

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.

Date: Thursday, 17 January 2008

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. Analysis of the Community Leadership Fund 2006-7 and Review of Members Flexibility to Carry Forward Under-Spend (report herewith) (Pages 1 - 9)

For Monitoring:-

7. Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (report herewith) (Pages 10 - 15)
8. Borough Council Elections - 1st May, 2008 (report herewith) (Pages 16 - 19)

Minutes - For Information:-

9. Minutes of a meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 13th December, 2007 (herewith). (Pages 20 - 25)
10. Minutes of a meeting of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 7th December, 2007 (herewith). (Pages 26 - 33)
11. Minutes of a meeting of the Members' Consultation Advisory Group held on 6th December, 2007 (herewith). (Pages 34 - 38)

Exempt Items:-

12. Exclusion of the Press and Public.
The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended (information relates to financial or business affairs).
13. Chief Executive Revenue Budget Proposals 2008/09 (report attached) (Pages 39 - 41)

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 21 February 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)
Ray Noble (Community Representative)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO SCRUTINY

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	17TH January 2008
3.	Title:	Analysis of the Community Leadership Fund 2006-7 and Review of Members Flexibility to Carry Forward Under-Spend.
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report provides a summary of spending activity around the Elected Members Community Leadership Fund for the financial year 2006-7.

The report also examines the first 12 months of the Members Flexibility to Carry Forward any Under-Spend from one financial year to the next.

6. Recommendations

- **That the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel note the performance of the Community Leadership Fund for 2006-7.**
- **That Members ability to carry forward under-spend from one financial year to the next be extended for a further year and consideration given to imposing a maximum carry forward of one years Fund allocation.**
- **That a Members Seminar be held to give consideration to the implications of the Community Leadership Fund arising from The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

The Local Government White Paper, 'Strong and Prosperous Communities', emphasises the importance of ward councillors as local political and community leaders. The White Paper encourages local authorities to adopt a range of powers and responsibilities to empower ward councillors including new opportunities to act on local issues and be more effective advocates. Through the Community Leadership Fund Rotherham has already put some of these tools in place to strengthen the role of the ward councillor.

During December 2006 a report was presented to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement containing recommendations from the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel regarding the following changes to the Community Leadership Fund:-

- That the fund remains as flexible as possible by allowing Individual Members to carry forward any underspend from one financial year to the next.
- That the Community Leadership Fund budget be increased to £1000 for each Member for the 2007/8 financial year.

Following this on the 10th January 2007 Cabinet agreed that approval be given to individual Members carrying forward any unspent Community Leadership Fund allocation from the financial year 2006/7 into 2007/8. Cabinet further recommended that the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel be responsible for monitoring the scheme following one year of operation and a report submitted to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement.

In addition to this an increase in the Community Leadership Fund allocation to £1000 per Member was agreed as part of the budget setting process during March 2007.

All Members received a statement in April 2007 illustrating the amount they had carried over and their current balance to spend. This was supplemented by a six month statement sent out during September 2007 indicating the latest spending activity for each member and outlining any remaining balance half way through the financial year.

7.2 Analysis of Expenditure 2006/7

During the financial year 2006-7 Members committed £20,163.50 representing 64% of the of the total budget allocation of £31,500. Members chose to carry forward £11,336.50 representing 36% of the budget.

In terms of overall expenditure of the Fund there has been a significant drop this year from 84% during 2004-5, 98.99% during 2005-6 period to 64% for the 2006-7 period. Although clearly the increased flexibility of the 'carry over' has had a significant effect on the total amount of the fund allocated to projects during 2006-7.

There remains some concern that if Members continue to carry over their full allocation from one financial year to the next without consideration of a limit, some Members may accrue significant amounts that could be used to relieve budget pressures and priorities in other areas.

Members carrying forward funding

At the turn of the financial year 2007/8:-

22 members did not carry forward any funding.

18 members carried forward between £1 and £250

23 members carried forward between £250 and £500 of which 11 members carried forward their full allocation of £500 from the 2006/7 Fund.

A survey of the 11 Members carrying over their full allocations indicated that they had:-

- Identified projects that were in the early stages of development that would require funding at a later date

or

- Had set aside funding to deal with any pressing or urgent issues that may arise within their Ward.

Spend by Community Strategy Theme

An analysis of spend by Community Strategy theme shows that for the first time the Alive theme has achieved the most support. This indicates an increase in funding for projects around children and young people, sports and social activities and the environment, parks and open spaces.

In contrast to previous years there has been an increase in the number of projects supporting the Safe and Learning themes although no projects contributed towards the Achieving theme of social enterprise, developing business and transport accessibility.

Full Project listing for 2006-7

The spreadsheet attached to this document (appendix 1) details all the projects supported by the Community Leadership Fund during 2006-7.

7.3 Current position with Expenditure 2007/8

The total spent for the current financial year 2007-8 as at the 8th January 2008 stands at £26,355.15 representing 35.4% of the total budget allocation available to Members.

This compares with 44.4% of the budget spent at this time during December 2006 (however at this stage Members had not been offered the option to carry over and the budget take up is traditionally high during the last two months of the final year.

7.4 The Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities”

The Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” advocates the further devolution of budgets to a local level, with particular reference to Councillor Call for Action.

The White Paper states:

“2.28 Often councillors will be able to solve communities’ problems themselves. Many authorities are developing new ways to support them in doing this. For example several authorities provide their councillors with a small budget to spend on projects in their local communities. This has proved effective as councillors, using their close links to their communities, can identify issues early and take action before they become major problems. As part of developing the CCfA (Councillor Call for Action) we will expect local authorities to consider what powers or budgets it would be appropriate to devolve to their councillor to help them in solving minor problems”

Local authorities such as Oldham delegate £3,000 per year for individual ward members with a further £3,000 per Ward to promote joint working. Preference is given to projects that

- Bring in other resources e.g. match funding
- Contribute to one or more of the Council priority areas
- Meet priorities in the Area Action plans (similar to Rotherham’s Area Plans)

It has been suggested by the Member Development Panel that these proposals are examined in the light of the implementation of the White Paper through The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (LGPIH Act) and consideration given to the future role of the Community Leadership Fund. It has been proposed that a Members focus group be held in early 2008 to examine the issues.

8. Finance

The increased allocation of £63,000 per annum for the Community Leadership Fund has been secured until the end of the financial year 2009/10. No additional administrative costs have been incurred as a result of the increase in the Fund.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 clearly advocates a continued move towards greater devolution of budgets, the empowerment of local communities and the central role of the local Councillor in this process. It is important that the role of the Community Leadership Fund is considered in light of such developments to ensure that it continues to have a positive impact on the quality of life of Rotherham’s communities.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Community Leadership Fund makes direct links with the Governments agenda for Local Government as detailed in the White paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities”. The paper outlines a vision which includes:-

- Giving local people and local communities more influence and power to improve their lives.
- Local government playing a much stronger role in supporting active citizens and neighbourhoods.
- Extending Ward Members community leadership role at the centre of neighbourhood arrangements.
- Real decision making at a Neighbourhood level by the devolution of small budgets and powers to ward councillors to solve minor problems at a local level

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Ward Councillors and Community Leadership: A Future Perspective JRF December 2007

The Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” October 2006

Minutes of the Member Development Panel 27th September 2007

Contact Names: Paul Griffiths, Community Leadership Manager – Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, Ext 2667

paul.griffiths@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - Projects supported by CLF 2006/7

