

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham

Date: Thursday, 12 February
2009

Time: 9.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency
3. Apologies for Absence
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Questions from the press and public
6. Matters Referred from the Youth Cabinet
7. Communications
8. Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel - Ratification of Membership of Parent-Governor Representatives

FOR DISCUSSION

9. Young Carers Strategy - Impact Assessment (report attached) (Pages 1 - 3)
10. Imagination Library - One Year On (report attached) (Pages 4 - 11)
11. Foundation Stage Assessment Results - Summer 2008 (report attached) (Pages 12 - 17)
12. Key Stage 1 Assessment Results - Summer 2008 (report attached) (Pages 18 - 23)

13. OFSTED Profile of Schools (report attached) (Pages 24 - 27)
14. Review of Children and Young People's Services (report attached) (Pages 28 - 42)

MINUTES

15. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 12th January, 2009 (copy attached) (Pages 43 - 49)
16. Minutes of meetings of the Children's Board held on 10th December, 2008 and on 16th January, 2009 (copies attached) (Pages 50 - 61)
17. Minutes of a meeting of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 19th December, 2008 and 16th January, 2009 (copies attached) (Pages 62 - 74)

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Friday, 6 March 2009**

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell)
Vice-Chairman – Councillor Burton
Councillors:- Ali, Currie, Dodson, Donaldson, Fenoughty, Hughes, Kaye, License, Sharp and Sims

Co-optees:-

Mrs J. Blanch-Nicholson, Ms. T. Guest,
Mr M. Hall (Statutory Co-optee), Father A. Hayne
(Statutory Co-optee) and Mrs P. Wade.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children & Young People’s Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	Friday, 6 th February, 2009
3.	Title:	Young Carers’ Strategy
4.	Directorate:	Children & Young People’s Services

5. Summary: The Barnardo’s Young Carers Service is the direct service provider for young carers within Rotherham. Actual numbers of young carers are difficult to identify but the last census indicated that there might be around 800 young carers in Rotherham who are largely unrecognised. Numbers accessing the Barnardo’s Young Carers Service remain low, however, with 31 young people worked with this year. The service makes great efforts to publicise itself but is essentially dependent upon referrals from agencies and professionals within CYPS. A renewed programme of awareness raising is required to coincide with the updating of the current Policy & Procedures document which was written in 2003

6. Recommendations:

- **that the current policy and procedures document be updated**
- **that membership and terms of reference of the Young Carers Stakeholder Group be refreshed in order to more effectively promote the service**
- **that progress is reported annually**
- **that the Barnardo’s Young Carers Service be invited to give a presentation to Locality Managers on identifying young carers and the service available**
- **that the Barnardo’s Young Carers Service submit a briefing paper to Primary & Secondary Headteachers on identifying young carers and the service available**
- **that the in-house multi-agency young carers training package for professionals be incorporated in the C&YPS Workforce Development Programme and delivered on an annual basis**
- **that specific steps be taken to raise awareness of young carers within the BME Community**

7. **Proposals and Details:** Objective 7 within the Rotherham Joint Carers' Strategy 2008 – 2011 is to "increase support which protects children and young people from inappropriate caring in a way which encourages them to enjoy positive childhoods by March 2010". Priority actions in achieving this objective will be to:

- improve the identification of young carers
- raise awareness of young carers in schools via key education staff, healthy schools coordinator and on through the admission process
- provide support / advice and input on Younger Carer issues in schools
- complete a basic mail out to GPs to build awareness and skills in dealing with young carers / awareness raising on young carers to be delivered to GPs and practice managers
- work in partnership to develop "Extended Family Pathfinder Bid"
- work with Barnardo's to ensure other service areas identify and support young carers by taking advantage of training and advice available from Rotherham Young Carers, Early Intervention Team and Clearways

The Barnardo's Young Carers Service provides a Welcome Pack for young carers, leisure and sports activities specifically for young carers (9 events over the summer, 2 at October half term) as well as evening activities and information on financial support including Quids In, Direct Payments and Rothercard. Tailored packages of support are produced, with an emphasis on helping young carers to access mainstream services. Barnardo's also do considerable work in raising the needs of young carers with other agencies. Although the service makes great efforts to publicise itself referrals remain well below the level which might be expected. Responses to questionnaires to professionals to inform the Young Carers' Commissioning Strategy indicated that only 57% of professionals were aware of the service and, of those, only 2% had referred a young carer to the service. This is despite the fact that 38% of respondents were aware of children & young people who were, or had the potential to be, young carers

8. **Finance:** The 2008 – 2009 allocation from the National Carers Grant to the Barnardo's Young Carers Service is £31850

9. **Risks and Uncertainties:**

The responsibility to identify and support young carers does not lie solely with the direct service provider but is the responsibility of all agencies. Each agency should attempt to ameliorate any adverse impact of the caring responsibilities on the young carer. This should include a full assessment of the person needing care in order to provide appropriate services. Failure to respond appropriately breaches young carers' rights as children and increases the risk that the responsibilities of caring might have a negative impact on the young carer's development and wellbeing.

In addition, without multi-agency support across Children and Young People's Services in referring young carers to the Barnardo's Young Carers Service, the direct service provider cannot deliver value for money

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 identifies young carers as “children in need” as defined in the Children Act 1989. As such, an assessment of their needs should be undertaken within the Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000

11. Background Papers and Consultation:

Rotherham Joint Carers’ Strategy 2008 - 2011

Young Carers Commissioning Strategy 2007 - 2010

Rotherham’s Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures on Supporting Young Carers & their Families 2003

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	Friday 6th February 2009
3.	Title:	Imagination Library – One Year On
4.	Directorate:	Children and Young People’s Services

5. Summary:

Imagination Library is a really special opportunity that has the potential to change children’s lives. It has its roots in Sevier County, Tennessee, USA but Great Britain is the first country in Europe, and Rotherham is the first local area in Great Britain, to adopt this scheme. As such Rotherham has paved the way for other local authorities to become involved.

Every child in Rotherham, between the ages of 0 and 5, can become a member of the *Imagination Library*. As a member they receive a free, brand new book with UK titles, selected by an expert panel. Once the child is registered the books arrive every month, sent to them at their home, addressed to them by name. If a child is registered at birth this enables them to collect a library of 60, good quality books, by the time they are five.

Rotherham’s *Imagination Library* began enrolling members from 1st April 2008 after running a small pilot from December 2007. The Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce has funded the early work, prior to the completion of the Council’s formal procurement process to purchase the books and postage.

Over 6,500 children have been registered with the *Imagination Library* up to 9th December 2008.

6. Recommendations:

- **That the report be received**
- **That members of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel, recognising the value of children, young people and their families having good literacy skills, re-affirm their support for the Imagination Library programme.**

7. Proposals and Details:

a) Background

In 1996, Dolly Parton, an internationally well known country singer, launched an exciting new scheme to benefit the children of her home county in east Tennessee. She could remember being brought up in a large, poor family where she didn't have any books. She wanted to foster a love of reading among her county's pre-school children and their families. She wanted children to be excited about books and to feel the magic that books can create. Moreover, she could ensure that every child would have books, regardless of their family's financial situation.

She decided to give a brand new, age appropriate book each month to every child under five in Sevier County and send it directly to their home via post. With the arrival of every child's first book they could experience the joy of finding their very own book in their letterbox. These moments continue each month until the child turns five - and in their very last month in the programme they receive a special "graduation" book.

The response to the programme was a tremendous success. So much so that many other communities wanted to provide the *Imagination Library* to their children. Consequently, she decided her Foundation should develop a way for other communities to participate. The Foundation asked a panel of experts to select just the right books and secured Penguin Group USA to be the exclusive publisher for the *Imagination Library*. In March 2000 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. she revealed her plan for other communities to provide the *Imagination Library* to their children.

b) The Dollywood Foundation UK Launch

After much work and planning, The Dollywood Foundation of the United Kingdom was formed and on 4th December 2007 in London, Dolly announced that her *Imagination Library* would now be available to communities throughout the United Kingdom.

On 5th December 2007 she travelled to Rotherham to host an event, attended by over 400 representatives of the media, education chiefs, councillors and other stakeholders from across the region, to launch *Imagination Library UK*.

c) Creating Rotherham's Imagination Library

Following the launch, in December 2007, a small group of Rotherham families were invited to pilot the *Imagination Library* until a formal procurement process for the provision of the books and postage was completed at the end of May 2008. The commissioning and procurement process was undertaken in line with standard OJEU regulations and requirements. The legal contract was written as a Framework Agreement, and this innovative approach means that Rotherham has done the ground work to enable other local authorities, throughout the United Kingdom, to enter into the Book Service, with the same provider, without having to enter into separate, costly and time consuming commissioning and procurement exercises.

Following the formal procurement process:

- The Dollywood Foundation of the United Kingdom, that has charitable status, was selected to manage the system to deliver the books to the children's homes;

- Penguin Books UK was chosen as the exclusive publisher for the programme, along with partners Dsicmm Limited for fulfilment and;
- Royal Mail for the book delivery.

