

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.

Date: Thursday, 15 January 2009

Time: 3.30 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. Communications
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Questions from members of the public and the press

For Decision:-

6. Chief Executive Revenue Budget Proposals 2009/10 (Pages 1 - 4)
7. Community Assets and Community Asset Management Update (Presentation by Carole Smith and Paul Walsh)

For Monitoring:-

8. Interim Review Community Cohesion Services in Rotherham (report herewith) (Pages 5 - 9)
9. Eastwood & Springwell Gardens Community Participatory Budget Pilot (report herewith) (Pages 10 - 18)
10. Eastwood and Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Governance Pilot Project (report herewith) (Pages 19 - 24)

Minutes - For Information:-

11. Minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 4th December, 2008 (herewith). (Pages 25 - 30)
12. Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement held on 15th December, 2008 (herewith) (Pages 31 - 34)
13. Minutes of a meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel held on 18th December, 2008 (herewith) (Pages 35 - 40)

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 26 February 2009**

Membership:-

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

Co-opted Members

Debbie Heath (Voluntary Action Rotherham)
Taiba Yasseen (REMA)
Councillor A. Buckley (Parish Council Representative)
Councillor E. Shaw (Parish Council Representative)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	15th January, 2009
3.	Title:	Chief Executive Revenue Budget Proposals 2009/10 All Wards Affected
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive

5. Summary

This report sets out the current position in relation to proposals for the budget setting process for 2009/10 and the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. A number of efficiency policy options have now been identified which highlight potential areas for efficiencies. These are to be considered by senior officers and elected members as part of agreeing the revenue budget for 2009/10 and updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6. Recommendations

Receive the latest report and note the current potential efficiencies for Chief Executive proposed for setting the 2009/10 revenue budget and updating of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 OUTTURN POSITION

The current net revenue cash limited budget for Chief Executive for 2008/09 is £9m. The summary below shows the projected revenue outturn position for Chief Executives (as at the end of November 2008).

Forecast 2008/09			
Head of Account	Annual Budget £,000	Projected Outturn £,000	Variance Over(+) / Under(-) £,000
Chief Executive	5,347	5,347	0
Human Resources	1,185	1,185	0
Legal and Democratic Services	2,426	2,426	0
TOTAL	8,958	8,958	0

Budget pressures for 2008/09 are:-

- Job Evaluation – this is currently being reviewed and will be incorporated into future budget monitoring reports, if appropriate.
- Legal Services
 - Cost of Locums £25k
 - Northgate System upgrade £16k

The service is aiming to manage these pressures through tight vacancy management and savings on non staff budgets.
- Rotherham Newspaper – four editions of ‘Rotherham News’ have now been produced and distributed. The monthly running costs are £25k. It is anticipated that the costs of this will be met through existing budgets and changes to the recruitment advertising model. The feasibility of this will continue to be closely monitored.
- Transport fleet – the drivers currently undertake non contractual, unbudgeted overtime. Working schedules are under review that should enable this budget to breakeven at year end.

7.2 SAVINGS

The CMT report (6th October 2008) on the Budget Process identified a target saving requirement for Chief Executive of £163k.

The total policy option proposed savings are £422k and there are no policy option investments proposed. This consists of £140k recurrent savings and £282k one off savings for 2009/10 only. Appendix 1 shows the detailed policy option savings proposed for the Directorate for a 3 year period.

8. Finance

The Chief Executive saving proposals identified are in respect of a one off reduction in the election budget £250k, a service restructure of £125k and other reductions of £47k in general Supplies and Services budgets.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The proposed efficiencies are to be considered together with proposals from other Directorates as part of the budget setting process.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget within the pre-determined limits is vital to achieving the Council's Policy agenda. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The revenue budget process involves consultation with senior managers and budget holders within Chief Executive, Senior Officers and Members within the Council.

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matt.gladstone@rotherham.gov.uk.

DIRECTORATE BUDGET PROPOSALS

DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Department	Proposed Action	Impact	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
			(- = efficiency, + = investment)		
EFFICIENCY PROPOSALS					
Chief Executive	Reduce Directorate Training & Development budget	No direct impact anticipated on service plan delivery. This represents a 19% reduction. (One year only)	-9	9	
Chief Executive	Reduce Quality of Life Survey budget	This is a bi-annual report (due 2010/11) that records perception levels. The report feeds into Indicator NI 1-7	-15	15	
Chief Executive	Additional income from management fees	Additional income from management Fees via Communities for Health/lifecheck. This will have no impact on service plan delivery.	-3	3	
Chief Executive	Reduction in pension actuarial costs	Actuarial pension costs are payable for 3 years only (to staff who retire early), this charge has already been set by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority for 2009/10. The charge has resulted in a £5k reduction that will have no impact on service delivery.	-5		
Chief Executive	Dis-establish PO16	This is the Executive Officer's post in the Assistant Chief Execs Team, it is currently vacant and the workload will be absorbed by the rest of the team.	-58		
Chief Executive	Reduction in supplies and services budget Scrutiny	This saving reduction of 4% is to be allocated across all supplies & services with no anticipated impact on the service delivery plan.	-5		
Legal Services	Reduction in elections budget	"Free year" in terms of budget and will have no direct impact on service.	-250	250	0
Legal Services	Restructure the Property Team	Due to a change in the workload it is proposed to dis-establish a P09 Solicitor post in the property team, create a Trainee Legal Officer and re-grade two Legal Executives posts. The increase in 2010/11 will fund the 2nd year training fees of the trainee.	-38	5	0
Committee Services	Dis-establish vacant 0.5 support post	No direct impact anticipated on service.	-18	0	0
Human Resources	Dis-establish vacant clerical post (Band D)	Revised structure will be able to cover the current workloads.	-11	0	0
Human Resources	Reduce Trade Union Secondment Budget	Keep the budget in line with current charges and should have no immediate impact on service. This is approximately a 3% reduction.	-4	0	0
Human Resources	Reduction in Special Projects Budget	No direct impact anticipated on service. Further sources of funding to be investigated. This is a 10% reduction in the budget.	-4	0	0
Human Resources	No inflation increase to Management Development budget	Hold current budget at £100,000, no direct impact anticipated on service delivery.	-2	0	0
TOTAL			-422	282	0

Rotherham Borough Council – Report to Members
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1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	15th January, 2009
3.	Report Title:	Interim Review Community Cohesion Services in Rotherham
4.	Lead Organisation:	Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

5. Summary

This review is concerned with the position of the service after 6 months of the employment of the Community Cohesion Officer. Also included in this review is a report on performance and progress for quarter three (October – December 2008)

6. Recommendations

That The Scrutiny Panel – Legal and Democratic

- **Notes this review and progress made since the introduction of the revised service**
- **Notes the need to support the future funding of the Community Cohesion service beyond March 31st 2009**

7. Proposals and details

The Community Cohesion Officer has been in post almost 6 months and is responsible for leading on Rotherham's Community Cohesion Service and introducing a new process to monitor and action community tension and Hate crime. Prior to their engagement numerous organisations from both the public, private and voluntary sector were responding to Hate crime on various levels either in terms of recording and actioning incidents or delivering community cohesion activities and /or events. Only the police were monitoring community tension in an organised way. The role of the community cohesion officer has been to pull together these organisations and encourage them to work in partnership in order to pool their valuable skills and expertise in order to achieve one goal, that of ensuring Community Cohesion in Rotherham. A new partnership group exists (A.C.T.) whose purpose is, as their title suggests, to act on community tension.