Ward No.	Councillor	Date Rec	Date Sent	Where Spent	what it was spent on	Amount Spent	Carry forward
Ward 1 Anston & Woodsetts	R Stonebridge	10/07/06	18/07/06	Woodland Drive Family Learning Centre	Sustaining the work of the centre	500.00	0
	I G L St John	14/03/07	27/03/07	Greenlands TARA	Start up costs	500.00	0
	J A Burton	10/07/06	18/07/06	Woodland Drive Family Learning Centre	Sustaining the work of the centre	500.00	0
Ward 2 Castle	Mahroof Hussain	27/07/06	05/08/06	Clifton Community Partnership	Developing a newsletter	100.00	290
	P A Wooton	08/11/06	30/11/06	Canklow Black & Asian Women	Workshop event	110.00	
		30/10/06	03/11/06	Clifton Community Partnership	Additional Equipment	100.00	240
		22/11/06	30/11/06	Canklow Black & Asian Women	Workshop event	110.00	
	R A McNeeley	07/02/07	13/02/07	Radio Nightingale	Purchase CDs for broadcast	50.00	
		27/07/06	05/08/06	Clifton Community Partnership	Developing a newsletter	100.00	40
		22/11/06	30/11/06	Canklow Black & Asian Women	Workshop event	110.00	
07/02/07		13/02/07	Radio Nightingale	Purchase CDs for broadcast	50.00		
	02/03/07	Internal transfer	Children and Young Peoples Service	Visit to houses of parliament	200.00		
Ward 3 Brinsworth Catcliffe	A G Jackson	29/06/06	30/08/06	Brnsworth/Catcliffe Craft Group	Paper cutter, storage trolley	100.00	0.88
	R G Littleboy	10/08/06	30/08/06	Brinsworth Howarth Stay And Play Group	Catering Equipment	150.00	
		18/09/06	03/10/06	31st Rotherham Rainbows	Items for the brownie/guides pack	65.12	
		15/03/07	27/03/07	Residents Against Pollution	Start up costs	184.00	
		18/09/06	03/10/06	31st Rotherham Rainbows	Items for the brownie/guides pack	65.12	4.88
		09/11/06	transfer	St Georges Drive, Brinsworth	Dog bin	0* internal transfer	
	22/11/06	28/11/06	Catcliffe Primary School	Suport for the school council	90.00		
F Wright	23/08/06	30/08/06 BACS	Brinsworth Parish Council	ter bins and tools for the new attendan	500.00	0	
Ward 4 Dinnington	J P Wardle	14/07/06	24/07/06	West Garth Close TARA	computer Equipment	250.00	150
	J A Havenhand	30/10/07	05/02/07	Highnook Residents Association	Christmas Fayre	100.00	
		27/06/06	07/08/06	55+ exercise group	Qualified instructor and room hire	300.00	100
		11/07/06	25/07/06	Silverdales community group	Youth event	100.00	
D W Davies	25/09/06	16/10/06	Dinnington RUFC	Training floodlights	500.00	0	
Ward 5 Hellaby	R A J Turner						500
	B Cutts						500
	L Donaldson						500
Ward 6 Holderness	H L Jack						500
	J Austen	08/02/07	BACS	RMBC Streetpride	Bollards at Main St. Aughton	400.00	100
	G Smith	08/02/07	BACS	RMBC Streetpride	Bollards at Main St. Aughton	400.00	100
Ward 7	F Hodgkiss	16/11/06	28/11/06	Upper Haugh Cricket Club	Improving facilities	75.00	425
	J Hamilton	16/10/06	25/10/06	Cortonwood Comeback Centre	Material for minor repairs to centre	100.00	325
		16/11/06	28/11/06	Upper Haugh Cricket Club	Improving facilities	75.00	
	R S Russell	16/10/06	25/10/06	Cortonwood Comeback Centre	Material for minor repairs to centre	100.00	325
		16/11/06	28/11/06	Upper Haugh Cricket Club	Improving facilities	75.00	
Ward 8 Keppel	S Walker	26/06/06	05/07/06	Haynook OAPs and social club	Coach trip to Bridlington	100.00	0
		31/07/06	07/08/06	Thorpe Heslaey & Scholes Youth Forum	training sessions	£100.00	
		10/08/06	30/08/06	Forty Martyrs Hall Committee	New External Doors	£200.00	
		03/07/06	11/07/06	Forty Martyrs Bowling Club	Trip to Skegness	100.00	
		21/07/06	04/08/06	Wingfield Comprehensive School	lessons on road safety skills	200.00	0
		18/07/06	05/08/06	Jason Ainley Martial Arts	Equipment for Kick Boxing Lessons	242.00	
	B A Kaye	19/02/07	27/03/07	Black Hut Community Association	Landscaping	58.00	
		18/09/06	03/10/06	Thorpe Hesley & Schole OCP & Centre	Provide a new Boiler	300.00	100
	I C Barron	14/03/07	27/03/07	Forty Martyrs Hall Committee	provide Kitchen Equipment	100.00	

Ward 9 Maltby	G B Robinson B Slade Rushforth A						500 500 500
Ward 10	G Whelbourn	08/06/06	17/06/06	Rawmarsh Community School	Outward bound trip for pupil	250.00	25
		13/09/06	03/10/06	Dale Farm Retirement Group	Transport, meetings, refreshments	100.00	
		16/11/06	28/11/06	Upper Haugh Cricket Club	Improving facilities	75.00	
	N Hamilton	11/12/06	08/01/07	Arcon Place Communtiy Centre	mini bus, xmas meal	50.00	275
		13/09/06	03/10/06	Dale Farm Retirement Group	Transport, meetings, refreshments	100.00	
		16/11/06	28/11/06	Upper Haugh Cricket Club	Improving facilities	75.00	
	S Wright	11/12/06	08/01/07	Arcon Place Communtiy Centre	mini bus, xmas meal	50.00	-25
		13/09/06	03/10/06	Dale Farm Retirement Group	Transport, meetings, refreshments	100.00	
		16/11/06	28/11/06	Upper Haugh Cricket Club	Improving facilities	75.00	
		11/12/06	08/01/07	Arcon Place Communtiy Centre	mini bus, xmas meal	50.00	
		02/03/07	Internal transfer	Children and Young Peoples Service	Visit to houses of parliament	300.00	
Ward 11	G D Nightingale	18/09/06	03/10/06	Wetherby Drive/Pointer ave residents	Goal posts	78.33	0
		22/11/06	28/11/06	Treeton Miners Welfare Bowling club	Set of bowls for the juniors	40.00	
		20/10/06	25/10/06	Thurcroft Action Group Partnership	Boxing pilot project	66.66	
		20/10/06	25/10/06	2nd Rotherham Scout Group	Portable cooking stoves	33.34	
		24/10/06	30/10/06	Thurcroft Friday Circle	Help with costs for speakers	33.33	
		24/10/06	30/10/06	The Friday Club	Craft materials	33.33	
		05/02/07	via bacs	Aston Fence School	Contribution to a new stage	215.01	
		29/06/06	05/07/06	Treeton Methodist Resource Centre	Mobile loudspeakers	98.00	
		22/11/06	03/01/07	Treeton MW Social Group	Start up costs	77.00	
		22/11/06	28/11/06	Treeton Miners Welfare Bowling club	Set of bowls for the juniors	40.00	
		20/10/06	25/10/06	Thurcroft Action Group Partnership	Boxing pilot project	66.67	
	J F Swift	18/09/06	03/10/06	Wetherby Drive/Pointer ave residents	Goal posts	78.33	0
		20/10/06	25/10/06	2nd Rotherham Scout Group	Portable cooking stoves	33.33	
		24/10/06	30/10/06	Thurcroft Friday Circle	Help with costs for speakers	33.33	
		24/10/06	30/10/06	The Friday Club	Craft materials	33.34	
		05/02/07	via bacs	Aston Fence School	Contribution to a new stage	40.00	
		18/09/06	03/10/06	Wetherby Drive/Pointer ave residents	Goal posts	78.33	
		22/11/06	28/11/06	Treeton Miners Welfare Bowling club	Set of bowls for the juniors	40.00	
		20/10/06	25/10/06	Thurcroft Action Group Partnership	Boxing pilot project	66.67	
		20/10/06	25/10/06	2nd Rotherham Scout Group	Portable cooking stoves	33.33	
		24/10/06	30/10/06	Thurcroft Friday Circle	Help with costs for speakers	33.34	
		24/10/06	30/10/06	The Friday Club	Craft materials	33.33	
		18/12/06	03/01/07	Treeton MW Social Group	Start up costs	40.00	
05/02/07	via bacs	Aston Fence School	Contribution to a new stage	175.00			
Ward 12 East	M R Kirk	10/08/06	30/08/06	Clifton Community Partnership	To Create a Newsletter	100.00	300
		21/08/06	12/09/06	Abu Bakar Education Centre	Consultation event	100.00	
	B Dodson	10/08/06	30/08/06	Clifton Community Partnership	To Create a Newsletter	100.00	300
		21/08/06	12/09/06	Abu Bakar Education Centre	Consultation event	100.00	
	S Ali	10/08/06	30/08/06	Clifton Community Partnership	To Create a Newsletter	100.00	300
		21/08/06	12/09/06	Abu Bakar Education Centre	Consultation event	100.00	