From April 2008, with books funded by the Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce (BRCC), registration was opened to all children between the ages of 0 and 5. By December 2008 membership of the Imagination Library had topped over 6,500 children (see Appendix 1), with a potential registration of around 15,500 children, and 54 different books (see Appendix 2) have been distributed to Rotherham children.

d) Key Developments April 2008 – January 2009

- A Co-ordinator for the Imagination Library was appointed and took up post in January 2009
- Close links with the Library Service and the *BookStart* book gifting scheme have been established
- 300 to 400 new registrations are received each month (see Appendix 1)
- Regular up-dates are given to key partners e.g. Learning Partnership Board and schools
- Specific support programmes, through Family Learning programmes, have been established. These consist of three two hour workshops that take place in Children's Centres.
- Additional funding of approximately £2.9 million has been received from Yorkshire Forward to develop literacy and communication skills across Rotherham. Whilst the funding for this new project, *Inspire Rotherham*, cannot be used to fund the *Imagination Library* it can support the work with adults that supports the *Imagination Library*.

e) Measuring Outcomes

The scheme is still in its infancy and so it would be too early to secure quantitative evidence of impact on reading standards in the borough. The early members of the *Imagination Library* will reach the end of Key Stage 1 in 2010. However, in August/September 2008, a baseline survey was undertaken, using families that had registered with the *Imagination Library*, to assess their early attitudes and views about *Imagination Library*. There were no negative comments and there was already some clear evidence of the *Imagination Library* having changed attitudes and approaches to reading within the adults, many of whom had experienced difficulties in reading themselves. Repeat surveys will be undertaken at regular intervals.

Some of the comments expressed by the families are shown below:

- Benefits for the child
 - It has helped him to socialise with other children, they sit together and read his books.
 - Reading books in English (rather than Urdu) have helped him to learn two languages.
 - It has helped to develop her mind and imagination, become a confident speaker and listener, they use the language of books.

- Benefits for the adult
 - Yes, reading has helped me. If you read to your child you learn new words too so you can then get books with longer words than you would have done.
 - I am getting more confident about what books to read to him.
 - I didn't know how to choose books.
 - I didn't do much reading, now I'm reading with Josh.
- Change in attitudes and behaviours for the family
 - Makes you realise that even when children are very young you can read to them.
 - Range of books prevents stereotyping girls as princesses.
 - It has opened the range of books I might get for my child. I used to look for a particular series of books. I have now widened my horizons about selection of books.
 - Her Dad uses them at bedtime- bonding time, chance to be with her.
 - I used to go to Waterstones and look for books with bears and trains and things he can associate with, flap books and kipper books, now I may look for different ones.
 - I had no support from my parents who were illiterate (coming from abroad). I don't want my children to go through what I did.
- Over 6,500 children have been enrolled in the Imagination Library since April 2008
- 60 adults have enrolled on the Imagination Library Workshops involving 6 Children's Centres

f) Key Areas to be Developed

- It is necessary to generate income to support the delivery of the *Imagination Library*. Little work has been undertaken in this area given the limited resources available for this work. With the appointment of the Imagination Library Co-ordinator this work can now be undertaken more rigorously.
- Strong links with the *Inspire Rotherham* programme must be established if the impact of both programmes is to be maximised.
- A formal monitoring Board, in partnership with the BRCC will be established
- Effective procedures to monitor both the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of the programme need to be embedded in the programme.
- A publicity and communication strategy needs to be established
- More formalised procedures for engaging with key partners e.g. NHS, Children's Centres, Parent Support Advisers to ensure that all children and specifically the hard to reach families are aware of and take advantage of this offer.

8. Finance:

- The Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce funded the Imagination Library activity prior to the completing of the formal procurement process (£53,183) and will fund a further £96,817, making a total of £150,000 over the first four years
- An allocation from the Local Authority Business Growth Initiative has been granted to support this project
- Gifts and donations have been received totalling £1,208

9. Risks and Uncertainties:

The performance data for children in statutory education shows that, from the earliest ages, Rotherham's children experience difficulties in communication, language and literacy skills. This pattern of performance is then replicated throughout the later Key Stages through to GCSE and beyond.

Failure to achieve functional levels in these key areas impacts negatively on the overall achievements and life chances of children and young people.

The *Imagination Library* initiative, and the work surrounding this offer, provides an opportunity to inspire and engage children, and their families, in activities to improve these important skills areas.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

This initiative will address the Corporate Priorities for:

- Regeneration: - improving the image of Rotherham.
 - providing sustainable neighbourhoods of quality, choice and aspiration.
- Equalities: - promoting equality.
 - promoting good community relations.
- Sustainability: - improving the quality of life.
 - increasing employment opportunities for local people.

Together with the outcomes for Enjoy and Achieve contained within the Children's Plan.

11. Background Papers and Consultation:

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Appendix 1

Imagination Library Figures

Date	New Regs	Graduates	Active Regs	TOTAL Regs
11/12/07 - 11/04/08	3729	0	3729	3729
12/04/08 - 09/05/08	321	75	3975	4050
10/05/08 - 09/06/08	286	65	4192 (4196)	4336
10/06/08 - 09/07/08	335	66	4459 (4465)	4671
10/07/08 - 09/08/08	324	76	4706 (4713)	4995
10/08/08 - 09/09/08	385	90	4894 (5008)	5380
10/09/08 - 09/10/08	324	82	5244 (5250)	5704
10/10/08 - 09/11/08	410	85	5568 (5575)	6114
10/11/08 - 09/12/08	390	107	5846 (5858)	6504

N.B. There are some slight discrepancies in the calculation of the running total. This could be a result of the calculation of the "graduate" population and the point at which they are removed from the register
 Figures inside the brackets are the calculated figures
 Figures outside the bracket are those shown on the data base

Imagination Library Books – by month

April 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Jim and The Beanstalk
- Group 5 (2004) - Tales of Jemima Puddleduck
- Group 4 (2005) - Brushing My Teeth
- Group 3 (2006) - My First Number Board Book
- Group 2 (2007) - Puppies
- Group 1 (2008) - Baby Says Peekaboo

May 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Badger's Fancy Meal
- Group 5 (2004) - Spot Goes To School
- Group 4 (2005) - First Steps: Dentist
- Group 3 (2006) - My First Body Board Book
- Group 2 (2007) - Touch and Feel: Mealtime
- Group 1 (2008) - Whose Nose, Whose Toes?

June 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Princess Smartypants
- Group 5 (2004) - Take Care Good Knight OR Mrs. Wobble The Waitress
- Group 4 (2005) - The Elves and the Shoemaker: First Favorite Tales
- Group 3 (2006) - The Building Site
- Group 2 (2007) - Touch and Feel: Jungle Animals
- Group 1 (2008) - Baby's First Wild Animals

July 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Harry and the Dinosaurs Make a Splash
- Group 5 (2004) - The Three Billy Goats Gruff First Favourite Tales
- Group 4 (2005) - Row, Row, Row Your Boat
- Group 3 (2006) - Numbers With Peter Rabbit
- Group 2 (2007) - Five in a Bed OR Playtime Peekaboo
- Group 1 (2008) - Baby's Bedtime

August 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Watch Me Grow - Panda
- Group 5 (2004) - Harry And The Dinosaurs Play Hide And Seek
- Group 4 (2005) - Farm Chase
- Group 3 (2006) - Spot Loves His Dad
- Group 2 (2007) - Baby's Catalogue
- Group 1 (2008) - Baby's First Farm Animals

September 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Grandfather And I
- Group 5 (2004) - Spot's Baby Sister
- Group 4 (2005) - Time To Eat Up
- Group 3 (2006) - Whose Ears?
- Group 2 (2007) - Spot Goes To The Park
- Group 1 (2008) - Whose Baby Am I?

October 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Elephant and the Bad Baby
- Group 5 (2004) - Peppa Pig Hide and Seek
- Group 4 (2005) - My Lucky Day
- Group 3 (2006) - Touch and Feel: Puppy
- Group 2 (2007) - Baby Touch: Shapes
- Group 1 (2008) - My First: Pets

November 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - Angelina Star of the Show
- Group 5 (2004) - Harry and the Dinosaurs Say Rah!
- Group 4 (2005) - One, Two, Buckle My Shoe
- Group 3 (2006) - Touch and Feel: Farm
- Group 2 (2007) - Bathtime Peekaboo
- Group 1 (2008) - Colours With Peter Rabbit

December 2008

- Group 6 (2003) - NA
- Group 5 (2004) - Spot's Treasure Hunt
- Group 4 (2005) - My First: Time
- Group 3 (2006) - First Steps: Doctor
- Group 2 (2007) - My First: Things That Go
- Group 1 (2008) - Colours With Peter Rabbit

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children & Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	6th February 2009
3.	Title:	Foundation Stage Assessment results: Summer 2008
4.	Directorate	Children & Young People's Services

5. Summary:

The original purpose of this report was to inform the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Lifelong Learning about the performance of Rotherham children in Foundation Stage, in 2008.

The Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning has referred the report to the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

6. Recommendations:

That the report be received.

7. Proposals and Details:

All schools must conduct a form of statutory assessment at the end of each Key Stage (at age 5, 7, 11, 14 and 16). The Foundation Stage Profile is assessed when children reach the end of Foundation Stage (age 5) through ongoing and summative teacher assessment.

a) Overall Foundation Stage Results

The national assessment profile for pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage (Foundation Stage Profile [FSP]) has been in place for six years. Increased confidence and security in the assessments made has meant that, over recent years, the FSP is judged to be a more valid and reliable indicator than those undertaken in 2003 and 2004. This has been achieved by extensive moderation activities undertaken by the majority of schools across Rotherham and led by members of the School Effectiveness Consultant workforce.