The benefits of working in this way can include:-

- Increased reporting
- Improved communication
- Targeted resources
- Increased clarity
- Enhanced understanding
- Acting on policies
- Common approaches to service delivery
- effective resource pooling
- increased confidence
- increased awareness
- improved protection
- more efficient practice
- better professional awareness
- agency ownership
- up front identification of needs and services to identify needs
- victim centred
- improved coordination

A total of 17 Organisations are currently involved in the A.C.T group including all the main statutory organisations i.e. RMBC, South Yorkshire Police, Rotherham NHS and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue. In addition, key voluntary and community organisations such as REMA, VAR, LGBT Rotherham Ltd and Age Concern are also involved. A new addition is Stop Hate UK whom is being funded to provide a free telephone reporting and referral line with 24 hour capacity thus meeting recommendation 16 of the Steven Lawrence report.

The service is in its infancy, as organisations including the council review their policies and procedures in order to embrace the challenge of recording and actioning community tension including hate crime and are thus in a period of change. (The council's draft policy on Hate crime will be available for consultation in early January). Working relationships are being built as the profile of the work is shared and others become involved.

A new database has been developed to collate all Hate Crimes and Community Tension which is currently being trialled. The benefits of this include:-

- Early identification of hotspots
- Ability to highlight repeat victims and perpetrators
- Avoidance of duplication
- Ease of information sharing and communication contributing to analysis
- Generation of electronic statistical reports
- Minimal staff access improving confidentiality
- Recording of actions taken

The potential for increased reporting is evident as more organisations become involved. Work is underway to encourage more organisations and groups to become involved in supplying information for this database and increase this potential further. Those who are in prime positions to pick up on activity both in the public realm as well as within organisations are being engaged. Contacts with Area Assemblies, Elected Members, Youth Cabinet and externally South Yorkshire Passenger Transport executive are being made or are planned in order to recruit their involvement in the Community Tension Process. A simple form, along with guidelines for use, has been developed to summarise all types of Community Tension including incidents of Hate crime occurring within Rotherham for use by RMBC directorates and relevant partner organisations to enable speedy and simple recording (see appendix1). These are to be completed and forwarded on a weekly basis.

The main challenge for the Cohesion Service is appropriate, timely and regular promotion of its availability to the community of Rotherham in order to encourage and increase reporting. This will give the opportunity for more timely proactive interventions which will promote Community Cohesion. In addition to this, the need to inspire confidence in the new service is particularly evident as a result of the early analysis of research with staff involved in recording and actioning incidents and victims perceptions of the existing services.

Work is being developed to recruit victims on to independent advisory groups in order to assist in achieving this. This will ensure that the views of victims are sought and actions are taken in order to ensure the service is responsive to need and expectations are managed.

Directorates and the CIU are now beginning to share incidents relating to Hate and also community tensions on a monthly basis. This was increased to weekly on the 8th December whilst we are trialling the process and database. A meeting is to be organised for the new year for all those who provide the Community Cohesion Officer with information regarding tensions to discuss any issues with this. It is planned to produce the first Community Tension Monitoring Report in early February which will relate to the month of January.

KEY Activities for the future are:-

Activity	Due Date	Responsibility
Draft Hate Crime Policy available for consultation	12 th January	GW
First Community Tension Report presented to Community Tension Meeting	4 th February	GW and CIU
Process Trial Report Complete	27 th February	GW and Process Trial Group

Statistics for Racial incidents for October, November and December are as follows :-

October – Council Directorates = 14
SYP = 19
2010Ltd = Not received
Total=33

November – Council Directorates=17
SYP = 3
2010Ltd = not received
Stop Hate UK = 0
Total=20

December to 12th December
Council Directorates= 2
SYP = 6
2010Ltd = none received
Stop Hate UK = 0
Total= 8

Total Racial incidents to date 61

NB. Stop Hate UK Have received 2 **enquiries about their service** to their reporting line during November and up to 12th December 2008.

8. Finance

The Community Cohesion Officer and Administrative Officer are currently funded by the Safer, Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF) until March 31st 2009. A Further bid either to the SSCF or other sources will be made to fund the work for a further year to March 31st 2010 but in order to ensure security for this function consideration for mainstream funding should be made for future years.

Issues relating to funding were identified relating to training and marketing at the first meeting of the partnership group. However whilst it was hoped that training for staff could be met via existing organisational budgets for statutory organisations, this may not be the case for voluntary and community organisations. Therefore this will be included in the bid to SSCF in order to offer support to such organisations. Marketing and publicity costs could be met through the Communication and Customer Focus Group budget of Safer Rotherham Partnership. It is also envisaged that partner organisations will share resources. A contract will be issued to Stop Hate UK starting on 1st November 2008 – 31st March 2010 with a further years funding available subject to satisfactory completion of outcomes.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There are clear risks in terms of public well-being and community harmony in not having a well resourced and structured approach to community cohesion in Rotherham.

The development and continuation of the Community Cohesion Service offers greater opportunities for wider reporting, whilst still offering the facility for people to make reports

to an independent recording unit outside the Police and RMBC. Also offered is the potential for highlighting issues quite early therefore preventing community tension from escalating. This will therefore lead to a more cohesive Rotherham.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- There are implications for RMBC's Community Cohesion Strategy and Action Plan given the new service
- The new Community Cohesion Service has clear linkages to the Outcomes Framework for Adult and Social Care and importantly these include:
- Freedom from Discrimination or Harassment, by providing a well structured, well resourced service to people living in and visiting Rotherham.
- Improved Quality of Life, by supporting people to live a fulfilled life, free from harassment and to maximise their potential.
- The Safer Rotherham Partnership currently has targets in respect of racial and LGBT incident reporting.
- Accurate, timely returns are required locally and by GOY&H
- Community cohesion was not identified through the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment as a 'stand-alone' priority but is integral to high quality service delivery

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report of the Community Cohesion Task and Finish Group to Safer Rotherham Partnership Board 18 September 2007

Draft government 'Guidance for Local Authorities on Community Cohesion Planning and Tension Monitoring' – 25 September 2007

'Understanding and Monitoring Tension and Conflict in Local Communities' – A Practical Guide for Local Authorities, Police Service and Partner Agencies.

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1. Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2. Date:	15th January, 2009
3. Title:	Eastwood & Springwell Gardens Community Participatory Budget Pilot
4. Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

5. Summary

The Eastwood & Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP) Community Cohesion Sub Group delivered a Community Participatory Budget Pilot (Dragons Den) event on 18th October, 2008.

The Pilot was funded by the Safer Rotherham Partnership which had invited bids for projects supporting 1 or more of 7 priorities which included Community Cohesion and Resilience.

There were 12 applications to the Pilot (total value £28,543) 8 were successful (total value £17,387).