Ward 13 Rotherham n (by election 26.10.06)	P J Lee	22/08/06	30/08/06	Blackburn Community Partnership	Support for the drop in centre	200.00	100
		14/03/07	27/03/07	Culture Shock Youth Club	Painting & Decorating	250.00	
	A Senior*	09/10/06	25/10/06	Station Road Community Group	Silver Liners excursion	200.00	100
		04/12/06	03/01/07	Cope Group (Winterhill School)	equipment for a coffee morning	100.00	
		16/03/07	27/03/07	Caine Gardens Group	Social Activites for Elderly	100.00	
	J Akhtar	04/09/06	12/09/06	Richmond Park TARA	Community events	200.00	0
		20/12/06	08/01/07	Henley Community Group	Start up costs	150	
		14/03/07	27/03/07	West Central Womens Forum	Start up costs	100	
		14/03/07	27/03/07	Culture Shock Youth Club	Painting & Decorating	50	
	Ward 14	G A Russell	13/09/06	03/10/06	Dale Farm Retirement Group	Transport, meetings, refreshments	100.00
28/11/06			08/12/2006/	March Flatts Community Centre	Blinds and painting materials	83.33	
12/12/06			03/01/07	Hooton Roberts Parish Meeting	Xmas tree, lights & decorations	66.66	
11/12/06			00/01/00	Arcon Place Communtiy Centre	mini bus, xmas meal	50.00	
19/12/06			03/01/07	Kilnhirst Action Group	social evening	25.00	
22/01/07			05/02/07	Ravenfield Events Group	Hire of the hall for event	60.00	
R Stone		07/02/07	13/02/07	35th Rothertham Brownies	Flag and outing	65.00	
		02/03/07	Internal transfer	Children and Young Peoples Service	Visit to houses of parliament	300.00	
		13/09/06	03/10/06	Dale Farm Retirement Group	Transport, meetings, refreshments	100.00	100
		12/12/06	03/01/07	Hooton Roberts Parish Meeting	Xmas tree, lights & decorations	66.67	
		28/11/06	08/12/06	March Flatts Community Centre	Blinds and painting materials	83.33	
		19/12/06	03/01/07	Kilnhirst Action Group	social evening	25.00	
P A Russell		22/01/07	05/02/07	Ravenfield Events Group	Hire of the hall for event	60.00	
		07/02/07	13/02/07	35th Rothertham Brownies	Flag and outing	65.00	
		13/09/06	03/10/06	Dale Farm Retirement Group	Transport, meetings, refreshments	100.00	95
		12/12/06	03/01/07	Hooton Roberts Parish Meeting	Xmas tree, lights & decorations	66.67	
		28/11/06	08/12/2006/	March Flatts Community Centre	Blinds and painting materials	83.33	
		19/12/06	03/01/07	Kilnhirst Action Group	social evening	25.00	
Ward 15 Sitwell	J M Clarke	15/06/06	19/06/06	Whiston Area Community Partnership	Equipment for the partnership	250.00	0
		04/07/06	24/07/06	11th Rotherham Brownie Pack	Safety vests	200.00	
		26/10/06	13/11/06	Friends of Ulley Park	To promote new membership	50.00	
	J Gilding A M Mannion	26/10/06	13/11/06	Friends of Ulley Park	To promote new membership	155.59	344.41
		10/08/06	30/08/06	Whiston Area Community Partnership	To promote Cinema Club	100.00	1.32
		26/10/06	13/11/06	Friends of Ulley Park	To promote new membership	155.58	
	07/11/06	7/11/06 via BAC	Whiston pre school	Equipment for the outdoor area	243.10		
Ward 16 Swinton	K Wyatt						500
	J Doyle						500
	N License						500
Ward 17 Valley	P F Burke P M Lakin	28/11/06	08/12/06	Friends of Valley Park	Refreshments at the carol concert	150.00	350
		21/08/06	16/10/06	Highgreave Place	Blinds for the community centre	90.00	160
	D Pickering	13/12/06	03/01/07	Valley FC	Hire of sports hall	100.00	
		05/12/06	03/01/07	Dalton Youth Centre	Arts & Crafts materials	50.00	
		28/11/06	08/12/06	Friends of Valley Park	Picnic table	50.00	
		19/02/07	18/03/07	Swinburne Place Community Association	Coach trips for pensioners	50.00	160
		21/08/06	22/11/06	Highgreave Place	Blinds for the community centre	90.00	
		13/12/06	03/01/07	Valley FC	Hire of sports hall	100.00	
		05/12/06	03/01/07	Dalton Youth Centre	Arts & Crafts materials	50.00	
		19/02/07	18/03/07	Swinburne Place Community Association	Coach trips for pensioners	100.00	

Ward 18 Wales	K S Barton	16/10/06	25/10/06	Peregrin Way Centre Fund	Decorating materials	250.00	250
	D K Hall	14/02/07	12/03/07	Wales Parish TARA	Start up costs	250.00	0
	J Whysall	28/02/07	12/03/07	All Hallows Church Council	Resources for the youth group	250.00	
		15/06/06	19/06/06	38th Rotherham Guides	Trips & Uniform	150.00	0
		25/09/06	16/10/06	38th Rotherham Brownies	Books, uniforms and visit	200.00	
	14/02/07	12/03/07	Wales Parish TARA	Start up costs	150.00		
Ward 19	A Gosling	07/11/06	21/11/06	Wath Community Allotment	Toilet facilities	146.67	0
		07/11/06	11/12/06	Acorn to Oaks	Venue hire to stage a show	114.75	
		14/03/07	27/03/07	Wath St James Junior FC	Equipment	238.58	
	A Sangster	07/11/06	21/11/06	Wath Community Allotment	Toilet facilities	146.67	0
		07/11/06	11/12/06	Acorn to Oaks	Venue hire to stage a show	114.75	
		14/03/07	27/03/07	Wath St James Junior FC	Equipment	238.58	0
	A Atkin	07/11/06	21/11/06	Wath Community Allotment	Toilet facilities	146.66	0
		07/11/06	11/12/06	Acorn to Oaks	Venue hire to stage a show	114.75	
		27/03/07	27/03/07	Wath St James Junior FC	Equipment	238.59	
Ward 20 Wickersley	S Ellis	12/05/06	30/08/06	BIPHA Roller Hockey trip to Detroit		50.00	450
	P Thirlwall	12/05/06	30/08/06	BIPHA Roller Hockey trip to Detroit		50.00	450
	B Billington						500
Ward 21	L M S Johnston	04/12/06	03/01/07	Munsbrough Junior FC	Football Kits	500.00	0
	TR Sharman						500
	K Gouly	24/11/06	08/01/07	GMRW Community Partnership	Sustaining the work of the centre	500.00	0

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	17th January, 2008
3.	Title:	Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places
4.	Programme Area:	Chief Executive

5. Summary

Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 made changes to Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 requiring a review of polling districts and polling places. The report outlines comments received during the consultation and changes to polling arrangements since the start of the review.