Assessments continue to be made against the thirteen assessment scales that cover the strands of the five Areas of Learning. However, new national measures, referred to as Early Years Outcome Duties (EYOD), have been introduced and each Local Authority is required to set targets against these. They now form the key reporting indicators both locally and nationally.

Each assessment scale comprises of ten stages, identified through a point system of 0 to 9. The national expected level for pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage is point 6, which is equivalent to reaching the Early Learning Goals. Assessment scores of points 0 to 3 are judged to illustrate performance below the Early Learning Goals, points 4 to 7 illustrate performance within the Early Learning Goals and points 8 and 9 illustrate performance above the Early Learning Goals.

The particular features of the new Early Years Outcome Duty (EYOD) measures, place an emphasis on pupils reaching the national expected level of point 6 and their development in six key aspects. These are:

- 1) Personal Social and Emotional Development (6+ PSED),
- 2) Communication, Language and Literacy (6+ CLLD)
- 3) All Areas of Learning (78 points and above)
- 4) Both Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy (6+ PSED and CLLD)
- 5) All Areas of Learning, plus both Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy (78 points and 6+ in both PSED and CLLD)

A further key feature of the EYOD measures is linked to improving the outcomes for the lowest performing pupils at the end of Foundation Stage, identified as the lowest 20% band. This is measured by comparing the gap between the average point score for the whole cohort with the average point score for the lowest 20% band. This is referred to as:

- 6) The gap between the LA median and the bottom 20% band.

In addition, the EYOD gives regard to levels of deprivation for individual children as measured through the Index of Multiple Deprivation and referred to as the Super Output Areas (SOA). Children are grouped according to whether they live within the

30% SOA indicator or within the 70% SOA indicator (non 30% SOA). Those children that live within the 30% SOA are judged to have higher levels of deprivation. The proportion of Rotherham pupils in the 2008 Foundation 2 cohort that live within the 30% SOA is 53% compared to a national of 31%.

Data related to Rotherham's performance against these EYOD measures are contained within the attached appendices. These illustrate the trends over the last 3 years as well as the details of the 2008 outcomes.

Appendix 1 includes Tables 1 to 6

Tables 1 to 6 show the performance trends for each of the Early Years Outcome Duties over the last 3 years for boys, girls and all pupils. 2008 outcomes, as reported through the new national measures, show a positive upturn following the declines in 2007. The 2008 Foundation 2 cohort reported significant improvements in all Early Years Outcome Duty (EYOD) measures compared to 2007:

- Table 1: 6+ PSED: 68.5 (+8%)
- Table 2: 6+ CLLD: 47.1 (+7.1%)
- Table 3: 6+ in both PSED and CLLD: 44.2 (+7.5%)
- Table 4: 78 points or more: 64.7 (+7.8%)
- Table 5: 78 points and 6+ in both PSED and CLLD: 44.2 (+7.6%)
- Table 6: 20th Percentile FSP score: 65 (+4) - Gap between LA median and bottom 20%: 44.4 (-2.2%)

These positive outcomes have contributed to a rising trend over the last three years in all measures except the gap between LA median and bottom 20% which continues to exceed those reported in 2006. This upward trend is also very evident for children in the 30% SOA and those in the none 30% SOA, although the improvements from 2006 are more pronounced for those children in the 30% SOA.

In 2008, Rotherham met its targets for two of these Early Years Outcome Duties (6+ PSED and 78 points or more) which is a significant achievement. However, the proportion of pupils that reached 6+ in CLLD remains some distance from the target, highlighting the low levels of capability that many of Rotherham pupils have in Communication, Language and Literacy on entry to Foundation Stage and as they move into Key Stage 1. These lower outcomes in CLLD had a negative impact on two of the other targets, which combine this aspect with other measures.

Appendix 2 including Tables 1 to 3

Table 1 shows the increase in the proportion of pupils who reached point 6 or above in each of the strands, across all the assessment scales of the Areas of Learning between 2007 and 2008. While the improvements are most evident in PSED and CLLD, improvements have been made in all strands.

Table 2 and Table 3 show the gap between the LA and national for the proportion of pupils that achieved point 6 or above in each of the assessment scales across all the strands of the Areas of Learning, in 2007 and 2008. The gap between Rotherham's outcomes and those nationally has been narrowed in all aspects. The gap now ranges from 9.5% in Creative Development to 2.7% in Emotional Development.

Appendix 3 including Tables 1 and 2

The average scores for each Area of Learning (AoL) reported slight increases in Rotherham's 2008 outcomes compared to a standstill in the majority of assessment scales nationally. CLLD continues to be the weakest aspect, although notable gains have been made in Linking Sounds and Letters (+0.4), exceeding the national upturn by 0.2. Reading shows little variation from 2007 in line with the national trend. A stronger average has also been achieved in "Calculating" within the Mathematics AoL, compared to a standstill nationally. This improvement has also narrowed the gap between this strand and the two remaining strands in Mathematics, that have always been notably stronger features within this AoL for Rotherham.

b) Vulnerable Groups

Girls' performance continues to exceed that of boys in all EYOD measures. Improvements since 2006 have been made by both groups against each of the outcomes, however, these gains have been more significant for girls than for boys, except in PSED where boys improvement trend was 0.3% above that of girls. Boys were more strongly represented in the 20% lowest performing band, accounting for 64.8% of this group.

The proportion of pupils from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds in the 2008 cohort (15.2%) was slightly lower than in 2007 (16.6%), but above 2006 (12.6%). APKN (Asian of Pakistani origin) continues to be the main group within Rotherham's ethnic community. 38% of pupils from BME backgrounds within this cohort were within the 20% lowest performing band, while only 16.5% of the pupils of White British origin are represented within this lower performing group.

Only three schools reported no pupil in the 20% lowest performing band. Across the remaining schools the proportion of each cohort represented in this band ranged from 1.9% to 86.3%.

c) Actions Taken

Following the declines reported in 2007, the School Effectiveness Service continued its drive to improve the outcomes for children at the end of the Foundation Stage and to increase the levels of capability for children as they enter Key Stage 1. This continues to be part of the strategic programme to raise standards across all key stages.

In partnership with the National Strategies team a formal review of Rotherham's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision was undertaken. A wide range of stakeholders were involved in this review and, while many positive aspects of Rotherham's EYFS provision was confirmed, clear areas for improvement were identified. Actions taken in response to these identified areas have contributed to the improvements made in 2008 and have increased the effectiveness of the provision across this key stage to underpin future improvements.

The particular emphasis on integrating a more structured approach to the teaching of phonics across all schools and settings, through universal and specific training programmes has contributed to the marked improvements in children's outcomes at the end of the Foundation Stage in the strand of "Linking Sounds and Letters". However, this has not impacted sufficiently well on children's reading capability in

2008. The introduction and implementation of Rotherham's "Imaginary Library" is widening the scope to support children's reading from an early age. Increasing children's involvement in books and engaging the support of parents/carers and families in the sharing of books with their children prior to and during their EYFS stage. Although still in the early stages of introduction, this programme should make a significant contribution to the collective drive to improve reading standards and behaviours across Rotherham.

c) Priorities for improvement

In order to meet the EYOD targets for 2009 and sustain a trajectory for improvement:

- Extend the successes reported in 2008
- Increase the average of the LA's lowest 20%
- Narrow the gap between the LA's lowest 20% and the LA's median
- Further increase the proportion of children reaching 6+ in CLLD

Actions to support further improvements

- An additional consultant for CLLD, funded by the National Primary Strategy, is now in post and is working with targeted schools to improve the provision for CLLD and increase the effectiveness of this on children's learning.
- The EYFS workforce has been extended and now benefits from an additional experienced consultant and a highly effective consultant headteacher.
- The roll out of "Imagination Library" is already contributing to the raising of the status of reading across Rotherham and will support an increased level of involvement and interaction with high quality books from a very early age
- Further visits are planned to high performing LAs, recommended by National Strategies
- Further cross LA moderation in Foundation Stage is to be undertaken, most particularly with LAs with similar contexts to those of Rotherham that are reporting more positive results than Rotherham
- The data and information provided to all school settings with Foundation Stage children have been revised and training has been provided to all school leaders in the analysis of these. A particular focus has been on raising expectations and challenging underperformance
- A research programme is in place to extend our knowledge and understand of the learning needs of those children in the 20% lowest performing band and to inform our approach to removing the barriers to learning for our most vulnerable children.
- Assessment materials have been revised to reflect the new EYFS Framework and assessment processes and systems are being developed to support teaching and learning across this key stage.

8. Finance:

Funding for the identification of, intervention in and support for schools that are underachieving is a key focus for the core budget of the School Effectiveness Service.

Additional resources have been provided by the national Strategies to employ and additional consultant specifically for CLLL.

9. Risks and Uncertainties:

Should Rotherham's schools continue to show low and declining outcomes at the end of Foundation Stage this could result in:

- Declining and lower standards at the end of KS1 and KS2
- Significant numbers of children underachieving resulting in reduced opportunities post statutory education
- The Council's rating, in relation to the quality of services and its statutory responsibility to raise standards, will be affected through the CPA and APA systems
- The Council's intervention rating with DCSF could be increased.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

Pupil achievement is a key performance indicator (Learning), in the Community Strategy, the Corporate Plan, the Children and Young People's Single Plan and the Learning without Limits Partnership Plan (schools)

11. Background Papers and Consultation:

Foundation Stage Assessment results: Summer 2005 to 2008

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children & Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	Friday 6th February 2009
3.	Title:	Key Stage 1 Assessment results: Summer 2008
4.	Directorate:	Children & Young People's Services

5. Summary:

The original purpose of this report was to inform the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Lifelong Learning of the performance of Rotherham pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, in 2008.

The Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning has referred the report to the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

6. Recommendations:

That the report be received.

7. Proposals and Details:

All schools must conduct a form of statutory assessment at the end of each Key Stage (at age 5, 7, 11, 14 and 16). At the end of Key Stage 1 (age 7) children undertake a formal assessment, informed by Statutory Assessment Tasks (SATs) which, from 2005, have been reported as teacher assessment.

a) Overall Results for Key Stage 1

Historically, pupils enter Key Stage 1 with average scores below the national averages in all assessment scales as reported through the Foundation Stage profile. The weakest element has continued to be in Communication Language and Literacy, most particularly in “Linking Sounds and Letters” and Writing. Pupils’ capability in mathematics has shown an ongoing weakness in the “Calculation” strand. These outcomes present a low base for pupils as they move into KS1.

Appendix 1 – Table 1

Standards, as reported through the Average Point Scores (APS) at the end of KS1, have remained broadly static over the period 2005 to 2007, reporting standards below the national averages. There has been some variability between subjects and levels over this period. However, gains and declines have, in the majority of instances, followed the national trend and that of our Statistical Neighbours. The exception has been in reading, which remains the furthest distance from the national. 2008 results were disappointing, reporting declines in reading, writing and mathematics and failed to reflect the impact of the actions taken.

Appendix 2 including Tables 1 to 9

Tables 1 to 9 show the performance trends over the last four years, against the three key measures of level 2+, level 2B+ and level 3 for Rotherham and the national in reading, writing and mathematics.

Tables 1 to 3 present Rotherham’s reading profile against the key measures. Level 2+ reading has continued to decline year on year compared to a more evident standstill nationally. The gap between Rotherham’s performance and the national average is most significant being 4.7% below. The slight gain made at Level 2B+ in 2007 was not maintained in 2008, although the 2008 outcome is above that reported in 2006. Performance in reading, at level 3, is only 0.5% below national average.

Tables 4 to 6 present Rotherham’s writing profile against the key measures. Level 2+ writing maintained the outcome in 2007 compared to a 1% decline nationally. The decline at level 2B+ in 2008 was in line with the national rate of decline, The gap between Rotherham’s performance at level 2B+ and the national average is 2.6%. Although year on year declines have been reported at Level 3 in writing, these have been broadly in line with the national trend. The small decline in 2008 results at this level was less marked than the national and has therefore reduced the gap between Rotherham and the national to 0.5%.

Tables 7 to 9 present Rotherham’s mathematics profile against the key measures. 2008 results reflect declines at all levels compared to a standstill nationally at Level 2+ and Level 2B+. The notable gain made at level 2B+ in 2007 was not sustained, although results are higher than in 2006. The difference between Rotherham’s

performance and the national average is 3.5%. Level 3 mathematics continues to be above the national average by almost 1%.

b) Summary of KS1 Performance

Attainment at L 3+ continues to be the strongest element of Rotherham's profile in Key Stage 1 and is comparable to the national averages in all aspects. Core outcomes are above those of our Statistical Neighbours (reading +3%, writing +2% and mathematics +2%). This is a significant achievement, in the context of the continuing lower proportion of pupils attaining above the Early Learning Goals in all assessment scales, than reported nationally, at the end of Foundation Stage.

The proportion of pupils attaining below L2 is higher than the national average and that of our Statistical Neighbours. This mirrors the trend at the end of Foundation Stage, where a higher proportion of pupils attain below the Early Learning Goals than reported nationally and emphasises the exceptional degree of challenge many of our schools continue to face. Reducing the proportion of pupils attaining below L2 in both reading and mathematics remains a priority for the LA.

Current performance at the end of KS1, from the low starting points reflected in the Foundation Stage Profile, continues to demonstrate some strong features of progress for pupils.

- Almost all pupils who reached point 6 (expected standard) at the end of Foundation Stage attained at least L2 by the end of KS1 in reading, writing and mathematics
- Two thirds of these pupils attained at the national expected level of 2B and above in each of these aspects
- one tenth of these go on to demonstrate attainment at the higher level of 3+
- Almost 7 out of 10 pupils who attained just below the expected level (points 4 and 5) at the end of Foundation Stage attained L2 at the end of KS1, with approximately half of these pupils reaching the national expected outcome of L2B
- Progress is most evident in reading and writing. Overall approximately 3 out of 10 pupils who attained below the Early Learning Goals (points 1, 2 and 3) on entry to KS1 also reached L2 in reading and writing. This success was slightly lower in mathematics.

Increasing progress rates further continues to be a key objective within the LA's drive for improved standards.

c) Actions Taken

The LA aspires to be at least in line with the national average, in all aspects and at each level, as a key milestone in the drive for improved standards at this KS1. The lack of sustained improvement over the last three years makes this ambition increasingly challenging. However the commitment remains and an increase in the level of challenge and support continues to be directed to schools.

- All schools have been supported in establishing effective pupil tracking systems. This ensures that each pupil's progress is closely monitored and clear targets are set for individual pupils for the end of each key stage.

- New assessment materials for reading have been developed and shared with schools (PEAR) to support the accuracy of the data schools are using as well as supporting the next steps in learning for pupils.
- Schools are particularly focused on those pupils at risk of underachievement. 2008 results show an 8% increase in pupils from APKN backgrounds attaining L2 and above in reading compared to 2007.
- A particular emphasis, during 2007/08, was on improving outcomes at the end of Foundation Stage, in order to strengthen the entry profile of pupils as they move into KS1. This has been highly successful. Foundation Stage Profile measures for 2008 reported the highest performance to date in the great majority of indicators. The current Year 1 cohort have entered this key stage with increased capability in Communication, Language and Literacy and most particularly in Linking Sounds and Letters, having benefited from the more structured national programme delivered to all schools and settings. This should provide a more secure platform for an increased proportion of pupils to reach the national expected level at the end of KS1 and ensure that outcomes are more in line with the national averages and exceed those of our Statistical Neighbours by 2010.
- Strengthening the learning culture and aspirations within the school's immediate communities is critical in addressing the effects of embedded levels of acute deprivation. The LA continues to promote the benefits of engaging families in learning programmes and equipping them to be more confident to support their children's learning. Rotherham's Family Learning Team have worked in 50 different settings and enrolled 400 adults (Sept 07 – April 08) in adult learning programmes with progression routes leading to qualifications. The implementation of Rotherham's "Imagination Library" further supports the Council's drive to engage our youngest children, with their families, in positive reading behaviours. The aim is to extend their Language and Literacy skills prior to moving into Key Stage 1 and to embed a culture of reading across the Borough. These are longer term investments in the future achievements of our children, most particularly as they move into statutory schooling.
- All schools have been trained in the delivery of a more structured approach to the teaching of phonics, as recommended by the Rose Review and promoted through the National Strategies. Schools report notable improvements in pupils' ability to decode words accurately. The application of this enhanced skill into reading for meaning has been demonstrated, nationally, to become more powerful during the second year of its implementation when it impacts more substantially on standards in reading at the end of this KS1. 2009 outcomes should, therefore, demonstrate stronger progress measures in reading and contribute to improved outcomes for pupils in this aspect.
- A decisive response was made to the declines reported in 2007, at the end of Foundation Stage, and the impact of this upon the entry profile for this cohort as they moved into KS1 (2009 Y2 cohort). A range of support strategies and programmes have been targeted towards identified schools to enable this particular cohort to attain more successfully at the end of KS1 and to improve the quality and effectiveness of provision. Year 1 Framework Training for Literacy and Numeracy (National Strategies) has been a key part of this programme.
- As part of the raising standards strategy the School Effectiveness Service, in partnership with schools, is working to establish an increased proportion of

models of highly effective practice to influence and inform the wider group of schools (Lead Learning Centres). Three schools were identified in 2007 for reading at KS1 and have been supported to confirm their practice and increase their readiness to work with other schools and to act as training centres. The contribution of these schools to improving the quality of provision across KS1 in reading and thus raising standards will become increasingly significant.

d) Priorities for Improvement

- Reducing the proportion of pupils attaining below L2, most particularly in reading and mathematics
- Increasing the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level (L2B+) in all aspects
- Improve the performance of vulnerable groups (boys, BME, 30% SOA)

e) Development Activities

- A highly effective Headteacher has been recruited, from September 2008, to lead the drive for improved standards in KS1. This will strengthen the expertise and extend the capacity of the School Effectiveness Services in this area. One key focus of work will be the increased cross- moderation of schools' internal assessments by the LA and partner schools. Assessment at KS1 is entirely internal without the validation of national testing. Outcomes at KS1 provide the baseline for schools' Contextual Value Added (CVA) measure at KS2, which is published nationally.
- A detailed scrutiny of the key characteristics of those pupils failing to reach level 2 will be undertaken to identify the additional measures required to support schools in overcoming current barriers to learning. This will provide a focused agenda for services across C&YPS and engage Locality Teams in this determined drive.
- Nine schools are involved in the re launch of Reading Recovery. This strategy provides a structured programme of intervention, targeted to individual pupils at risk of not reaching the expected standard by the end of KS 1 in reading. This has proved to be highly successful and will reduce the proportion of pupils working below the national expected level in reading.
- Five schools are involved in the new initiative Every Child Counts (ECC). This strategy provides a structured programme of intervention, targeted to individual pupils at risk of not reaching the expected standard by the end of KS1 in mathematics. Early work in the piloting of this programme shows this to be effective in reducing the proportion of pupils working below the national expected level.
- To confirm further the unrelenting drive to improve standards in reading by the end of KS1, a targeted programme of intervention is being delivered to eleven additional schools to support their practice in the teaching of reading and to impact more successfully upon standards at the end of this key stage.
- The commitment to raise standards and achievement at during KS1 is central to the second, LA and schools, Partnership Plan 2008-10, endorsed by Headteachers and an essential contract between schools and the LA.