6. Recommendation

The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report. A fuller description of the background, process and outcome of the Pilot is given in the attached paper.

7. Background

In 2008/09, to ensure fair and transparent commissioning, the Safer Rotherham Partnership (and partners) invited bids for activities that met one or more of 7 priorities.

A bid for £20,000 was made on behalf of the NMP Community Cohesion Sub Group (supported by the NMP Team) for a Community Participatory Pilot for projects delivering Community Cohesion and Resilience activities (one of the 7 SRP priorities) in the NMP area.

The Community Cohesion Sub Group invited bids of £2,000 (£4,000 in exceptional circumstances) for community cohesion activities that met criteria established by the local communities of Eastwood & Springwell at the launch event for the Neighbourhood Governance Pilot being developed by the NMP and its partners.

There were 12 applications to the Pilot (total value £28,543) which were reviewed by the Community Cohesion Sub Group. 3 were found to be ineligible and another to duplicate work already funded by the NMP. The remaining 8 (total value £17,387) were invited to make 4 minute presentations to a public open Community Participatory Budget event on 18 October (now known, by popular usage, as the Eastwood & Springwell Dragons Den). The community would then have the chance to ask questions about the applications before scoring them on a scale of 1 to 5.

Whilst the total value of projects was now within the approved sum (£20,000) the Safer Rotherham Partnership had asked for a saving to be made so an element of competition remained.

The event was formally opened by Cllr Shaukat Ali. Presentations were made by Chinese, Indian and Pakistani led organisations active across the District, by Rotherham United and by community and voluntary groups, including a mixed cultural group of young people, from Eastwood & Springwell. Proposals included sports activities, celebrations and health and education.

56 people signed the attendance sheet and 28 registered to vote. People could vote if they:-

- had an Eastwood & Springwell address and post code
- were 14+; those under 21 were asked to bring proof of age
- were prepared to stay and hear all of the presentations and vote on all of the proposals.

The highest score for a project was 111 (possible 140) and the lowest 75 (possible 28). A final decision on funding was deferred pending negotiations with the Safer Rotherham Partnership which finally agreed to fund all 8.

Evaluation and Learning

The support of a recognised and supportive elected member was important to the success of the day

Immediate feedback from people at the event included:-

- “I thought it was a great idea, very different and it gave real power to the community”
- “the buzz was great”
- “it’s really good that grass roots organisations have had the opportunity to take part in this”
- “we need this across Rotherham”

There was Immediate added value arising from the networking that took place between diverse groups and individuals present - commitments were made to work together. The event itself made a clear contribution to community cohesion in Eastwood & Springwell and Rotherham.

The Community Cohesion Sub Group and the previously agreed criteria for community cohesion projects in the NMP established recognisable boundaries for both purpose and process

People were really serious about the event both those who presented their proposals and those who scored them.

The core funding would have supported a similar (more competitive) event for a wider area provided a suitable lead organisation could be identified to deliver it and an appropriate officer team to provide support.

8. Finance

The Safer Rotherham Partnership agreed to fund 8 projects (total cost of £17,387). The Partnership also issued individual funding agreement letters and will monitor expenditure outcomes.

The NMP defrayed some £800 in publicising and running the event (including entertainment and refreshments).

9. Policy Background

Community Empowerment Action Plan 2007

Communities in Control: Real Power: Real People. White Paper 2008

Participatory Budgeting: A National Strategy 2008

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Eastwood & Springwell Gardens Community Cohesion Sub Group
ComCohCash: A Community Participatory Budget Pilot
The Eastwood & Springwell Dragons Den 18 October 2008

On 18 October the Eastwood & Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP) Community Cohesion Sub Group, supported by the NMP Team and others, hosted the Eastwood & Springwell Dragons Den. The event was opened by Cllr Shaukat Ali.

At the Den 8 project sponsors were asked to present their proposals for activities promoting community cohesion and resilience. Local residents were then able to ask questions and to score the proposals on a scale of 1 to 5.

The 8 proposals had a total value of £17,387 and offered match funding of £11,227 (mostly volunteer time). The highest bid was for £3,301 and the lowest for £1,800 (full list attached).

Proposals were received from Chinese, Indian and Pakistani led organisations active across the District, from Rotherham United and from community and voluntary groups, including a mixed cultural group of young people, from Eastwood & Springwell. Proposals included sports activities, celebrations and health and education

Twentyeight residents registered to vote. The highest score for a project was 111 and the lowest 75. Fiftysix people (inclusive of the residents registered to vote) were present at the event.

Funding was provided by the Safer Rotherham Partnership who agreed that because all of the proposals had scored well all could be funded (see Background & Process below).

Feedback from the event included:-

- “I thought it was a great idea, very different and it gave real power to the community”
- “the buzz was great”
- “it’s really good that grass roots organisations have had the opportunity to take part in this”
- “we need this across Rotherham”

Immediate added value came from the networking that took place between groups and individuals. Commitments were made to work together. The event itself made a clear contribution to community cohesion in Eastwood & Springwell and Rotherham.

Background & Process

Early in 2008/09 the **Safer Rotherham Partnership** (SRP) invited proposals for activities meeting one (or more) of 7 priorities.

A proposal was submitted on behalf of the **Eastwood & Springwell Gardens** Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP) **Community Cohesion Sub Group** for £20,000 to run a Community Participatory Budget Pilot focusing on **Community Cohesion and Resilience**. The 5 priorities for the proposal to be those developed by the community at the launch of Eastwood & Springwell United (a Neighbourhood Governance Pilot for the NMP area) viz

1. Providing opportunities to learn about other cultures and faith
2. Buying equipment for local groups so they can run activities
3. Organising fun community events and activities
4. Providing opportunities to learn more about disability
5. Activities for children and young people

The community also stressed that any funding must be of benefit to the whole community not single cultural or ethnic groups within it.

The Safer Rotherham Partnership confirmed that the bid was approved and on 18 August 08 an invitation to bid to ComCohCash was issued together with an Application Form and Guidance Note (these being based on the NMP Small Grant Fund documentation). Efforts were made to ensure that the invitation went as wide as possible.

The **closing date for applications was 30 September 08** and the Community Cohesion Sub Group met on 1 October to consider applications so that the maximum time was available for project sponsors to prepare for the Community Participatory Budget event which became known as the Eastwood & Springwell Dragons Den (simply because that is what local residents and service providers started calling it)

Twelve applications were received with a total value of **£28,543** with match funding of £20,377. An incomplete application was also received and it proved impossible to contact the applicant to remedy this prior to the Community Cohesion Sub Group meeting. A late application was received on 2 October 08.

The Community Cohesion Sub Group found 3 applications to be unsuitable for CohComCash and a fourth to duplicate activity already funded by the NMP.

The remaining 8 applications had a total value of £17,387 and match funding of £11,227 (mostly volunteer time). Whilst the Safer Rotherham Partnership had originally offered £20,000 they had subsequently asked that a smaller sum be approved so there remained an element of competition

The 8 project sponsors were advised on 2 October that they were invited to present their projects to the Dragons Den on 18 October. The unsuccessful applicants were advised as soon as possible. One asked if there was an appeal procedure (there was not) and 2 asked for a meeting (which took place with the NMP Team).