6. Recommendations

That the changes outlined in the report be noted.

7. Proposals and Details

The present polling arrangements have been publicised through the Council's web pages, libraries and council offices. In addition political parties recently active in local elections, councillors, parish councils and members of parliament have been consulted direct. Meetings have been held with the council's Access Officer and with the Access Audit Group.

One written response was received. This was on behalf of Hellaby Community Project regarding Centenary Hall, Hellaby. This building has been put up for sale by Bramley Parish Council and I am informed that it will not be available as a venue for polling in future.

A requirement of the review is that we must seek representations from such persons as we think have a particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability. In terms of looking at accessibility of every polling station venue it is more useful to inspect premises when elections are taking place. To this end I have discussed this with the Council's Access Officer and with the Audit Access Group and will be considering arrangements whereby Group members can be officially allowed into polling stations when elections are being held. This will allow them to assess not only the general accessibility and suitability of the room layout but will also give them an opportunity to talk with the polling staff on duty. I am looking to have this in place for the next scheduled elections in May 2008.

Premises used for polling venues are now included in BV 156 'Buildings Accessible to People with a Disability'.

The present arrangements are generally likely to change as a consequence of existing premises not being available and new premises becoming available. There have been a number of these since the review began but not as a consequence of the review and the changes proposed are as follows:

Revised Proposals

Wickersley Ward

Existing Polling Station: Wickersley Village Hall off Warren Road
New Polling Station: Blessed Trintiy Church Hall, Northfield Lane

Comment: Wickersley Village Hall is to be replaced with a new community facility that will be sited in the adjoining ward of Hellaby. Blessed Trinity Church Hall has the necessary facilities, ample car parking space and is accessible. No amendments to the polling district boundaries are required. The proposal has the support of the ward members.

Anston and Woodsetts Ward

Existing Polling Station: Woodsetts Primary School, Wellfield Crescent
New Polling Station: Woodsetts Village Hall, Gildingwells Road

Comment: Woodsetts Primary School has been used for several years following the closure of the old infants' school. Woodsetts Village Hall is a new building situated on the site of the old infants school and is centrally placed. It meets the standards of accessibility now demanded, affords better facilities for polling than the school and has ample car parking space. No amendments to the polling district boundaries are required. The proposal has the support of the ward members.

Wales Ward

Existing Polling Station: Todwick Church Hall, Lindley's Croft
New Polling Station: Todwick Village Hall, Kiveton Lane

Comment: Todwick Village Hall has been used as the polling venue for many years and has recently been extended and refurbished. Todwick Church Hall became the polling venue whilst building work was undertaken at the Village Hall. The Village Hall is centrally located, has ample car parking space and meets standards of accessibility now demanded. No amendments to the polling district boundaries are required. The proposal has the support of the ward members.

Rotherham East Ward

Existing Polling Station: Eastwood Methodist Mission, St. Ann's Road
New Polling Station: Eastwood Village Community Centre, Erskine Road

Comment: Eastwood Methodist Mission has been used as a polling venue for many years but complaints have been made regarding its accessibility. For many years Eastwood Methodist Mission was the only venue available to us in this polling district. Eastwood Village Community Centre has ample car parking facilities, is conveniently located and meets the standards of accessibility now demanded. No amendments to the polling district boundaries are required. The proposal has the support of the ward members.

Wingfield Ward

Existing Polling Station: Rockingham Professional Development Centre,
Roughwood Road

Comment: General access to this polling station is by a set of double doors that normally serve as an emergency exit. Access for disabled persons is across the courtyard through the main entrance and then along the connecting corridors. This presents a security risk to the rest of the premises during the early part of the day and in the evening when the Development Centre is not in use. To overcome this issue we will be acquiring a portable ramp to install at the general point of access to the polling station.

New Proposal

In addition we have specifically looked at the Kimberworth area following comments received prior to the review and changes have hinged on the availability of the new Kimberworth Primary School. The availability of the new premises has provided the opportunity to revise the polling districts in that area. The changes proposed are as follows:

Rotherham West Ward

Existing Polling Stations: Caine Gardens Centre, Caine Gardens and Kelford School, Oakdale Road

New Additional Polling Station: Children's Centre, Kimberworth Community Primary School, Kimberworth Road

We have created a new polling district to be called 'Bradgate' (MI) and have revised the polling districts of Kimberworth (MB) and Kelford (MC). In doing so we can alleviate the pressure on the polling station located at Caine Gardens Centre and provide more convenient polling arrangements for electors. The new polling station will be housed in the Children's Centre attached to the school. It has adequate car parking facilities and meets the standards of accessibility now demanded.

Political parties and ward members have been consulted and no objections have been received.

A map showing the proposed boundaries is attached as appendix 1.

These changes will be incorporated into the revised electoral register required to be published on 1 December 2007 and will be used for elections thereafter.

8. Finance

The changes proposed will present no significant difference to costs.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Inadequate provision of polling places and polling stations could have a detrimental affect on voter turnout and inadequate provision could be the source of an election challenge. Lack of provision could be seen as a deliberate attempt to influence voting. The use of unsuitable premises will have implications for health and safety and accessibility.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

To meet expected goals there has to be sufficient polling places to help encourage more electors to participate in the democratic process.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Electoral Administration Act 2006

The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections)
Regulations 2006

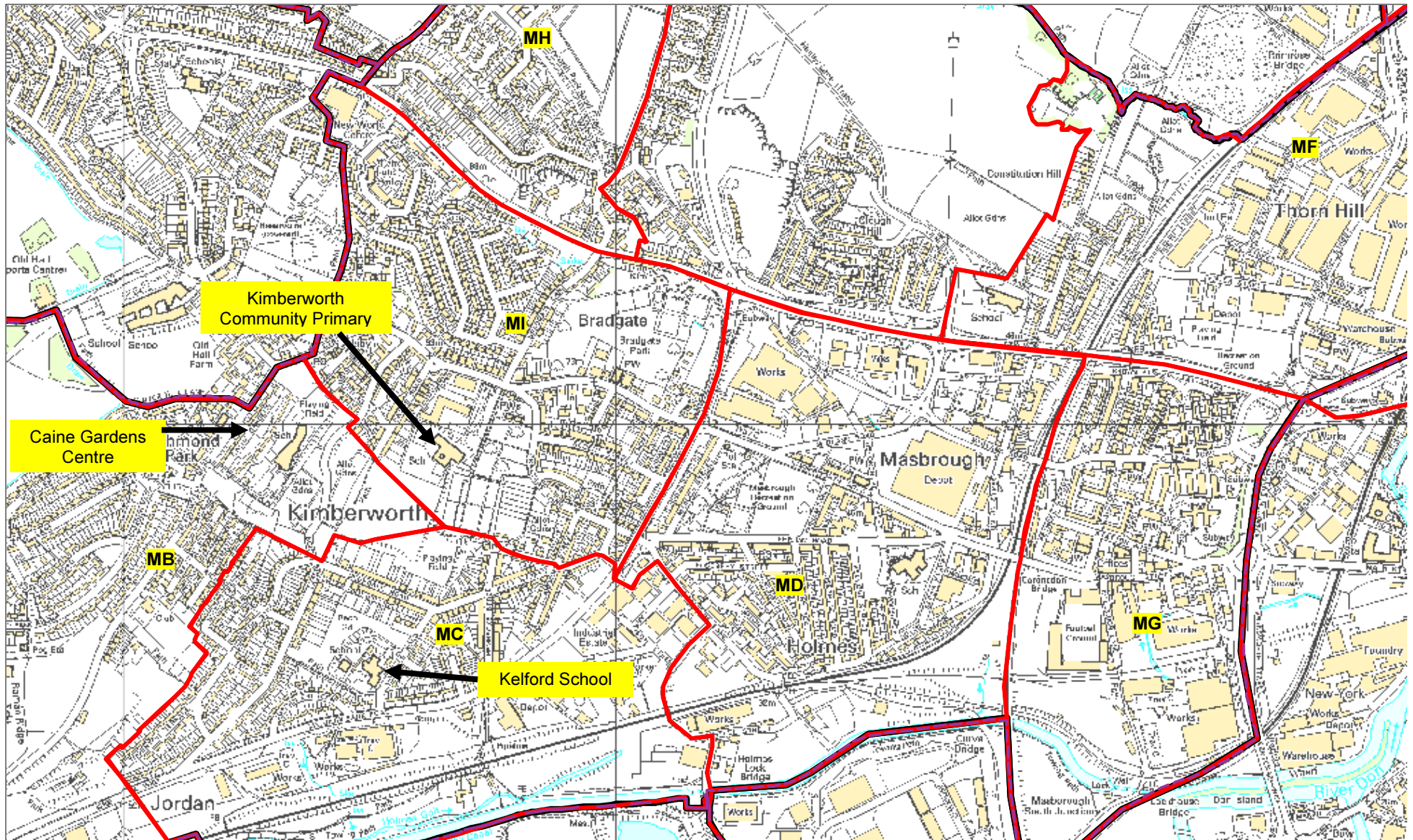
Contact Name :