8. Finance:

Funding for the identification of, intervention in and support for schools that are underachieving is a key focus for the core budget of the School Improvement Service. Additional grant funding is provided by the National Strategies where weaknesses are identified.

9. Risks and Uncertainties:

Should Rotherham's schools show insufficient progress this could result in:

- Declining and lower standards at the end of KS2
- Significant numbers of children underachieving, which reduces their opportunities post statutory education
- The Council's rating, in relation to the quality of services and its statutory responsibility to raise standards will be affected through the CPA and APA systems
- The Council's intervention rating with DCSF could be increased.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

Pupil achievement is a key performance indicator (Learning), in the Community Strategy, the Corporate Plan, the Children and Young People's Single Plan and The learning without Limits Partnership Plan (schools)

11. Background Papers and Consultation:

Key Stage 1 Assessment results: Summer 2005 – Report to Cabinet – 2006

Key Stage 1 Assessment results: Summer 2006 – Report to Cabinet – 2007

Key Stage 1 Assessment results: Summer 2007 – Report to Cabinet – 2008

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Children and Young People’s Services Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	Friday 6th February 2009
3.	Title:	Ofsted Profile of Schools
4.	Directorate:	Children and Young People’s Services

5. Summary:

This report was originally presented to the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Lifelong Learning. The report summarises the Ofsted inspection profile of all Rotherham schools during the period 2005-8.

The Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning has referred the report to the Children and Young People’s Services Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

6. Recommendations: That the report be received.**7. Proposals and Details:**

This report provides an overview of the Ofsted inspection profile of Rotherham schools during the period September 2005 - July 2008. Ofsted introduced a new inspection framework in September 2005 based on a three year cycle which, by the end of the 2007/8 school year, had seen the inspection of all but two Rotherham schools. The most important feature of the new framework has been the centrality of the school’s self-evaluation in the assessment process and the influence of the analysis of performance data, using the national Raise on Line intelligence system, on inspection outcomes.

a. Inspection framework : Schools are inspected across a range of indicators of which the most important are:

- Standards and Achievement
- Pupil Personal Development and Wellbeing
- Quality of Provision, including Teaching & Learning and Curriculum and, Leadership & Management

Each area is graded 1-4, Outstanding to Inadequate. Each school is then assessed for its overall Effectiveness & Efficiency on the same grade scale. Schools judged as 4, Inadequate, are subject to Special Measures or, if in the inspectors’ judgement, the school has the capacity to improve itself a Notice to Improve.

b. Improved Borough Profile : During 2005-8, Ofsted inspectors have identified a strongly positive profile of Rotherham schools across all three Phases. Two key indicators of success are the number of schools placed in Ofsted categories (Inadequate) and the proportion of schools achieving Outstanding judgements. In the first case, Headteachers, with the support of the Local Authority, have achieved a significant reduction in the number of schools subject to category. Currently, only

one school, Dinnington Primary School, is in Notice to Improve and no school is subject to Special Measures. This is a radical improvement on previous profiles and the best position since inspections began. Moreover, the proportion of Outstanding schools, particularly in Primary and Special, has increased significantly with 4 out of 6 Special Schools judged as Outstanding by July 2008 – an unprecedented achievement.

c. Summary Inspection Profile: in July 2008, at the end of the 2005-8 inspection cycle, 22 schools had been judged Outstanding (Grade 1), 55 Good (2), 51 Satisfactory (3) and 1 Inadequate (4).

	JUDGEMENT			
	1	2	3	4
All Phases	17% (22)	43% (55)	40% (51)	1% (1)
Primary	16% (16)	47% (48)	36% (37)	1% (1)
Secondary	13% (2)	31% (5)	56% (9)	0%
Special/PRU	36% (4)	18% (2)	45% (5)	0%

The profile represents a considerable strengthening in relation to previous inspection patterns. The number of Outstanding Special and Primary schools is particularly impressive since it offers the Borough examples of leading practice from which other schools can learn; this is the inspiration of the Lead Partner Programme where 20 Junior and Infant schools are working with 10 Outstanding schools in partnerships of three to build collective excellence. Two secondary schools with emphatic Good inspection reports are currently working with the Consultant Headteacher of an Outstanding school to achieve that standard in the next cycle.

The essential challenge for the next period is to move the body of schools, especially in the Secondary phase, from Satisfactory to Good and then to Outstanding.

d. Historical comparison : comparison with the Local Authority position in previous years is complicated by the removal of the Ofsted category Serious Weaknesses and its replacement by the slightly different indicator of Notice to Improve, whose introduction has considerably increased the number of category schools nationally. However, by any measure, there has been a significant reduction in the number and proportion of Rotherham schools judged to be Inadequate in the last four years, so that in 2008 the Authority is in its strongest ever position in this regard. Current national and Statistical Neighbour information is not yet available for this period but previous data would confirm the strength of the LA profile in relation to Authorities nationally and not least vis a vis its regional neighbours.

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Sept 08
Special Measures	4	4	3	0	0
Serious Weakness	2	2	-	-	-
Notice to Improve	-	1	2	4	1
Total	6	7	5	4	1

A number of factors have contributed to this important improvement, including :

- i. improved recruitment, professional development and sustained support for Headteachers, especially in the most vulnerable schools
- ii. systematic investment in quality leadership development and succession planning at all levels, led by the LA
- iii. more intelligent, focussed and flexible school intervention strategies, based on “doing with” not “doing to”
- iv. a culture of collaboration where schools support each other and therefore greatly enrich the resources for improvement
- v. a significantly improved advisory and consultancy team, making best use of talented colleagues in SES and in schools themselves

e. Particular areas of accomplishment : an analysis of schools’ differential performance across the many indicators in the Ofsted framework indicates our current areas of particular strength and some priorities for further improvement.

The category Personal Development and Wellbeing is consistently the strongest area in all schools and especially in the Primary phase where 88% of schools were judged to be at least Good in promoting the overall personal development and wellbeing of their pupils. This aspect embraces behaviour, enjoyment, pupil safety and health, the contribution to community and spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of school life. Guidance, care and support for pupils are similarly strong in Primary, where our schools are clearly inclusive, caring and responsible communities.

The quality of curriculum is a particular strength in secondary schools, where 81% were at least Good on this measure. Personal development and wellbeing scores less highly than in Primary (65-70%) but is secure for the older phase. Secondary Governing Bodies and leadership teams score well. All Rotherham schools (90% at Good +) score impressively on “working in partnership “to support learners, exemplifying the strength of the partnership culture developing in the Borough.

f. Priorities for further improvement : Standards and Achievement remain below the national averages on most indicators and this is the urgent continuing priority for improvement. Standards (29% Good or better) are significantly weaker than Achievement (60%) and Progress (60%) because our schools add good value to pupils, many of whom have low starting points. Critical to further improvement here is the strengthening of the Teaching and Learning culture which achieves a modest 62% overall Good or better outcome, but only 44% in secondary. The evaluation of leadership (68% overall Good or better) will only rise when Standards and Achievement improve. The other most urgent area to be addressed is attendance where only 49% of schools are rated Good or better and 6% are Inadequate on that measure.

Overall, however, 71% of schools are judged to have at least a Good capacity to continue to improve; none lacked that capacity sufficient to warrant Special Measures.

8. Finance:

Support for schools in developing Standards and Achievement and the Quality of Provision is provided by the School Effectiveness Service as part of its core agenda with schools, together with Area Based Grants relating to National Strategy priorities.

9. Risks and Uncertainties:

Ofsted inspections are an important evaluation of the quality of education provided to children and young people. Where that quality of provision is Good or Outstanding, pupils' progress, achievement and standards should be of the same order. Where schools are ineffective or failing, students' progress and achievement will be damaged and their life chances negatively affected. Strong and successful schools exert a profoundly positive influence on their communities; underachieving schools contribute to community decline and impoverishment.

The Ofsted profile for individual schools and the Local Authority is a key indicator of professional effectiveness contributing to judgements of the quality of the LA and the Council in APA and JAR evaluations. Schools subject to a negative inspection are required to mount intensive improvement programmes within tight timescales and are regularly externally monitored. Such schools are vulnerable to negative public reaction and unhelpful publicity which may impact both on the pupil roll and on the recruitment and retention of staff. Intervention in support of such schools is an expensive call on LA resources and personnel. Local Authorities with a high number of schools in categories are themselves subject to intensive external intervention by Ofsted and DCSF. In extreme cases where underperformance persists, both schools and LAs may lose their right to self-governance.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

Any plans arising from an analysis of this report should be consistent with the Community Strategy, the Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People's Single Plan. The improvement actions should address the Corporate Priorities for:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Regeneration | - improving the image of Rotherham;
- providing sustainable neighbourhoods of quality, choice and aspiration. |
| Equalities | - promoting equality;
- promoting good community relations. |
| Sustainability | - improving quality of life;
- increasing employment opportunities for local people. |

11. Background Papers and Consultation:

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	21st January, 2009
3.	Title:	Review of Children and Young Peoples Services
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's

5. Summary

The recent publication of the 2008 Annual Performance Assessment (APA) Letter (**Appendix A**) has demonstrated a deterioration of scores across five of the six APA outcome areas. Subsequently the overall judgement for children's services has been reduced from 3 (Good) to 2 (Adequate).