The **Eastwood & Springwell Dragons Den** was held on Saturday 18 October at the Unity Centre, St Leonard's Road. It was advertised by an edition of the NMP Newsletter that goes to every house and business in the NMP area. People attending were met by a fire eater and the event was formally opened by Cllr Shaukat Ali at 11:00. It was jointly run by John Porter Jnr, Chair of the Community Cohesion Sub Group and Chris Edwards, Deputy Manager of the NMP.

People could register to vote if they had an address and post code within the NMP target area and were aged 14+ (those aged below 21 were asked to bring proof of age). Their votes would only be counted if they stayed to listen to and vote on (score) all the applications. 28 people registered to vote. Most came to support specific projects and stayed to take part in the whole event. In all 56 people signed the attendance sheet and a number brought their children and there was a very good feel to the event.

The applicants were asked to make a 4 minute presentation in the medium of their choice. These ranged from power point presentations to simple statements of need. Residents were then able to ask questions before using prepared score sheets to mark the applications on a scale of 1 to 5. There was a break in presentations for a buffet lunch and the fire eater stayed on to keep children and some adults occupied by making balloon sculptures.

When all the presentations had been made the scores were counted and announced to the meeting (during the count Janet Benton, a local resident who is also a member of the NMP Board and the Community Cohesion Sub Group, organised a free raffle). The highest score for a project was 111 (of a possible 140) and the lowest 75 (possible 28). Given the need for a reduction in funding (ie downward from £20,000) the meeting was asked to agree to defer a final decision on which projects should be funded. Following the event the Safer Rotherham Partnership agreed that given the narrow spread of the scores that all the projects could be funded.

Immediate feedback from the event included

- "I thought it was a great idea, very different and it gave real power to the community"
- "the buzz was great"
- "it's really good that grass roots organisations have had the opportunity to take part in this"
- "we need this across Rotherham"

There was a representation that the time keeping might have been better (ie some people were allowed more than 4 minutes for their presentation) and

another that the event would have been better attended if it had been a little later in the day.

Immediate added value came from the networking that took place between groups and individuals. Commitments were made to work together. The event itself made a clear contribution to community cohesion in Eastwood & Springwell and Rotherham.

Lessons & Thoughts

Before the Event

1. The Community Cohesion Sub Group was an effective vehicle to deliver the Community Participatory Budget Pilot but did depend upon officer support
2. The availability of established criteria for community cohesion and resilience activities was a clear plus
3. Clear Application Forms and Guidance Notes are essential
4. A published time table is helpful and should be kept to
5. It would be useful to have time between the closing date for applications and the eligibility/criteria check to develop some of the proposals eg the Dragons Den received 2 applications for sports provision in Eastwood that were complementary and it would have been useful to explore this opportunity.

At the Event

6. Do not start before midday
7. The presence of a recognised and supportive elected member (who happened in this instance to be the Deputy Lord Mayor) really made people feel that the event was important
8. The feel good contributions made by the entertainment, the buffet lunch and the raffle helped the overall event to run smoothly. A crèche might or might not be useful – not having one at the Dragons Den meant that the mums stayed in the event (and the children were well behaved)
9. People take it seriously and this has a levelling effect on those bidding for projects. Some of the most experienced became the most tongue tied in front of the community
10. Establish rules and stick to them. There was a comment that some projects were allowed more than 4 minutes for their presentation so these things do get noticed
11. Leave a bit of slack in the programme. Dragons Den had this and it meant that nobody felt rushed or pushed “it felt comfortable”.

12. Have some mechanism for ranking projects for approval/refusal. Asking people to score projects out of 4 (quartiles) or 6 (top middle and bottom) would have been better than out of 5. The Dragons Den event was lucky to not have to make a tricky decision.

13. Think about layout and ambience. Dragons Den chose a café layout which was informal and comfortable and there was background music during periods when nothing was particularly happening.

14. If it is at all possible announce the result of the vote and the Participatory Budget at the end of the meeting

After the Event

15. Everybody was really positive about the event and the opportunity to take part. This needs to be followed up.

16. There is an opportunity to build collaborative working that will be facilitated by the GROW Eastwood Peoples Project (see list)

17. Get any follow up paperwork out quickly. If there is any delay let people know what is happening.

Finance & Resources

The NMP defrayed some £800 on the Community Participatory Budget Pilot and the Dragons Den event. This excludes the cost of the Newsletter which coincided with the need to publicise the event.

Most of the preparation work was completed by a single officer who absorbed it into their workload. Now the process has been established much of this work could be undertaken by support staff.

The actual event was supported by the full NMP Team plus an officer from the Area Partnership Team and another from Voluntary Action Rotherham. Officer time will be managed out by flexi arrangements. The event would probably have run with less support but this level did mean that everybody got as much attention as they needed without any fuss.

The Safer Rotherham Partnership provided core funding, issued Funding Agreement Letters to the successful projects and will monitor expenditure and outcomes.

The core funding would have supported a similar event for a wider area provided a suitable lead organisation could be identified to deliver it and an appropriate officer team is available to provide support.

**Eastwood& Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder
Bids to ComCohCash Community Participation Budget
Projects presented to the Dragon's Den Event 18 October 2008**

Sponsor Name	Project Name	ComCohCash Bid £	Match Funding £ Cash or in Kind	Votes Received	Total Score
HVFC Community Centre	Sports in the Middle	2,458	1,548	28	91
Rotherham United	Fathers Unite	1,146	667	28	85
Friends of St Ann's School	Early Learning Club	1,966	885	28	106
Youth Association of South Yorkshire	Eastwood Unite	2,216	1,160	28	85
GROW	E&SG Peoples Project	3,301	1,845	27	83
Wah Hong Chinese Association	Chinese New Year Celebration: The Year of the OX	1,800	1,372	28	111
Bharat Integration Group	BIG Cohesion Project	2,000	350	28	75
abc Forum	Food Project	2,500	3,400	28	81
Total Value		17,387	11,227		

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1. Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2. Date:	15 th January, 2009
3. Title:	Eastwood and Springwell United- A Neighbourhood Governance Pilot Project (Developing a model that enables communities and stakeholders to engage in the governance of their neighbourhood)
4. Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

5. Summary

The Panel will recall that in May 2007 the Eastwood and Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP) commissioned Communities & Organisations: Growth & Support (COGS) Consulting to develop a pilot model of neighbourhood governance for the NMP area.

Since last updating the panel NMP has commissioned VAR to manage a pilot of this model in the Eastwood and Springwell Gardens area.

This report is an update to that work including an interim evaluation of the progress made so far.

6. Recommendation

The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report and the executive summary of the COGS interim evaluation.

7. Proposal and Details

Background

The **NMP** commissioned **Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR)** to manage a contract to develop and review a neighbourhood governance structure/model to engage the communities and stakeholders that comprise Eastwood and Springwell Gardens in the governance of that neighbourhood.

After a tendering procedure a contract was agreed with COGS Consulting in May 2007. The aims of the contract were to

1. Provide clear, evidenced based recommendations and an implementation plan for the **development of a new sustainable model of neighbourhood governance** for Eastwood & Springwell Gardens and
2. **Identify good practice** in developing neighbourhood governance models which may be rolled out to other communities across Rotherham

A **Steering Group** comprised of representatives of VAR, the NMP Board and Team and elected members and senior officers of RMBC was established to oversee the contract.

