted and the officers be thanked for their presentations.

(2) That the potential links between the Youth Cabinets of Duisberg and Rotherham be welcomed.

(3) That the offer to the Youth Cabinet from Mr. John Healey, M.P. to be called to account be welcomed.

(4) That the £35,000 funding allocation to the Youth Cabinet be welcomed.

(5) That the Youth Cabinet be requested to consider the invitation to be represented on the Planning Group and notify Karl Battersby of any nominations.

(6) That the potential for shadowing jobs in the Council be investigated.

105. ANTI BULLYING STRATEGY

Tom Kelly, Director of Inclusion, Voice and Influence and Catherine Ratcliffe (Chief Education Welfare Officer and Chair of the Anti-Bullying Steering Group) presented the submitted report updating progress on the Anti-Bullying Strategy and the implementation of the review recommendations over the past six months.

Also submitted were young person and older person versions of the anti-bullying progress report, together with the Rotherham Anti-Bullying Standard which was sent to all schools earlier in the week.

Specific reference was made to:

- 'Blue Friday' as part of anti-bullying week
- the questionnaire which had now been made available on the Intranet
- a Rotherham web site for bullying concerns
- the 'listening box' (displayed at the meeting) where bullying issues could be related in confidence
- the Sentinel system for reporting bullying in schools

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- impact of derogatory comments made by judges on reality TV shows

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- need for different ways to communicate concerns regarding bullying that were comfortable for young people e.g. texting facility
- concerns regarding the siting of the 'listening box' in schools and need to ensure discretion
- need for feedback from the original Youth Cabinet group regarding changes, outcomes and impact of review recommendations

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

(2) That further work was required and the following issues needed to be addressed:

(a) a culture of respect needed to be nurtured

(b) more channels were required to communicate bullying issues

(c) appropriate siting of the 'listening box' in schools

(3) That this meeting feels that invitations should be issued to reconvene the anti-bullying review group to assess the outcomes from the review and conduct the "so what" test.

106. PLASTIC BAG FREE ROTHERHAM

Dale Otter, Recycling and Sustainable Waste Services Officer, presented the submitted briefing note relating to the above and what could be done to achieve a "plastic bag free Rotherham", including what steps could be taken to introduce such, drawing on the success of other towns.

The report covered the background, current situation, way forward, financial considerations and an account of the position in Modbury, Devon where shopkeepers were claiming a European first by being entirely free of plastic bags.

Dale summarised the proposed way forward indicating that rather than attempting to stop the use of plastic bags it may be better to encourage the following reduce and re-use options :-

- Write to national and local shops for their support in removing the option of 'free' carrier bags.
- Introduce a Charter for shops to promise to reduce the use of plastic carrier bags, encouraging re-use of existing bags and looking at alternatives to plastic.
- Encourage shoppers to make a pledge including; saying "no" to a bag if they don't need one.

- Set up a display in the Town Hall giving information and showing a range of alternative bags to plastic.
- Produce information packs and posters that shops can display in their windows.

Dale displayed alternative bag samples to the single use free plastic bags.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- incentives for businesses to use alternatives to the single use free plastic bag
- Belgium example whereby major supermarkets warned customers that the supply of plastic bags was to cease and the initiative was working well
- availability and cost of bio degradable bags
- recycling provision for plastic bottles and kerbside collection proposals
- attitude of major supermarkets to removing the use of plastic bags
- awareness campaign to inform people who does what in terms of assisting recycling initiatives
- promotional plans for the introduction of plastic recycling initiatives such as kerbside collections
- promotion of co-ordinated approach for all supermarkets/businesses to hold a free bag for life day
- Government initiatives to reduce packaging generally amongst retailers
- rewards for using non plastic bags
- double bagging issues and implications
- promotion of polymer numbers to inform customers regarding recyclable plastic
- high cost of organic foods

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

(2) That this Committee considers that the following issues should be addressed/pursued:

- (a) need to promote the bag for life initiative
- (b) need for a general reward system from retailers for not using plastic bags resulting eventually in a voucher of choice for customers to spend
- (c) need to pursue contributions from retailers/manufacturers towards recycling initiatives
- (d) need for the publication of a 'recycle' message from the Youth Cabinet in Rotherham Matters
- (e) when plastic bags are used, need to promote their re-use
- (f) alternatives to double bagging of refuse to wrap food and other waste
- (g) need to provide facilities for the recycling of plastic/plastic bottles
- (h) need to promote the use/awareness of polymer numbers to assist with recycling
- (i) need to promote a free bag for life day in Rotherham

107. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

108. VOTE OF THANKS

In closing the meeting, Councillor Stonebridge thanked Lydia and the other Youth Cabinet members for their participation and considered and useful contributions to the discussions.

NEW ARRIVALS WORKING PARTY
Wednesday, 21st November, 2007

Present:- Councillor Sharman (in the Chair); Councillors Hussain, Kirk, Rushforth and S. Wright.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ellis.

8. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2007

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th September, 2007, were noted.

In accordance with Minute No. 1, Fred Butlin (Service Manager, North Locality) gave a verbal report on the situation with regard to unaccompanied asylum seeker children. Currently the Service was working with 8 unaccompanied children most of which had discretionary leave to remain.

Discussion took place on the funding available from the Home Office to support the children and the services provided by the local authority.

Agreed:- That Fred Butlin, Andrew Crowley and Tom Kelly prepare a joint financial report on the services provided for submission to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young Peoples' Services.

9. CASE RESOLUTION PROGRAMME

Andrew Crowley, Asylum Project Team Leader, gave a verbal update on the above Programme.

Since the last report in September, 2007, no further progress had been made by the Home Office and looked likely that the Programme would be extended beyond March, 2008.

Andrew explained the difficulties being experienced by his Team in tackling this issue.

Agreed:- That Andrew prepare a briefing note for the meeting with MPs.

10. NEW ARRIVALS FROM EASTERN EUROPE - IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES' SERVICES

Tom Kelly, Director of Inclusion, Voice and Influence, presented a report on the impact on the Children and Young Peoples' Services by the new arrivals from Eastern Europe.

Over the past 3 years there had been an increasing number of families from Eastern European countries settling in Rotherham due to economic migration. Appendix 1 showed the national background of children from

all newly arrived families in Rotherham whilst Appendix 2 showed their distribution amongst schools.

Agreed:- (1) That the item be included on the agenda for the next meeting to enable further discussion to take place.

(2) That the report be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young Peoples' Services.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on 30th January, 2008, at 9.30 a.m.