This judgement clearly is a cause for concern and this report highlights proposals to commission a review to provide an in-depth, independent assessment of children and young people's services for completion by the end of March 2009.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet agree the proposed review scope outlined in Appendix B.

That Cabinet agree the proposals that a Board and its recommended membership is established to oversee the review.

7. Proposals and Details

Background

The Annual Performance Assessment (APA) conducted annually by Ofsted, contributes to the Council's overall Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) rating.

Children and Young People Services have been well regarded in recent years. The Joint Area Review in 2006 rated the service as three out of four and highlighted many areas of good practice. Similarly the Annual Performance Assessment in 2007 rated the council as good with improvements across all areas, with capacity rated as outstanding.

The position in 2008 is very different. The council has experienced deterioration in scores with five of the six outcome areas reducing. The overall service is now judged as a two overall, "adequate". This is clearly a major cause for concern. The national picture is mixed. Over 40% of councils have shown a decline in service scores and overall about a quarter reduced their overall score. It is evident that Ofsted have been more robust in their approach following the incidents in Haringey.

Proposals

As a result we wish to commission a review to provide an in-depth, speedy and independent assessment of the situation. We have decided to use the DCSF Children's Services Improvement Framework as a basis to help us procure a high quality, tailored package of support. We are seeking a full scale management review of the whole service which will provide a 'healthcheck' on whether we have appropriate capacity in terms of staff, management and resources in order to improve longer term. An independent review is considered essential in order to provide an objective assessment of the service.

Scope of the Review

A comprehensive scope for the review has been produced and is attached at **Appendix B**.

In essence the review is looking at all aspects of the service. It will draw upon the Annual Performance Assessment from 2008 and other information but we are not looking for the review to repeat the APA. Instead we are seeking a diagnostic assessment of the issues and an independent view based upon a detailed examination of key aspects of service delivery.

Review Board

It is proposed that a review board is established to oversee the review and be kept up to date with all aspects of the review. Proposed representation should include:

Cllr Roger Stone – Leader, RMBC
Mike Cuff - Chief Executive, RMBC
Matthew Gladstone - Assistant Chief Executive, RMBC
Cllr Shaun Wright - Cabinet Member, CYP, RMBC
Joyce Thacker - Strategic Director, CYP, RMBC
Andy Buck - Chief Executive, NHS Rotherham

8. Finance

Completion of this review should be achieved for no more than £100K (indicative costs). As these costs are above £50K bids should be sought from at least six consultancy firms. The value of the contract will not exceed £100k and is therefore below the EU threshold at which the mandatory timescales take effect; similarly it will not be necessary to advertise in OJEU on this occasion.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure to address the issues identified within Children and Young People's Services could ultimately result in government intervention. This has already been evident in a number of other local authorities following the results of this years Annual Performance Assessments (APA).

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The findings of the 2008 APA will feed into the first Comprehensive Area Assessment Judgement expected in late 2009.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

APA Letter 2008, Ofsted – December 2008
APA Letter 2008 – Appendix A

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17 December 2008

Ms Joyce Thacker
Director of Children and Young People's Services
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Norfolk House
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Rotherham
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Dear Ms Thacker

Annual performance assessment of services for children and young people in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council 2008

This letter summarises the findings of the 2008 annual performance assessment (APA) for your council. The evaluations and judgements in the letter draw on a range of data and information which covers the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008. As you know, the APA is not based on an inspection of your services and, therefore, can only provide a snapshot based on the evidence considered. As such, I am grateful to you for assuring the quality of the data provided.

Performance is judged on a four point scale as detailed in the handbook. I should emphasise that the grades awarded are based on an overall 'best fit' model. For instance, an outstanding judgement of Grade 4 reflects that overall most aspects, but not necessarily all, of the services in the area are working very well. We know that one of the features of outstanding provision is the drive for greater improvement and no council would suggest, and nor would Ofsted, that a judgement of outstanding indicates that everything is perfect. Similarly within a judgement of inadequate overall, Grade 1, there could be some aspects of the overall service that are adequate or even good. Judgements are made in a rounded way, balancing all of the evidence and giving due consideration to outcomes, local and national contexts, priorities and decision-making.



The following table sets out the grades awarded for performance in 2008.

Assessment judgement area	APA grade
Overall effectiveness of children's services	2
Being healthy	2
Staying safe	2
Enjoying and achieving	2
Making a positive contribution	4
Achieving economic well-being	2
Capacity to improve, including the management of services for children and young people	2

*Inspectors make judgements based on the following scale
4: outstanding/excellent; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate*

Overall effectiveness of children's services**Grade 2**

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council delivers services for children and young people which meet the minimum requirements for users. The council's capacity to improve, including its management of services, is adequate. While the council has not sustained the level of outcomes for children across all areas compared with the 2007 APA, it has made adequate progress overall. The recent redesign of services to develop greater partnership working has been a priority for the council and the changes it has made have yet to fully demonstrate effectiveness across all areas of its work.

In all outcome areas the council has significant successes. The council is outstanding in enabling children and young people to make a positive contribution. In being healthy there are good levels of participation in and achievement of the Healthy School award, and in staying safe performance in initial and core assessments is good. Fewer schools in the borough are in an Ofsted category of concern following inspection than the national average; none are subject to special measures. The proportions of care leavers and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in employment, education or training are high.

In most outcomes areas these successes are balanced by aspects where further improvements can be made. For example, there are still too many teenage pregnancies. The fostering service was judged to be inadequate on inspection and although actions are underway to address the areas of weakness these have yet to be sufficiently effective. Performance by children of primary school age is not improving fast enough and level 2 and 3 achievements are too low for 16- to 19-year-olds.

Being healthy**Grade 2**

The contribution of services to improving outcomes for children and young people in this aspect is adequate. The council's analysis of its strengths and areas for development in this outcome area overvalue the areas where progress has been made and a range of outcomes remain at adequate levels. The table below sets out the evidence for the grade awarded.

Major strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The percentage of schools achieving the Healthy School Award is higher than for statistical neighbours and 100% of schools are engage in the National Healthy Schools Programme. ▪ There is a comprehensive service for substance misuse resulting in a higher proportion of young people receiving substance misuse treatment than in statistical neighbours.

Important weaknesses and areas for development

- The teenage conception rate remains higher than that of statistical neighbours.

Staying safe**Grade 2**

The contribution of services to improving outcomes for children and young people in this aspect is inadequate. The council's analysis of its strengths and areas for development in this outcome area underestimate a number of important weaknesses and overvalue the areas where progress has been made. The table below sets out the evidence for the grade awarded.

Major Strengths

- A higher percentage of initial and core assessments is completed on time when compared to statistical neighbours and the national average.
- The proportion of looked after children who were adopted during the year has improved to a high level.
- There has been a significant reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

Important weaknesses and areas for development

- The fostering service is inadequate. Too many placements are overcrowded resulting in children sharing bedrooms inappropriately and monitoring of placements is not robust. There are too few foster carers.
- Despite a statutory notice given to a council children's home to cease making emergency placements over their allocated number, the practice continues.

Enjoying and achieving**Grade 2**

The contribution of services to improving outcomes for children and young people in this aspect is adequate. The council's analysis of its strengths and areas for development in this outcome area underestimate a number of important weaknesses and overvalue the areas where progress has been made. The table below sets out the evidence for the grade awarded.

Major Strengths

- The percentage of schools in an Ofsted category of concern is lower than nationally and in comparable councils. There are no schools in Special Measures. The majority of special schools have been judged to be outstanding.
- All floor targets for secondary schools have been surpassed.
- There have been good improvements in the progress made by young people at Key Stage 4.

- The percentage of young people who leave care aged 16 with five or more GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A* to C is much higher than nationally and in comparable councils.

Important weaknesses and areas for development

- Attainment at Key Stage 1 fell in 2007 despite this being identified as an area of weakness in last year's APA. The trend of improvement over time is below average for reading, writing and mathematics when compared to similar councils.
- Although there has been improvement in children's attainment in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, standards remain below similar councils and the national average. The rate of progress being achieved in primary schools is not keeping pace with similar councils.
- Attendance in secondary schools is below that in similar councils.

Making a positive contribution

Grade 4

The contribution of services to improving outcomes for children and young people in this aspect is outstanding. The council's analysis of its strengths and areas for development in this outcome area is consistent with the evidence. The table below sets out the evidence for the grade awarded.

Major strengths

- Rotherham Voice and Influence is recognised as good practice at a national level and the council was the first to receive the National Youth Agency Quality Mark.
- The rate of re-offending is below similar areas and the rate for looked after children and young people (now the 30th lowest in England) is falling.
- The participation of looked after children and young people in their reviews is very good.
- There is an excellent Children's Rights Service which supports looked after children and young people at reviews, strategy meetings and by acting as advocates.