The COGS final report identified a neighbourhood forum with possible implementation of street reps. "A **Neighbourhood Forum**- open to residents and community groups providing a public space for consultation and debate on local issues, probably with a constitution, an executive and representatives going to other structures. It could have a partnership approach to working with service providers and would involve local Councillors in an ex-officio role. It could have a small budget and informal powers and be a first step towards a more formal neighbourhood council."

A **12 month** contract, implementation plan and budget for this work have since been agreed with Voluntary Action Rotherham. Bob Holt, the Neighbourhood Governance Development Worker has been appointed and started delivery on the 28th July 08.

Evaluation and Learning

An interim evaluation report has been prepared to support the effective learning from this pilot project. **The Executive Summary of the Interim Evaluation is attached as Appendix 1** and the full report is available on request. This evaluation has been carried out early in the life of the forum, but already some key messages are emerging. There will also be a further evaluation of the project in March 09, which will contain final recommendations for partners and key lessons for the future of Eastwood and Springwell United.

NMP Closure

The Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder has played an important role in supporting the development of Eastwood and Springwell United. Consideration is currently being given about how this support continues once the NMP closes in March 09.

8. Finance

A final budget for an initial 12 months pilot has been agreed with VAR. Future developments in funding the forum or sharing the pilot across Rotherham will be explored subsequent to further successful evaluation of the pilot.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The closure of the NMP in March 09 will have an impact on the support for the project, however the steering group will seek to ensure that effective support is found from other sources.

As the forum develops, its voice grows and the residents gain more control over the forum activities, it will become less reactive and more proactive in its relationships with service providers. This may lead to a push from the community for organisations to change, particularly the way they engage, this should be welcomed as a significant outcome of the pilot.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Improving the level of involvement of local people is a major part of the Government's agenda to delivering improved services and policies and greater user satisfaction, nationally and locally.

The work being undertaken by the NMP anticipates the proposals in the **Local Government White Paper Implementation Plan** for new powers for principal authorities to carry out community governance reviews. It will provide an early indicator of how such reviews may be conducted and implemented.

RMBC has adopted National Indicator 1: **% of people from different backgrounds getting on well together** and National Indicator 4: **% of people who feel able to influence decisions** as part of Rotherham's Local Area Agreement. This project will support a good score for Rotherham on these indicators. In the NMP household survey 24% of residents in Eastwood and Springwell Gardens feel they can influence decisions, compared to 16% for across Rotherham (Quality of Life survey 2006).

Eastwood and Springwell United will be working closely with ward councillors to ensure that the forum works to support their community leadership role.

The Neighbourhood Governance Pilot Project for Eastwood and Springwell Gardens is at the **forefront of national policy**; it is the only one to have benefited from a precursor piece of work exploring the options available and

recommending how the favoured option might be implemented.

Background Papers and Consultation

Neighbourhood Governance Pilot Project Final Report by Communities & Organisations: Growth & Support

Neighbourhood Governance Pilot Project Interim Evaluation Report by Communities & Organisations: Growth & Support

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**Neighbourhood Governance Pilot in Eastwood and Springwell Gardens
Interim Evaluation - Executive Summary**

1. Following the research and consultation in 2007, proposals were agreed to establish a broad based and inclusive neighbourhood forum in Eastwood & Springwell Gardens.
2. The plans were based on an open meeting, four times a year supported by a planning group and potential working groups around particular topics. The focus on the large open meetings was to ensure accessibility and involvement, and avoid the dangers of a more hierarchical committee potentially excluding some groupings while claiming to be representative.
3. The proposals are being implemented with financial support from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP) and evaluation of the pilot area including the identification of good practice that could be considered for rolling out to other areas of Rotherham.
4. The forum, now called Eastwood & Springwell United (ESU), was launched on 26 April and has met again in July and September. Four planning meetings have now taken place. The implementation phase of this model was initially supported by the NMP Team prior to the recruitment of a full-time development worker in July 2008.
5. A brief survey of residents views using questions based on national indicators (NI1: % of people from different backgrounds getting on well together, NI2: % of people who feel they belong to their area and NI4: % of people who feel able to influence decision making) was done in August/September. Interviews were held with agencies including SY Police, NHS Rotherham, NMP, Voluntary Action Rotherham, Rotherham Partnership and various Rotherham M.B. Council departmental staff and Members.
6. Interviews were structured around the six themes for the evaluation shown below:
 - i. **ENGAGEMENT**
The development worker has been in post since the end of July. Good progress has been made in involving people in ESU meetings. An emerging core of about 20 people are actively involved, from a contact list of 140. Residents have also been involved in a number of ways outside of formal meetings. There is considerable support and interest in working with ESU from stakeholder agencies and local Councillors. There is a need for ESU to increase the range of communities involved and develop more opportunities for informal engagement.
 - ii. **CAPACITY**
Examples of joint work between residents and agencies highlight an existing level of leadership and capacity in the group (e.g. Walkabouts). Planned capacity building activities including training, networking and visits to other areas are just starting. There is a need to ensure that people develop the capacity to continue to operate the inclusive and accessible structures that are developing
 - iii. **COHESION**
ESU has already brought people together across community and geographical boundaries. Resident survey shows that people feel there is a good sense of

belonging and neighbourliness and that ESU will help to improve this. Many agencies regard this dimension as critical in solving the problems facing the neighbourhood and important in evaluating the success of ESU.

iv. **VOICE**

The aim of developing a mechanism for all the voices of this neighbourhood to be heard is seen as central to the initiative. ESU meetings have been facilitated and are developing a simple structure for meetings to promote positive discussion and action planning, so everyone can be involved and contribute. Difficult issues have been raised in meetings and handled effectively.

Residents' survey shows people feel ESU will have a positive effect on the feeling of being able to influence decisions (NI 4). A particular outcome is that a small group of ESU members are now attending Area Assembly meetings. There may be a danger that the expectation that ESU can involve 'all' the communities in this neighbourhood is too high.

v. **SUSTAINABILITY**

The group is developing well at an appropriate pace, although many workers are focused on the pilot project timescale and longer term sustainability. The forum will need to find an agreed 'place within the structure' and avoid weaknesses associated with traditional community groups. Sustainability may depend to some extent, on gaining support from strategic decision makers who will also be interested in transferability.

vi. **TRANSFERABILITY**

Key elements of the approach have been identified: a model designed on the outcome of consultation and research, community owned and driven, a flexible structure based on open forum meetings and planning meetings – both facilitated. These elements combined with some resourcing to support engagement work and capacity building have so far kept the organisation accessible and inclusive and avoided domination by small numbers and local vested interest.