John Walker, Chief Elections and Electoral Registration Officer

Telephone extension: 3521

E-mail address: john.walker@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - Rotherham West Ward



ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	17th January, 2008
3.	Title:	Borough Council Elections 1st May 2008
4.	Programme Area:	Chief Executive

5. Summary

A report on procedures for the Borough Council elections to be held on 1st May 2008.

6. Recommendation;

That the report be noted.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 The scheduled elections for the Borough Council will take place on 1st May 2008. The key dates for the election are as follows;

27 th March	Publication of the Notice of Election
4 th April	Noon is the latest time for the delivery of nominations
9 th April	Noon is the latest time a candidate can withdraw
16 th April	5 p.m. is the latest time for applications to vote by post and for changes to indefinite period absent votes
16 th April	Last day to be included in the register of electors for the election
23 rd April	5 p.m. is latest time for applications to vote by proxy
24 th April	Last day for appointing polling and counting agents
1 st May	Polling day from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
2 nd May	Counting of votes commencing at 10 a.m.

7.2 Nomination packs are likely to be ready in the second week of March. As usual they will contain the necessary forms and guidance for candidates.

7.3 Candidates will be able to submit nominations from 28th March. Arrangements will be the same as at previous elections and will give candidates the opportunity of arranging an appointment.

7.3.1 From 2007 returning officers have the power to correct minor errors on nomination papers. There is however no definition of what constitutes a minor error and the Returning Officer has to use his discretion.

7.3.2 Candidates have the facility to request that their common name be used on the ballot paper. The returning officer has to use his judgement to decide if these can be allowed. If for instance the common name obscene or offensive or if its use was likely to mislead or confuse electors the returning officer could refuse to allow it.

7.3.3 Among the regular difficulties is the use of political party descriptions. It is essential that candidates sort this out with their political party early. The description used on the nomination paper must match exactly that on the certificate provided by their party. All a candidate's required details including any description must be entered on the nomination paper before it is signed by supporters.

7.4 Since 2007 polling cards have to be sent to all electors both those voting in person at the polling station and those voting by post. These will be despatched after the deadline for the withdrawal of candidates.

7.5.1 Postal ballot papers cannot be despatched before 17th April but will be despatched as early as possible after that date. The issue of postal ballot packs is a major element in every election and will be outsourced to enable the process to be automated. The volume of material is such that it is necessary for the majority of printing to be undertaken before 16th April. This

will result in some manual intervention where changes are made up to the 5 p.m. deadline on 16th April. The whole process is quite complex from data preparation, through the print process and on to despatch and is an area that requires more time than present election timetables allow. The Electoral Commission appointed Ron Gould, an elections expert from Canada, to conduct an independent review into the 2007 Scottish elections. In his report he has highlighted this lack of time as a serious issue.

7.6 The processing of returned postal ballot packs is also a major task. This was made much more complex in 2007 with the hasty introduction of computer systems to verify signatures and dates of birth. The law currently requires a sample of 20% to be checked. A number of improvements have been made to the systems since 2007 and we are proposing to verify 100% but this will be dependent on the systems working as required. Similarly Ron Gould's report also recommended that significant changes in law, as were introduced in January 2007, should not be introduced within six months of an election.

7.6.1 As a consequence of the requirement to verify signatures and dates of birth we will again be using the Civic Building's ground floor training room for processing returned postal ballots. Whilst the room is limited in terms of space it is nevertheless the only room that otherwise meets our needs. This room has previously been used as a polling station. However, this year we are not proposing to transfer any postal ballot operations to the count venue and we will therefore be setting up the polling station in the Central Library.

7.6.2 At the present time we have 46,000 electors registered to vote by post. This represents 24% of the electorate. With the national average at 12% we are faced with a greater challenge than is the case for many other returning officers.

7.7 The requirements for processing postal ballots are now such that we cannot guarantee that the processing will be concluded in a reasonable time after the polls close. It is therefore necessary for the counting of votes to take place on the Friday. The counting of votes itself should be relatively straightforward unlike 2007 when we had the added complication of parish council elections. The arrangements for the count will be similar to last year. The independent report into the Scottish 2007 elections recommended Friday counts as more suitable.

7.8 As ever there is a considerable burden placed on the Electoral Services Team to deliver a successful election. Our role is one of acting on behalf of the Returning Officer who holds a statutory post independent of the Council. We nevertheless enjoy good support from the Council. The legislative changes brought in 2007 introduced additional facilities for absent voters and for corrections to be made to registers. The Electoral Services Office itself will be staffed at least to the close of the poll to deal with these additional facilities. A small number of staff will be brought in to assist experienced officers.

7.8.1 Staffing arrangements for main elections in May commence in January as they have to be completed in the early part of the election timetable. In

addition to staffing polling stations, postal ballot processing and counting we will build on our practice of appointing polling station inspectors and again intend having interpreters available in certain areas throughout polling day.

- 7.8.2 After the count is concluded there is still a significant and no less important task to complete. All paperwork, sealed packets and equipment from polling stations and the count has to be sorted and stored. Marked registers for example will have to be available for inspection. Candidates will also be required to submit returns and declarations as to election expenses.

8. Finance

Additional budgetary provision is not envisaged.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- 9.1.1 As with all elections there are risks and uncertainties. Key to successful elections is securing the services of a reliable print supplier and support from the Council.

- 9.1.2 Procedural plans are prepared for each election but much depends on the experience and knowledge of key staff in being able to manage difficult occurrences in what are very tight timetables. Current legislation is very fragmented and this adds to the complexity and understanding of processes. Important decisions often have to be taken without the luxury of time. It is important that the key staff have the level of understanding to be able to give the correct advice to stakeholders.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Poorly conducted elections do a disservice to the democratic process and undermine confidence in it. A properly conducted election will meet the aspirations and expectations of those involved and will satisfy the Council's policy and performance agenda.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Representation of the People Act 1983

The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006

The independent report into the 2007 Scottish elections prepared by Ron Gould and commissioned by the Electoral Commission

Contact Name: *John Walker, Chief Elections and Electoral Registration Officer, telephone extension: 3521 and e-mail address: john.walker@rotherham.gov.uk*

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL
Thursday, 13th December, 2007

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dodson, Johnston, Sangster and Councillor A. Buckley.