Important weaknesses and areas for development

Achieving economic well-being

Grade 2

The contribution of services to improving outcomes for children and young people in this aspect is adequate. The council's analysis of its strengths and areas for development in this outcome area underestimate a number of important weaknesses and overvalue the areas where progress has been made. The table below sets out the evidence for the grade awarded.

Major strengths

- The proportion of care leavers in employment, education or training is higher than nationally and similar council areas. The percentage of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are in employment, education or training is very good. Almost twice as many as the national average are in work-based learning.
- Progress towards the introduction of the Diplomas for 14- to 19-year-olds is good and there is effective collaboration between providers.
- The average point score for 16- to 18-year-olds in GCE/VCE/A/AS improved in 2007 at a faster rate than similar council areas and are now in-line with the average of similar councils and nationally.
- Strategies to improve and sustain engagement post-16 are being successful. There have been year-on-year improvements in the number of 16-year-olds continuing in learning and a significant improvement over time in the number of apprenticeships being completed, which are now better than the average for similar council areas and nationally.

Important weaknesses and areas for development

- Although the percentage of young people not in employment, education or training has reduced it is still above similar councils and national averages.
- Level 2 and Level 3 achievement is below similar neighbours and the national average.

Capacity to improve, including the management of children's services**Grade 2**

The council's capacity to improve its services for children and young people is adequate. Its management of these services is also adequate. The recent redesign of services to develop greater partnership working has been a priority for the council. The establishment of the Children's Trust and the appointment of a new Director for Children's Services together with the redesigning of the service have the potential to bring about sustained improvements.

In its self-assessment, the council has over-estimated performance in some aspects, since the changes it has made have yet to fully demonstrate effectiveness across all areas of the its work. Overall progress has been adequate.

Major strengths

- Partnership working is effective, with increased integration of services, particularly for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Financial management is good. Expenditure on children in need has increased to a good level.

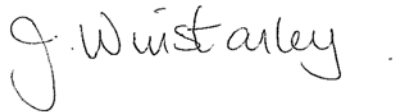
Important weaknesses and areas for development

- Management oversight for looked after children has not ensured they have been fully safeguarded.
- The council has overestimated its performance in some outcome areas.

The children's services grade is the performance rating for the purpose of section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It will also provide the score for the children and young people service block in the comprehensive performance assessment to be published by the Audit Commission.

We are grateful for the information you provided to support this process and for the time given by you and your colleagues during the assessment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Juliet Winstanley".

Juliet Winstanley
Divisional Manager, Local Services Inspection

Appendix B - Invitation to tender

Review of Children and Young People Services

Background

1. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has undergone a dramatic and rapid transformation in recent years rated as a 'weak' authority in 2004 and achieving 'excellent' status in 2008. Improvement has occurred across the whole authority and the Council is proud of its achievements but recognises there are still significant challenges remaining and is not complacent in its pursuit of ongoing improvement.

2. Children and Young People Services have been well regarded in recent years. The Joint Area Review in 2006 rated the service as three out of four and highlighted many areas of good practice. Similarly the Annual Performance Assessment in 2007 rated the Council as good with improvements across all areas, with capacity rated as outstanding.

3. The position in 2008 is very different. The Council has experienced a deterioration in scores with five of the six outcome areas reducing. The overall service is now judged as a two overall, "adequate". This is clearly a major cause for concern.

4. The national picture is mixed. Over 40 Councils have shown a decline in block scores and 13% reduced their overall APA score. It is evident that Ofsted have been more robust in their approach following the incidents in Haringey.

5. As a result the Council and NHS Rotherham wish to commission a review to provide an in-depth, speedy and independent assessment of the situation. We have decided to use the DCSF Children's Services Improvement Framework as a basis to help us procure a high quality, tailored package of support. We are seeking a full scale management review of the whole service which will provide a 'healthcheck' on whether we have appropriate capacity in terms of staff, management and resources in order to improve longer term. An independent review is considered essential in order to provide an objective assessment of the service.

Objectives of the review

6. The review needs to cover all aspects of children's services but in particular needs to assess the effectiveness of:

- Management arrangements in terms of structure, leadership, capacity and decision making throughout the service
- Resource management in terms of workforce, financial and asset utilisation/management

- Safeguarding arrangements to ensure that sound and safe practices are in place to protect vulnerable children and young people
- Performance management arrangements and a review of actual performance compared to other authorities
- Future direction of the service and the quality of existing and proposed partnership arrangements for integrating services

7. In essence the review is looking at all aspects of the service. It will draw upon the Annual Performance Assessment from 2008 and other information but we are not looking for the review to repeat the APA. Instead we are seeking a diagnostic assessment of the issues and an independent view based upon a detailed examination of key aspects of service delivery.

Timescales

8. We want the review to commence as soon as possible and are looking for it to conclude by the end of March 2009 with interim feedback by the end of February.

Scope of the review

9. Based upon the objectives of the review the following areas are highlighted:

Strategic management

- Team and joint working
- Organisational and team structures
- Organisational Culture
- Decision making and accountability
- Working with elected politicians
- Corporate governance arrangements
- Joint commissioning arrangements
- Strategic directorate and service planning
- Corporate working
- Level of self awareness
- Partnership working with NHS Rotherham and other partners

Operational management

10. The review needs to include a detailed examination of front line delivery. This will examine the quality of management, supervision, quality of service and value for money. In particular, areas to look include:

- Front line social work practice
- School improvement

- Attainment levels
- Protecting vulnerable children
- Behaviour and attendance
- Children information and advice services
- Locality teams
- Working with NHS and NHS Services for children
- Voice and influence arrangements for children and young people

Resource management

- Financial management including alignment to corporate strategies and plans
- Budget monitoring, including identification of overspends
- Value for money across all key services
- Identification of savings and operational efficiencies
- Quality of reporting to councillors – openness and transparency
- Level of resources compared to other similar councils
- Asset management including utilisation, management, capital investment
- Ability to plan resources over medium/longer term
- Workforce planning and development – skills, vacancies, use of agency staff, sickness levels,

Performance management

- Service and financial planning – quality and delivery
- Robustness of reporting, identification of under performance, action planning
- Alignment to corporate performance management framework
- Monitoring of key indicators – both corporate and service specific in line with CPA/APA requirements
- Robustness of reporting to management team, corporate centre and councillors
- Self assessment tools and techniques
- Learning from other best performing councils – national and regional
- Operational focus on corporate and directorate plans
- Data quality arrangements, including evidence of checking and systems evaluation
- Self awareness of performance by managers
- Actual performance levels against national and similar authorities – all areas showing performance over time

Safeguarding

11. The review needs to assess practice across all key areas – child protection, joint working with NHS Rotherham, referrals, assessment, care planning, supervision, fostering and adoption, case management, sharing

information protocols, looked after children, quality of care, out of borough placements, attainment levels.

Future direction of the service

12. The review needs to assess progress made to date in integrating children and young people services and take a view on how this compares to other authorities. In addition, the review team will assess the future plans and direction of the service, including the effectiveness of partnership working with health and other partners.

Supporting information and documents

13. The Council and NHS Rotherham will provide a range of supporting information to assist the review, both in preparing and scoping the review but also throughout the review fieldwork stage. Key documents include:

- Demographic information for Rotherham
- APA letter and judgement, including correspondence
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Corporate Plan and Community Strategy
- Local Area Agreement
- Performance Management Framework
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Workforce Development Plans
- Performance information, data and reports
- External and internal audit reports
- External Inspection reports and progress reports
- Budget information
- Structure charts and contact details
- Statutory Guidance e.g. Guidance from the Department for Children's, Schools and Families (DCSF) – Cabinet Member and Director Children's Services, Partnership Working

Reporting arrangements

14. Throughout the fieldwork stage, we will expect the review team to provide interim feedback on a regular basis to the Chief Executive and other senior managers as appropriate. At the end of the fieldwork stage we will seek a formal presentation of the key findings to the panel comprising of the Chief Executive, Leader, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Strategic Director for Children and Young Peoples Service, NHS Rotherham Chief Executive and other senior colleagues as appropriate.

15. A final report will then be presented to the Council's Cabinet and NHS Rotherham, including recommendations.

Review team

16. We are looking for experienced practitioners in children services who can give a professional, independent view of our services. The review team will need to include experienced senior officers who have operated at Director level or similar and across all key services.

17. We are also liaising with the Improvement and Development Agency to help identify appropriate peer support. This may well be commissioned via the Regional Improvement Partnership.

Costs of the review

18. The costs of this review will be jointly funded by the Council and NHS Rotherham. In addition, the Council is seeking additional support from the Regional Improvement Partnership which may help in identifying further support via the Improvement and Development Agency, for example, peer officers and members from top performing children's services.

Other supporting links

19. The Audit Commission/KPMG are currently completing an audit of the partnership arrangements between the Council and NHS Rotherham. This audit will feed into the review accordingly.

Key Contact

20. The contact point within the Council will be Matthew Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive 01709 822791 or mobile 07917 052320.

Response format and date

21. We are inviting bids from a few external consultants who may be able to assist with the above invitation to tender. The deadline for submissions is 9am 22nd January 2009. Tenderers are asked to outline how they intend to meet our various requirements, including:

- deadline and timescales
- experience and knowledge, including CVs
- review approach
- documentary evidence and analysis
- costs, including expenses

22. Any queries please contact Matthew Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive or email matthew.gladstone@rotherham.gov.uk.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
Monday, 12th January, 2009

Present:- The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell) (in the Chair); Councillors Ali, Burton, Currie, Fenoughty, Kaye and License.