7. This approach has the potential to enhance democratic involvement and the development of ESU can potentially support achievement in relation to the national empowerment indicators prioritised by Rotherham Council and its partners. There is also a clear potential to increase cohesion in a neighbourhood where this is a key issue

8. **It is recommended that:**

- i. The pilot continues as planned, with an increased focus on engagement with more marginalised communities
- ii. Attention is given to developing the role and relationship with Ward Members
- iii. Strategic decision makers consider an appropriate level of resourcing and explore the elements of good practice that may be transferable
- iv. Decisions are made about the organisational support required after the end of NMP in March 2009

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL
Thursday, 4th December, 2008

Present:- Councillor Austen (in the Chair); Councillors Cutts, Foden, Dodson, J. Hamilton, Johnston, Lakin, Parker and Pickering.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Littleboy and Mannion.

Also in attendance:- Councillor Alan Buckley, Parish Council Representative, and Joanna Jones, Community Representative.

134. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman welcomed Joanna Jones from GROW to her first meeting and Joanna gave a brief resume of her work in Rotherham and the value she could bring to this Scrutiny Panel.

135. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

136. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

137. THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Janet Wheatley, Chief Executive of Voluntary Action Rotherham gave a presentation on the voluntary sector and the difference they were making in Rotherham.

The presentation drew specific attention to:-

- Be Involved Team – The “V” Team.
- Rotherham’s Volunteers in the Community Sector in 2008.
- Key Facts on the Diverse Section and Strong Community Base.
- Contribution to Social, Capital and Community Cohesion.
- Contribution to the Local Labour Market.
- What had changed or was changing in the sector.
- What were the challenges facing public sector delivery.
- Voluntary Action’s Responses.

A question and a discussion and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and subsequently clarified:-

- Number of voluntary/community sector organisations in Rotherham and whether these could be broken down for information by Ward for

Ward Members to understand their community based activity.

- Community based organisations and their input into Area Assemblies.
- Role of Age Concern, the financial restrictions placed on it and its links with Voluntary Action Rotherham.
- Future of some voluntary organisations with the withdrawal of grant funding like Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

Resolved:- (1) That Janet Wheatley be thanked for her information presentation.

(2) That details of ward-based voluntary/community organisations be forwarded to Elected Members in due course.

138. WORKING WITH PARISH COUNCILS – PART II REVIEW

Consideration was given to the Part II Scrutiny Review of Working with Parish Council and how the relationship between the two layers of Local Government had developed during the four years since the first review and what improvements might still be made.

The report set out in detail what the Scrutiny Review would focus on and its key findings, along with the final report, which was attached.

Whilst one of the recommendations suggested that a Parish Council representative join the membership of the Members' Training and Development Panel, and a nomination had been made, but the name was not yet known.

Resolved:- (1) That everyone involved in this Scrutiny Review be thanked for their efforts.

(2) That the eleven recommendations of the Review which were arranged under the sub-headings of Communication, Training and Empowerment be agreed including:-

- Updating the Parish/Town Councils website, creating induction packs for Clerks and providing a checklist of available Council services.
- RMBC Officer training to be made available to Clerks, to include information on Parish/Town Councils in the RMBC Officer induction, and elect a Parish/Town Council representative to sit on the Members' Training Development Panel.
- Developing the Parish Network and supporting a South Yorkshire wide network of Clerks.

(3) That this Scrutiny Review be referred to the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee for consideration.

139. DEBT RECOVERY SCRUTINY REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Scrutiny Adviser which gave details of a suggested review on debt recovery, particularly the issues of bailiffs in Rotherham.

The report set out in detail what the Scrutiny Review could cover and the research that could be undertaken.

A representative was sought from Members of the Opposition and an invitation was extended for one of them to join the Review Group.

Resolved:- (1) That a Scrutiny Review of Debt Recovery be undertaken.

(2) That Councillors Dodson and Lakin, Parish Councillor Alan Buckley, Joanna Jones sit on the Review Group with Jane Woodford from Voluntary Action Rotherham co-opted.

(3) That a Member of the Opposition be invited to sit on this Review Group.

140. CHESTERHILL INTENSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT PILOT – 'MOVING TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY'

Consideration was given to a report presented by Catherine Dale, Neighbourhood Initiatives Manager, which detailed how Chesterhill Avenue was identified in 2007 as the most vulnerable community in Rotherham and in need of intensive neighbourhood management arrangements. A pilot neighbourhood was established covering around 650 households and a twelve month period of intensive management began in September, 2007. This report outlined the progress and impact made by the pilot and detailed how the learning from the pilot would be shared across the borough.

Catherine Dale also gave a presentation on the demolition of Chesterhill Avenue, which focused on:-

- The Clear Vision.
- Impact and Signs of Change.
- Value for Money.
- Exit Strategy and Forward Plan.
- Learning, Sharing and Roll Out.

The pilot had focused on stabilising crime and ensuring community safety and increasing community involvement, trust and communication.

Housing Market Renewal activity began in September, 2007 in the area

with Chesterhill Avenue earmarked for redevelopment. A total of 143 unsustainable properties were due to be demolished. To date around 90% of all tenants have been re-housed and dispersed across the borough. Various mechanisms have been put in place to ensure individuals and families at risk received the support they required and lettings were managed 'sensitively' taking into account the needs of the individual and the concerns of local partners. Demolition had already begun and would continue steadily over the coming months.

The success was underpinned by a clear vision and a clear twelve month delivery plan which was shared with local partners to ensure they fully understood their role and how they could impact and contribute to the success of the pilot. Local residents were central to the delivery of the approach. The pilot has been intensive and incorporated various key elements to its success.

In twelve months, change on stabilising the neighbourhood and mobilising the community was clearly evident and demonstrated what could be achieved through improved partnership working at a neighbourhood level.

Crime and anti-social behaviour have reduced significantly. In addition, there had been a positive increase in resident perceptions on issues such as anti-social behaviour, community involvement and residents' perceived ability to influence decision making locally. The image of the neighbourhood had also improved, not just amongst residents, but also partner agencies. Pride, trust and confidence amongst residents had also been boosted and there was a real feeling of change in the neighbourhood.

The exit strategy was essential to ensuring that the achievements and structures which have been tried and tested over the past twelve months were embedded into mainstream neighbourhood delivery.

The forward plan outlined priorities for action for key stakeholders involved in the Chesterhill pilot ensuring short term and longer term issues requiring additional attention and development were addressed. The long term forward plan identified longer term priorities which have emerged through community consultation aligned to the community strategy themes and contains targeted and focused interventions to address the complex and deep seated problems related to social exclusion and deprivation. These longer term issues would be addressed through the Wentworth South Area Assembly Community Plan.

A full report 'Moving Towards Sustainability: Impact, learning and Forward Plan' had now been completed and the evidence from the pilot suggested that intensive neighbourhood management could make a difference to people's quality of a life at a targeted neighbourhood level as well as adding value and contributing to borough wide priorities through increased perception measures and reductions around crime and anti-social behaviour.

The role of Ward Members in this pilot were crucial to its success and without their involvement the pilot would not achieved the residents' capacity for involvement and empowerment in the area. Councillors Lakin and Pickering were thanked for their support to the pilot project.