Also in attendance:- Debbie Heath (V.A.R. Representative)

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

44. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

45. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF AREA ASSEMBLIES

Councillor Whelbourn introduced the report which set out the findings and recommendations of the review group.

Councillor McNeeley attended the meeting for consideration of this item, as Chair and representative of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel (Councillors Falvey, Havenhand and Lakin had submitted their apologies).

The Review Group - Councillors Whelbourn, Austen, Lakin, McNeeley and Pickering, 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 co-ordinating 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 had received royal assent as the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act. There were many community empowerment commitments and the White Paper promoted community and neighbourhood engagement. It argued that involving citizens and communities in local decision-making led to better service provision and stronger, more confident communities.

The findings of the review were that progress had been made, but there were some specific areas that needed addressing. Overall, it did not seem clear that there was a consistent, shared vision on what role Area

Assemblies were meant to play and how co-ordinating groups fit into the Council's decision making structure. The terms of reference for co-ordinating groups and Area Assemblies were not in the Council constitution and there was not wide knowledge of their existence. There was 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 included a review of the terms of reference for Area Assemblies and co-ordinating groups to establish a shared understanding of their purpose. There also needed to be a clear referral route for complex or recurring issues from Area Assemblies into the Council structure. In terms of the co-ordinating 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 was endorsed they should occur incrementally.

The Scrutiny Panel's discussion included the following issues:-

- obtaining good practice about Area Assemblies from other local authorities and sharing that good practice with all seven Area Assemblies;
- devolved budgets for Area Assemblies;
- ensuring that the public were able to participate in the Area Assembly process and meetings – and that change could be seen to be happening;
- ensuring that the issues identified by Area Assemblies were properly considered by the Council's Executive and that the Area Assemblies would have the opportunity of influencing that process;
- support for Area Assemblies from all Strategic Directors and their Service Areas;
- the Council Call for Action;
- Area Assemblies being able to influence service delivery;

Resolved:- (1) That the recommendations from the Area Assembly Review Group be supported.

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

2007 (C. 28) – DUTY TO INVOLVE LOCAL PEOPLE AND ACTION PLAN FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Consideration was given to a report submitted by the Principal Policy Officer and the Principal Community Involvement Officer concerning the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (c. 28) which received Royal Assent on 30th October 2007. The provision in the Act, to involve local people, 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 and 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. A summary of these actions was included in the report submitted.

The Scrutiny Panel noted that the Government has recently published a consultation paper on the new “Best Value” guidance, which will be the subject of a further report to Elected Members.

Members also received a briefing paper about the new duty for local authorities to involve the public, which was included within the Act and which would come into force on 1st April 2009.

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

(2) That further reports be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel about:-

(a) the detailed guidance consultation and specific proposals in relation to these for implementation in Rotherham; and

(b) the operation of and timescales for the workstreams relating to the twenty-three actions; the report shall indicate the level of priority being afforded to each of the actions and whether any organisations or persons external to the Council shall be involved in the workstreams.

(3) That this Scrutiny Panel recommends that the ‘Our Future’ Groups be requested to consider the implications of the twenty-three actions streams.

47. LEGAL LPI REFRESH

Consideration was given to a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Executive, Legal Services, concerning the Legal Services performance indicator suite which was under revision with a view to being rationalised. The revised suite of Local Performance Indicators (LPIs) was appended to the report submitted, with all LPIs having current status green.

The report stated that there were no national performance indicators for Legal Services. During the past two years, Legal Services had developed

a suite of LPs against which to monitor its own performance. This information had been subject to challenge at performance clinics and was also reported to Elected Members on a quarterly basis. Rationalisation of the suite of LPs was based on the need to provide more meaningful and relevant performance information to management, Elected Members and Client Directorates and to establish a number of indicators to be compared against other Local Authorities.

Discussion took place on the need to review and revise the LPs continually, to ensure that challenging targets are established.

Resolved:- That the Scrutiny Panel notes the rationalised list of Legal Services Local Performance Indicators (LPs) and the performance of these LPs.

48. QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The HR Manager, Strategic Human Resources, presented the submitted Quarter 2 report on the performance of Corporate Health Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) (Corporate Health Indicators) 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 2 performance in respect of national and local targets.

Overall there were eight measurements against six national BVPIs 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 BVPIs.

Of the eight measurements, five were categorised as green stars, one as amber circle and two as red triangles (categorisation in accordance with PerformancePlus). The categorisation is based on comparison between quarter 2 actual figures and the end of year target.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued covering the eight nationally-set Best Value Performance Indicators together with the eight local performance indicators measured and reported on by Strategic Human Resources.

Particular attention was given to the range of successful interventions in sickness absence and the number of M3 Managers attending management development centres.

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

49. STRONG AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES - THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER OCTOBER 2006 - MAKING ASSETS WORK, THE QUIRK REVIEW FINDINGS AND AREA ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS

Consideration was given to a report submitted by the Asset Manager, Environment and Development Services which provided 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 Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Comprehensive Area Assessment requirements and the Development of Area Asset Management Plans.

Reference was made to the earlier consideration of these matters by the Regeneration and Asset Board, at its meetings held on 11th July 2007 (Minute No. 16) and on 23rd October 2007 (Minute No. 47).

Included with the report were documents about:-

- i) the Council's agreed way forward with the development of one integrated comprehensive strategy and implementation programme;
- ii) the community and area asset management plans quality criteria and production methodologies (including property asset review);
- iii) proposals for updating the Council's land and buildings records and actions for dealing with requests for transfer of assets.

The Scrutiny Panel debated the following issues:-

- community and area asset management plans and the proposed pilot scheme to take place in Maltby;
- the need for clear timescales for the pilot scheme – although the difficulties of establishing a firm timescale were acknowledged;
- involvement of Ward Councillors in dealing with requests for the transfer of assets (reference to Minute No. 17 of the meeting of this Scrutiny Panel held on 19th July 2007 and Minute No. 44 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement held on 12th November 2007);
- the capacity of the voluntary and community centre to manage and operate land and property assets
- the process was currently being managed within existing budgets;
- the need for close liaison between the Environment and Development Services and the Neighbourhoods Directorates.

Resolved:- (1) That the Council's agreed way forward, as detailed in the report and in the three appendices, be noted.

(2) That this Scrutiny Panel affirms its earlier view, as expressed at Minute No. 17 of the meeting of this Scrutiny Panel held on 19th July 2007, that Ward Councillors shall be included at the beginning of the process for dealing with requests for the transfer of assets.

(3) That this Scrutiny Panel shall monitor the progress of the community and area asset management planning pilot scheme which is to take place in Maltby; the Asset Manager, Environment and Development Services shall submit a progress report on the pilot scheme to this Scrutiny Panel in six months' time, or earlier if there are significant developments to report.

50. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 18TH OCTOBER, 2007

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 18th October 2007 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

51. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER, 19TH OCTOBER, 9TH AND 23RD NOVEMBER, 2007

The Scrutiny Panel noted the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 28th September 2007, 19th October 2007, 9th November 2007 and 23rd November 2007.

52. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NEW ARRIVALS WORKING PARTY HELD ON 21ST NOVEMBER, 2007

The Scrutiny Panel noted the minutes of the meeting of the New Arrivals Working Party held on 21st November 2007.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
7th December, 2007

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Akhtar, Boyes and P. A. Russell.

109. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

110. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

111. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY REVIEW

Mark Gannon, Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Manager, presented briefly the submitted report highlighting the major factors influencing the corporate procurement strategy review, together with the proposed timetable.

The significant factors included :-

- Local Government Sustainable Procurement Action Plan
- Regional Procurement Strategy (from the Regional Centre of Excellence)
- Our Future Group 2 "Strategic Partnership and Procurement Strategy" outcomes
- Our Future Group 6 "RBT Contract – Review/Change Strategy" outcomes
- Structural and organisational changes within the Council
- CSR07 enhanced requirement for efficiencies (3% cashable savings)

The proposed timetable for reviewing the strategy was set out.

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

- membership of the review group and its reporting lines
- elected member involvement
- need to ensure all stakeholders were consulted
- concerns regarding duplication of work bearing in mind the Our Future

work

- potential negative impact on the CPA use of resources block
- procurement savings and, bearing in mind the proposed timetable, how they could be factored into services as part of the budget

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted and the proposed review timetable, as now submitted, be approved as far as this Committee is concerned.

(2) That, as far as this Committee is concerned :

(a) elected member involvement should be ensured

(b) it was essential to know who the stakeholders were and that they were consulted

(c) an up to date strategy was essential

(d) sleek reporting arrangements were essential

(e) the timetable needed to be brought forward in future to facilitate the factoring in of procurement savings to the budget process,

112. QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2007/08

Julie Slatter, Head of Policy and Performance, with the aid of powerpoint, presented the submitted report emphasising that :-

- 64% of the Corporate plan indicators had hit their target with 55% of performance indicators showing improvement or maintaining their best score in the Audit Commission's Direction of Travel pack which included a wide range of indicators.
- The Culture block score in CPA should now achieve an improved score of a three out of four.
- Data Quality Audits had again been conducted by KPMG and following the audits we were going to amend 2 indicators through the Audit Commission's Electronic Data Collection (EDC). These would be published in the addendum along with additional changes noted by RMBC officers to incorporate FRS17 adjustments.
- Two of the LAA stretch targets were underperforming to the extent that they were currently rated as a red risk for their achievement of their targets and for obtaining performance reward grant. Both targets had been subject to performance clinics this quarter.
- Three performance clinics had been held this quarter and action plans had been developed to look at ways to improve performance.

- The Flood in June had impacted on a number of the performance measures across the Authority and could have further impact on CPA block scores next year.

Following the Comprehensive spending review, a new set of 198 Indicators had been set out to replace the existing Best Value indicators with effect from April, 2008.

The presentation covered:-

- Corporate Key Performance Indicators
- Corporate Key Performance Indicators – Issues
- Corporate Themes – Issues
- Exceptional Improvement
- CPA Block Scores
- Performance Clinics
- Data Quality Audits
- LAA Stretch Targets
- Flood impact
- Indicators with Issues

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

- NEETs performance and performance relative to other local authorities
- definitions of the PerformancePlus categories
- BV212 – Average time to re-let
- older people helped to live at home
- BV11b Black/Ethnic in top 5%
- LAA Stretch Targets and criteria for allocation of pump priming monies
- provision of monies for inter-agency performance e.g. no shared understanding of small areas and no database regarding monies to high priority localities

- progress towards telling the “Rotherham” story by Christmas
- need for the “Rotherham” story to inform negotiations with, for example, Government Office
- allocation/reallocation of pump priming monies not spent
- comparison of independent care sector with Council care provision
- exit strategies regarding exhaustion of pump priming monies
- position regarding caring by family and friends could inform better use of monies
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to inform considerations
- need to identify those in receipt of benefits but not receiving support from the Council
- concerns that knowing what needs to be done is not transferred into implementation
- concerns regarding need for support for children acting as carers
- report format
- budget pressures/Council priorities

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted including the overall position and direction of travel in relation to performance as well as the actions being taken to address “red” measures and issues.

(2) That action be taken with regard to the following views of the Committee :

(a) acknowledgement that progress was slowing down but essential to understand the meaning of top quartile

(b) translating the understanding in (a) above and answering the ‘so what’ question

(c) need to strive for understandable improvements in service not just efficiencies

(d) need to tell the ‘Rotherham’ story in a manner that the public understand and can be shared

(e) the common usage and understanding of performance methodology was essential

(f) need to understand the absolute achievement and its relativity to other authorities

(g) need to re-visit the use of pump priming monies and ensure it was not just a trailer for mainstream funding

(h) concerns regarding:

- NEETS
- ALMO
- Independent Living
- Children as carers

(i) need to consider alternatives to just performance clinics, perhaps on an inter-agency basis e.g. the use of time limited task groups properly resourced

(j) need to improve services and retain service dignity ensuring the use of all resources available and not just from within the Council

(k) need to be smarter about the use of data

(l) need for elected member involvement in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment work to provide constructive challenge

(m) need for discussions in relation to strategic commissioning framework at partnership level

(3) That particular performance issues be considered, as appropriate, at respective scrutiny panels and service directors and respective Cabinet Members be also requested to attend.

113. THE 11 MILLION TAKE - OVER DAY

The Chairman referred to the success of the last meeting and the excellent contributions from the members of the Youth Cabinet and chairmanship by Lydia Catterall.

The Committee highlighted issues discussed at the last meeting and considered ways in which those issues could be progressed.

Resolved:- (1) That the members of the Youth Cabinet be thanked formally for their attendance and excellent contributions to, and handling of, the meeting.

(2) That Mr. John Healey, M.P. be thanked for his attendance and contribution to the meeting.

(3) That the minutes from the meeting be forwarded to :-

(a) the Youth Cabinet

(b) Mr. John Healey, M.P.

(c) Rotherham Chamber

(d) Recycling Group

(e) Cabinet seeking endorsement of the Committee's views.

(4) That consideration be given to a joint Authority approach to the bulk purchase of biodegradable bin liners.

(5) That progress on the issues raised be reviewed at a meeting in March, 2008.

(6) That the Youth Cabinet be invited to the review meeting in March, 2008.

(7) That arrangements be made to schedule a joint meeting with the Youth Cabinet on an annual basis at which members of the Cabinet could also be invited.

114. MINUTES

(A) 9th November, 2007

Resolved:- (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th November, 2007 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

(2) That, with regard to Item 100 (Post Incident Report – June 2007 Floods), it was agreed that:-

(a) the Environment Agency report and the report commissioned by Hull Council regarding the role of Yorkshire Water be submitted to the next meeting for consideration;

(b) consideration be given to arrangements for a future well publicised scrutiny meeting at which the public and representatives of the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water would be invited to attend;

(c) the minute be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

(B) 23rd November, 2007

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November, 2007 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

115. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows :-

(a) Councillor Whelbourn reported that the Area Assemblies review was complete and the report was being submitted to the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel and this Committee on 13th and 19th December, 2007 respectively.

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

- Young Carers' Strategy
- Transition Arrangements for Young People in to Adult Services
- Annual Health Check
- Children and Young People's Services – Performance Indicator Second Quarter Report 2007/08
- Children and Young People's Services : Forward Plan of Key Decisions

(c) Councillor Doyle reported that the last meeting of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had considered:

- Forward Plan of Key Decisions
- LINks work and implications for the Authority

(d) Councillor Jack referred to the Domestic Violence Awareness Day and the tombola making £66

(e) Councillor McNeely reported that the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel was to consider the following in December:

- Garage Sites (to which all Members were invited)
- 2010 summary of Voids and their Responsive Repairs and Maintenance Plan

The January meeting was to focus on the Budget and the Allocations Policy.