The success of the pilot demonstrated that services at a neighbourhood level could be delivered more cost effectively and efficiently. It was now imperative that the learning, sharing and roll out now began to take place along with the development of a longer term strategy for other vulnerable neighbourhoods across the borough.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Condition of the houses to be demolished and the reasons for their demolition.
- The relocation of problem families out of the area and dispersing the problems elsewhere in the borough.
- Monitoring of the families and their activities in other areas of the borough.
- Close working with the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder.
- Ward Member involvement and support for action.
- Reduction in the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Congregation of people in one estate involved in anti-social behaviour, drug use, mental health difficulties, alcohol related problems which led to the initiation of the Chesterhill Pilot.
- Savings made by the reduced incidents of crime, arson and anti-social behaviour.
- Stigma attached to the area.
- Enthusiasm and moral boost in the area with the relocation of some problem families.
- Use of the land vacated by the Chesterhill houses and future plans for development.
- Project driven by Elected Member involvement.
- Processing of the exit strategy.
- The need for more intensive neighbourhood management to managing estates.
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The Scrutiny Panel welcomed this pilot project and was inspired by the passion and drive of the Ward Members in that area.

Resolved:- (1) That Catherine Dale be thanked for her very informative presentation and report.

(2) That the progress and impact of the pilot be noted.

(3) That consideration be given as to how the learning from the pilot

could be translated and put into action in other wards.

(4) That an update on the project be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel in due course.

141. NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL TRANSITIONAL FUNDING PROGRAMME 2008-11

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

142. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 23RD OCTOBER, 2008

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 23rd October, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

143. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND INVOLVEMENT HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER, 2008

Consideration was given to the minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement held on 24th November, 2008.

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

144. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH SEPTEMBER, 10TH AND 24TH OCTOBER AND 7TH NOVEMBER, 2008

Consideration was given to the minutes of a meeting of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 26th September, 10th and 24th October and 7th November, 2008.

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

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND INVOLVEMENT
Monday, 15th December, 2008

Present:- Councillor Hussain (in the Chair).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Burton.

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

55. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER, 2008

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement held on 24th November, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

56. SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

Consideration was given to an update report presented by Janet Spurling, Equalities and Diversity Officer, which outlined the approach and progress to date in developing an integrated Single Equality Scheme for Rotherham MBC.

In a report approved by Cabinet on 12th December, 2007, an action plan to achieve Level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG) was appended. This included an action to develop a corporate single equality scheme:

- (a) to incorporate the Corporate Equality Strategy and Action Plan, which is due for refresh; and
- (b) to mainstream the additional equality strands of religion and belief, sexuality and age within the extended Equality Standard for Local Government.

This approach complements the introduction of the new single duty to promote equality on the grounds of race, disability, gender (including transsexual people), age, sexuality and religion/belief when the forthcoming Equality Bill is enacted.

The Council's approach has been to develop a draft integrated single equality scheme which includes a revised Equality Statement and Policy and action plans for the diverse equality strands of:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| - Race | - Age |
| - Disability | - Carers |
| - Gender | - Religion/Belief |

- Gender Identity/Trans - Sexuality

The intention is to produce an overarching scheme by March 2009 that reflects and incorporates existing work in these areas and which will act as a driver to promote equality for all groups. New actions and initiatives are being developed, in particular for race equality as part of Race Equality Scheme 3 and to embed the newer equality strands, as well as giving a higher profile to carers and to gender identity. Carers have been included as they are often a disadvantaged and undervalued group and they form a significant community of interest in Rotherham given the high number of people who are disabled or with limiting long-term illnesses or conditions.

Present schemes such as the Gender Equality Scheme and Joint Disability Equality Scheme have been broadly assimilated into the new scheme but will also remain as “stand alone” – schemes until their planned review dates; at which point they will be brought within the ambit of the single equality scheme.

The report set out the advantages of a single integrated scheme.

A discussion took place with regard to the next steps to be taken in progressing this matter.

It was noted there were no financial issues arising from the report. However, the new integrated equality scheme will incur development costs including consultation, publicity and publishing, which will be met from existing budgets. Future actions within the new scheme are likely to require the commitment of resources by the relevant service or Directorate.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress in developing the scheme be noted.

(2) That the draft scheme be submitted to a future meeting early in 2009 for consideration and comment.

57. FERHAM ADVICE CENTRE ENTERPRISE

Sabi Akram, Centre Manager and Father Tom, gave a joint presentation on the increased workload of the Ferham Advice Centre Enterprise, as a result of the current economic crisis.

The powerpoint presentation drew specific attention to:-

- Origins of FACE
- Increase in client numbers over the last ten years
- Specialist Services
- FACE Structure
- Funding
- Paid Staff

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- Added Value
- Quality Standards
- Consultancy Lines Used
- Client Group
- Client Enquiries this year
- Enquiry Category
- Where our clients are from
- Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Income generated by the Project as a whole 2007/2008
- Debt
- Client Contact
- Client Age Range
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Client Types
- Contact Location
- Current Issues
- Partner Agencies
- The Future of FACE

The main aim of the presentation was to raise awareness of the work carried out by FACE, and to request additional funding in order for the FACE Advice Centre to continue its valuable work.

It was noted that, in addition to Benefits and Tax Credits advice/enquiries, debt advice was currently the most major issue.

A further area of advice work and enquiries which was increasing was as a result of new Government Legislation relating to changes in Incapacity Benefits to the new Employment Support Allowance.

A question/answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- client enquiries this year
- added value
- immigration and asylum work
- ratio of paid staff and volunteers
- capacity and space for more staff
- referral system and what issues are referred on for specialist advice
- new issues emerging/complexities of issues

Resolved:- That Sabi Akram and Father Tom be thanked for an interesting and informative presentation.

58. INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE BUDGET (ICIB) GRANTS FOR ADVICE AGENCIES 2009/2010

Zafar Saleem, Community Engagement and Cohesion Manager gave a verbal update on ICIB Grants for Advice Agencies 2009/2010.

The current level of funding up to March, 2009 from the Council to the following Agencies is as follows:-

Citizens' Advice Bureau - £125,727.00

Ferham Advice Centre Enterprise - £38,537.00

Kiveton Park Independent Advice Service - £30,172.00

Rotherham Diversity Forum (Immigration Advice) - £10,782.00

Discussion took place with regard to the progress on implementing the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Advice Services; how to meet existing and future demand, timescale for implementing the review recommendations, funding requirements, and the commissioning process.

Resolved:- (1) That the verbal update be received.

(2) That continued funding be approved from 1st April, 2009, as reported, but reviewed after 6 months to tie in with the implementation of the recommendations arising from the review of advice services.

59. FORWARD PLAN/WORK PROGRAMME FOR COMMUNITIES AND INVOLVEMENT

Further to Minute No. 52 of the previous meeting held on 24th November, 2008, it was suggested that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement in relation to Local Democracy Week.

Resolved:- (1) That a report be submitted to the next meeting on Local Democracy Week.

(2) That, at the next meeting, a presentation be given by Kiveton Park Independent Advice Centre, and an update report be submitted on community cohesion.

60. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING - MONDAY, 12TH JANUARY, 2009 AT 11.30 A.M.

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement take place on Monday, 12th January, 2009 at 11.30 a.m.

**MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
THURSDAY, 18TH DECEMBER, 2008**

Present:- Councillor Gosling (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Cutts, Dodson, Hughes, Lakin, McNeely, Pickering, Rushforth, Turner and Whelbourn.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Sharman, Sangster, Smith, Wootton and Whysall.

16. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2008

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th September, 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

17. UPDATE ON THE MODERN.GOV AND ECASEWORK IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Richard Copley, ICT Strategy and Client Co-ordinator gave a presentation on Modern.Gov and eCasework Improvement Projects.

Modern.gov

The Modern.gov system had been in use within RMBC for several years and performed two key functions:

1. To collate and produce all committee meeting agendas and minutes
2. To publish the relevant sections of the minutes and agendas on the RMBC website.

It had become apparent that RMBC's version of Modern.gov was several versions behind the most current version. In addition, it had become clear that, even in the version currently being used, the Council was failing to take advantage of all the functionality available through the system, particularly in terms of the information that could be offered to the Citizen via the website. The functions available which Members could elect to "turn on" were:

- Councillors' Details
- Councillor Websites
- Decisions
- Forward Plans
- Document Library
- Declarations of Interest/Outside Bodies
- Attendance Statistics

Members were advised that the Modern.gov system would be upgraded to the latest version and were asked to provide guidance on which

features should be made available via the website.

Discussion ensued about the various functions and how useful they would be to members of the public. Training on the usage of the system was also discussed and it was agreed that a number of sessions would be arranged and included on the training plan for 2009.

It was agreed that all functionalities would be turned on, and that the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel be asked to monitor it for a year.

eCasework

For several years the Surgery Connect system had been used to manage the work flow involved in processing the casework generated by Member's when issues were brought to them by members of the public.

Concerns had been raised that the system was difficult to use and at the meeting on 25 September, Sioned Mair-Richards and Richard Copley were asked to establish a project to review the effectiveness of the system and either implement improvements or replace the system with something better suited to Member's eCasework needs.

A member/officer project group met for the first time on 19 November 2008 and discussions took place around the use of eCasework and 11 members were put forward as a trial/consultation group. These were:

Jahangir Akhtar
Ken Wyatt
Darren Hughes
Ian St John
Reg Littleboy
David Pickering
Rose McNeeley
John Foden
Jo Burton
Mahroof Hussain
Jennifer Whysall

This meeting and subsequent meetings/conversations had established the following:

- Only 6 Members had ever been trained in the use of Surgery Connect
- The implementation of any new system would need to be carried out in tandem with extensive member consultation and training
- Most members had implemented 'workarounds' which circumvent Surgery Connect
- Of those Members that do use the system, the vast majority telephone in details via the contact centre, rather than inputting the details themselves
- Some admin officers also used the contact centre to the casework

inputting

- There were variations in the way that Member casework was handled by Directorates
- There were no formal SLAs around officer responsiveness casework
- There was no forum, corporately, for eCasework administrators to discuss issues relating to the process

A question and answer session ensued and the following issues were discussed:

- It was felt that systems needed to be in place to enable the sharing of common issues and how they were dealt with
- It would be useful to include a function which kept a log of work undertaken to enable the amount of work done by each member to be measured
- It was important that any system used needed to be user friendly to all Members
- There was a lack of SLAs
- There was a lack of agreed procedures
- There was a lack of Member buy-in/training.
- Had there been any investigation undertaken into what other Authorities were doing, and whether this was successful
- A free trial of the system had been offered by Lambeth Council and it was felt that this should be taken up and the trial/consultation group could then review it and feed back to the Member Training and Development Panel.

Agreed:- (1) That the content of the report be noted

(2) That the functionalities of Modern.gov which are currently switched off, be switched on.

(3) That it be suggested that the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel monitor the progress of the Modern.gov system

(4) That the free trial of the eCasework system be taken up and the trail/consultation group review it and feed back to a future meeting of the Member Training and Development Panel.

18. PAUL WHEELER PAPER

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services presented the report of Paul Wheeler entitled "Promoting the Councillor role to employers".

She reported that in South Yorkshire it was felt that Councils would benefit from increasing the number of councillors in employment. They would add to the knowledge and experience in the Council Chamber and enhance the reputation of the council with partner organisations and

central government.

There were a number of barriers which existed to ensure a higher proportion of councillors who were in employment which needed to be addressed. These were:

1. Leadership of each local council to explore options for member meetings outside core hours of 9-5 with specific reference to scrutiny committees and meetings with Directors/Heads of Service
2. Local Councils to develop publicity programme in council and external publications to promote the community leadership role of councillors
3. Annual review, led by members, on use of member time and level of support for member role
4. Research 'governance map' detailing allowances paid to those in local governance role in health, further education and other public sectors
5. Improvement Board to research 'jury service' compensation system for small firms with employees involved in day time meetings for council duties
6. Briefing note prepared by local councils and endorsed by LSP outlining the importance of the member role for the council and wider community
7. Regional Efficiency and Improvement Partnership to support local Good Employer Award
8. Local council to work with individual companies to ensure most effective use of member time. For employees who wish to take undertake more senior member roles (leader and cabinet) companies to consider four year secondments as currently happens with MPs.
9. Political Parties and groups to review existing practices (eg timing of group meetings) to facilitate participation by councillors in employment
10. Political Parties in South Yorkshire to consider participation in proposed national 'Be a councillor' and review existing recruitment and selection processes.

A question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised:

- Smaller businesses would find it more difficult to let employees

take time off as it would have more of an impact on workloads for others. Larger businesses would find this less of a problem.

- Concerns were raised about the accessibility of the Town Hall after 5.30 pm. Some members felt that this was not a problem as most of their work was done out in the community in the evening.
- It was felt that it was necessary to consider the recommendations and work with at least some of them. It was agreed that these would be looked at in more depth at the next meeting.
- Members also suggested that the Community Leadership Review at the next meeting.

Agreed: (1) That the report be received.

(2) That a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Panel for further consideration.

19. UPDATE ON SYIP

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services reported that as part of the Member Development Review Programme £113,400 had been allocated to be divided across the four South Yorkshire areas. Councillor Sharman had chaired the first meeting which had been set up to plan the South Yorkshire Programme.

She confirmed that there were four claims made, with one outstanding claim due in January 2009. Funding had now finished and this needed to be considered when setting the budget for 2009/10. She outlined some of the work which had been undertaken, and agreed to bring a final report to the panel after the final claim had been made.

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

(2) That a final report be brought to a future meeting once the final claim had been made.

20. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2009

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services reported that the Member Development Programme had been drafted for 2009 following the completion of the Member PDP's.

The common areas which had arisen from the PDP's were:

- LG Finance
- IT Support
- Managing Media Training
 - General Training
 - Media Training for TV and Press interviews
- Partnership Working or Working with Partners

She asked Members to make further suggestions and the following was raised:

- CAA & LAA
- Refresh on structures of departments
- Adult abuse – Safeguarding Adults
- Equalities and Diversity
- Emergency Planning

Cath agreed to bring a draft programme to the meeting in February 2009 for further discussion.

21. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING - THURSDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 2009 AT 2.00 P.M.

Agreed:- That the next meeting of the Panel be held on Thursday 22nd January, 2009 at 2.00 pm.