Councillor McNeely also reported :-

- she was to spend a full day with the Voids Team on 22nd January, 2008
- on her attendance at a national conference on 29th November re Extending Low Cost Home Ownership Support

(f) Councillor Stonebridge reported:

- the review on the use of consultants was nearing conclusion
- the review of advice services was reaching the interview stage

- the corporate complaints review group was meeting frequently
- the Council Call for Action group work was nearing conclusion
- lack of progress in respect of the South Yorkshire Tourism Forum (SYTF)

Agreed:- That the members/scrutiny teams of the other local authorities be contacted with a view to progressing the SYTF issue.

(g) Councillor Austen reported concerns regarding requests to close certain footpaths in residential areas.

Agreed:- That scrutiny liaise with area partnership managers/Ron Booth/Karl Battersby to ascertain the current policy framework and extent of the problem

116. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

MEMBERS CONSULTATION ADVISORY GROUP
Thursday, 6th December, 2007

Present:- Councillor Hussain (in the Chair); Councillors Swift and Turner.

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

20. REACHOUT 17

Waheed Akhtar, Principal Officer (Community Engagement and Cohesion), reported that 3,500 Reachout 17 questionnaires would be posted out in December, 2007.

The survey would cover housing in Rotherham, internet usage in Rotherham, future (Hospital) wards and health and obesity, the latter 2 questions being from the PCT. The final report would be available for dissemination in March, 2008, once all comments and quality checking was completed. 7 Area Assembly reports would be produced and would be sent to each Area Assembly Partnership Manager for their attention and dissemination. In addition an Area Assembly report would be produced and presented at the Area Assembly Chairs meeting.

The annual plan of consultation and community involvement would be produced for April, 2008, outlining the key developments and implementation undertaken from the results of Reachout over the last year. It was hoped that each Area Assembly would be able to feed into the report to identify how they had used the results based on the development of the Area Assembly report for Reachout and also the dissemination to Area Partnership Managers.

Discussion ensued on the issue of Parish Councils. The information related to Area Assemblies which did not always coincide with Parish Council boundaries. Additionally, the size of the population sample used did not lend itself to being broken down into parish boundaries.

The Head of Policy and Performance reported that exploratory work was currently being undertaken on the Local Government Association's Customer Insight Protocol which would enable you drill down further into the information collated from research with particular reference as to how to use it to understand service delivery at a local level, its impact and customer satisfaction. It would entail the collection of additional information behind the survey work and use post code information to break it down. If the Protocol was used, it would enable a much more segmented approach to the data collected. There was certain information that was more useful broken down into Parish Councils and some for Area Assembly purposes.

It was noted that some of the survey work being undertaken may be

duplicated by Parish Councils working towards the Parish Council Charter.

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

(2) That a meeting be held with the Parish Councils Working Group to discuss the possible overlap of work.

21. LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (LINK) FOR ROTHERHAM

Julie Slatter, Head of Policy and Performance, gave a powerpoint presentation on Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) as follows:-

Background

- New framework for Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPI)
- Stronger national voice
- Stronger user involvement in regulation
- One LINK will replace all PPI Forums in Rotherham
- PPIs will cease to exist after March, 2008
- Local authorities are to procure a host organisation to support 1 LINK per local authority area
- Department of Health to produce further guidance for LINKs and host organisations

What will LINKs do?

LINKs will have a role in:

- Promoting and supporting the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local health and social care services
- Obtaining the views of people about their need for, and experiences of, local health and social care services
- Enabling people to monitor and review the commissioning and provision of care services
- Raising the concerns of local people with those responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising services

Who can be part of a LINK?

- Anyone can be part of LINK
- Must be diverse and representative of the local population
- Will need clear structures and strong leaders
- LINK members can be user led organisations, local VCS organisations and individual people
- LINKs will decide themselves how members will be chosen

What powers will LINKs have?

- LINKs will have specific powers to enable them to influence the improvement of local services:-
 - o Make reports and recommendations and get a reply within a specified time

- Go into some types of services to see what they do
- Ask for information and get a response
- Tell an Overview and Scrutiny Committee what they have found and get a response

How will the LINK be set up?

- The Council will get a grant from the Department of Health
- The money will be used to pay a host organisation
- The host will be responsible for setting up the LINK and giving practical support
- Host will be accountable to the LINK
- The LINK will be independent from the Council with its own governance structure and decision making processes

The role of the Host

- The job of the host will be to:-
 - Help the LINK to set up
 - Work with local people and groups to set up how the LINK will work locally and how it will decide what to do.
 - Hold the money for the LINK and be responsible for keeping records of how money is spent

What LINKs offer

- A conduit for intelligence vital to health and social care organisations to ensure they:-
 - Commission and provide services that are responsive and accountable to local people
 - Make decisions and set priorities based on evidence based input
 - Understand services better from user perspective and make improvements
- ‘Consultation’ mechanism
- Interface with whole local community – including ‘easy to ignore’ groups etc.
- Vehicle for independent research

Timeline

- Early December, 2007 – advertise contract for host let through European tendering processes
- March, 2008 – award contract for host
- April-June, 2008 – host to set up LINK
- June/July LINK up and running

What you can do

- RMBC has established a Getting Ready for LINKs Working Group – now need to identify who else needs to get involved
- Proactively raise awareness of LINKs in your organisations, network and health communities
- Help people understand the benefits and their responsibilities

- Consultation event planned for January/February, 2008 – Themes – what do you want from a host? What will doing LINKs well in Rotherham look like?
- Supporting us in sharing your skills and experience of PPI
- Ensure we do not duplicate existing networks
- Help us to plan the LINK

Discussion ensued on the type of company/organisation that would express interest in becoming a host. There had been interest from charitable organisations and large national voluntary sector organisations.

Agreed:- That the presentation be noted.

22. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007

Asim Munir, Principal Community Involvement Officer, reported on the above Act which provided a duty to involve local people, the detail of which would be set out in “Best Value” guidance.

The Act built upon the objectives set out in the Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” as well as provisions for the future of securing public engagement in matters of health and social care through a Local Involvement Network.

The new duty to involve sought to ensure people had greater opportunities to have their say. The aspiration was to embed a culture of engagement and empowerment which meant that authorities consider, as a matter of course, the possible information provision, consultation and involvement opportunities they needed to provide people across all authority functions.

Aligned to the Government’s broader public participation agenda, the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Association had produced a joint report “An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success”. This provided 23 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 was set out in the report submitted.

Rotherham had produced a detailed set of workstreams for the implementation of the White Paper proposals and associated documents. The scoping of work against each of the workstreams in a co-ordinated approach would ensure that the Council was fully on track with all detailed developments and enable the Council to develop its own proposals, maximising the robust policy intelligence, advice and support available.

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

(2) That further reports be submitted on the detailed guidance

consultation and specific proposals in relation to these for implementation in Rotherham.

23. LIFESTYLE SURVEY 2007

Clare Bailey, Policy, Planning and Partnerships Manager, Children and Young Peoples' Services, submitted a report on the annual Lifestyle Survey conducted with children and young people within secondary and primary schools in Rotherham. The survey was conducted online.

The survey undertaken in 2006 had enabled the Service to determine baselines for the priorities identified within the Children and Young Peoples' Plan; the results from 2007 would enable the impact of any actions taken from the 2006 survey to be monitored.

The survey conducted within secondary schools was completed over the summer term with 12 schools out of 16 taking part, the findings of which would be published in December, 2007.

The survey for primary schools was taking place for the first time in 2007 between 5th November and 21st December, 2007. All Rotherham primary schools had been given the opportunity to take part in the pilot aimed at Year 5 pupils. The results would be available in early 2008.

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

(2) That the analysis of the surveys be submitted to the next meeting of this Group.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That the meeting arranged for 6th March, 2008, be deferred for an alternative date.

(2) That the minutes of this meeting be submitted to each Scrutiny Panel.

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

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