Also in attendance was:- Ms. T. Guest (co-opted member)

Apologies for absence were received from:- Councillors Dodson, Donaldson, Hughes, Sharp and Sims and from co-opted members Mrs. J. Blanch-Nicholson, Mr. M. Hall, Father A. Hayne and Parish Councillor Mrs. P. Wade.

74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

75. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

76. MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE YOUTH CABINET

There were no issues to report.

77. COMMUNICATIONS

(1) Road Safety and the Levels of Motor Traffic outside Schools – there would be a meeting of this Scrutiny Review Group on Friday, 23rd January, 2009; members of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel would also serve on this Review Group of which Councillor Kaye had been appointed Chair;

(2) Regional Health Scrutiny Event – this event would take place at the Town Hall, Rotherham on Thursday, 12th February, 2009; members of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel would also be invited to attend.

78. ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK WORKING GROUP - NOMINATION OF MEMBERS

Resolved:- That the Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell) (with Councillor Burton as substitute) and Councillor Kaye be nominated as this Scrutiny Panel's representatives on the Annual Health Check Working Group.

79. INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES - PROGRESS

Consideration of this matter was deferred until the next meeting.

80. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMISSIONING

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Commissioning

Manager (Children and Young People's Services) about commissioning, a strategic process of identifying priority areas, reviewing need and current provision, identifying evidence, developing service plans, acquiring and monitoring the necessary provision. Commissioning aimed to achieve, at best value, optimum outcomes for children and young people, greatest return for the investment made and also reduced inequalities. The presentation included:-

- details of the 'Every Child Matters' commissioning cycle;
- commissioning and procurement;
- joint and regional commissioning, with partners and stakeholders (eg: with NHS Rotherham) as well as the market place for Children and Young People's Services;
- the Department of Health world class commissioning competencies and their application to commissioning in Children and Young People's Services;
- the current, medium term commissioning schedule for Children and Young People's Services;
- examples of commissioning of services by Children and Young People's Services (eg: the Connexions Service; Short Breaks; Care Placements);
- the principles and challenges of commissioning and ways of ensuring the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

The Scrutiny Panel's discussion of this issue referred included reference to the following matters:-

- outcome based contract specifications and the responsibility for risk (either the Council or the contractor) and the impact upon the Local Area Agreement targets;
- cost-benefit analyses; contract monitoring and contract penalties;
- development of markets and providing opportunities for local companies and voluntary and community sector organisations to bid for contracts;
- dialogue with potential contractors (eg: meet the buyer events);
- joint partnership working with organisations such as NHS Rotherham, which may have different priorities and pressures than the Borough Council;
- use of research and dialogue with stakeholders to ensure that the commissioning process has reliable information about the level of service provision required;

- commissioning is still a relatively new and developing agenda, providing challenge, scrutiny, identifying priorities for change and investigating best practice;
- evaluation of tenders by quality of service provision, as well as cost;
- appropriate clauses allowing early termination of contracts, when necessary and the possibility of litigation.

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

(2) That a progress report about commissioning for Children and Young People's Services be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel in six months' time.

(3) That Scrutiny Panel Members make suggestions of individual services, encompassed by the commissioning process, which may be included in this Scrutiny Panel's work programme for 2009/2010.

81. PROVISION FOR ETHNIC MINORITY LEARNERS

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Learning Services outlining the model of developments to address the current challenges in relation to ethnic minority achievement in Rotherham.

The report stated that despite some significant, recent improvements, issues of under-achievement among Rotherham's EAL (English as an Additional Language) population were still evident. Rotherham hosted a recent and growing population of new arrivals from other European Union countries whose needs were significantly different from the established British Asian community. The model proposed in the report combined recommendations for a shift in strategy and practice and identified opportunities to test new practice in an initial, limited pilot programme. Beginning in January, 2009, the pilot programme would include:-

- the local authority's provision of clear strategic leadership and expertise, with the creation of a team of specialist staff;
- support for schools in taking responsibility for a sustainable approach to ethnic minority achievement;
- using the Council's Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Service resources more strategically and increasing the Council's capacity to raise achievement for learners with English as an Additional Language.

The Scrutiny Panel's discussion of this matter included the following salient issues:-

- the possible introduction of a central register of pupils of Rotherham's EAL (English as an Additional Language) population;

- the function, role and location of the Welcome Centre and arrangements for an OFSTED inspection;
- details of the 'welcome offer' services provided for new arrivals to Rotherham's EAL (English as an Additional Language) population;
- provision of best practice hubs on two secondary school sites and on one primary school site;
- the model of developments would be evaluated during October, 2009, at the schools' Autumn half-term recess.

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

(2) That a progress report about the model of developments to address the current challenges in relation to ethnic minority achievement in Rotherham be submitted to a meeting of this Scrutiny Panel after the Autumn half-term evaluation of the pilot programme.

(3) That details of the action plan for the model of developments be reported to a future meeting of this Scrutiny Panel.

82. ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGY - PROGRESS

Further to Minute No. 108 of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 27th April, 2007, consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Learning Services and the Council's Anti-Bullying Officer detailing the progress of the development of the anti-bullying strategy in schools and the implementation of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review.

The report stated that the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review provided direction to the Anti Bullying Strategy Group and to the Council's Anti Bullying Development Officer. The Strategy Group is a multi-agency group with representation across the Children and Young People's Services Directorate, including secondary and primary school head teachers, officers from the Neighbourhoods Directorate, as well as representatives from the South Yorkshire Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Rotherham and from voluntary sector organisations. This Group has primary responsibility for developing the Anti Bullying Strategy and for implementation of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review.

Included with the report were (i) the draft revised anti-bullying strategy (dated November, 2008), (ii) the updated list of recommendations from the Scrutiny Review, with commentary on progress being made and also (iii) the draft action plan for the revised anti-bullying strategy.

The Scrutiny Panel's discussion of this issue referred included reference to the following matters:-

- the role of School Councils, the anti-bullying standard and 'whole school approaches to preventing bullying;
- schools nominating a designated governor for bullying;
- trial of the Sentinel computer system and whether the SIMs system would be a preferred alternative;
- the need for thorough reporting of all incidents of bullying in schools;
- the pathway project for the prevention of bullying, already in operation in several secondary schools (eg: Maltby; Clifton);
- the resource implications of preventing bullying in schools;
- the role of the Anti-Bullying Officer.

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

(2) That consideration of (i) the draft revised anti-bullying strategy (dated November, 2008) and (ii) the draft action plan for the revised anti-bullying strategy be deferred until a future meeting.

83. MANAGEMENT OF SURE START CHILDREN'S CENTRES ON SCHOOL SITES

Further to Minute No. 65(1) of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 28th November, 2008, consideration was given to a report presented by the Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager describing the arrangements for the governance and management of the Sure Start Children's Centres which are located on a number of primary school sites.

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

(2) That the information be distributed to the Governing Bodies of all primary schools which are also accommodating Sure Start Children's Centres and of those schools which will do so in the future.

84. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 28TH NOVEMBER, 2008

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel held on 28th November, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

85. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCRUTINY SUB-PANEL HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER, 2008

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meeting of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel held on 10th December, 2008 be noted.

86. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 21ST NOVEMBER, 2008 AND ON 5TH DECEMBER, 2008

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 21st November, 2008 and on 5th December, 2008 be noted.

87. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended (information relating to financial or business affairs).

88. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES - REVENUE BUDGET 2008/2009 AND 2009/2010

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Resources and Access concerning the budget for Children and Young People's Services. The report detailed the key areas of under/overspend for 2008/09, the proposals to reconcile to the allocated cash limit and also those for possible savings and investment for 2009/10.

The Directorate's Budget proposals were appended to the report submitted. The presentation referred to the following matters:-

- overview of the current budget position and areas of under/overspend
- current budget pressures (eg: Looked After Children; Foster Care)
- the overall prediction of a budget overspend for 2008/2009
- performance under the five outcomes of Every Child Matters
- legal costs for family law cases, previously subsidised by Central Government
- achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters
- suggested efficiency savings to meet the funding gap for 2009/2010
- investment proposals for consideration
- the risks to service provision caused by budget pressures

The Scrutiny Panel's debate included reference to the following salient issues:-

- Looked After Children, including foster care and out-of-Authority placements;

- recruitment and retention of and support for foster carers;
- budget monitoring and value for money;
- employee vacancy management;
- the integrated Children's Services and introduction of locality based teams.

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

(2) That the budget proposals, as submitted, be supported by this Scrutiny Panel and be considered further by the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee, before being submitted to the Cabinet and to full Council.

(3) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Scrutiny Panel, about the approved budget for Children and Young People's Services for the 2009/2010 financial year.

**CHILDREN'S BOARD
WEDNESDAY, 10TH DECEMBER, 2008**

Present:- Councillor S. Wright (in the Chair); .

147. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Andy Buck, Matt Jukes and Ann Lawrence.

148. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CHILDREN'S BOARD HELD ON 8TH OCTOBER, 2008

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Children's Board held on 8th October 2008 were received as a correct record.

149. MATTERS ARISING

The Board noted action being taken on the various decisions.

150. ISSUES AND CONCERNS

It was noted that issues and concerns would be raised as part of matters later on the agenda.

151. CANKLOW WOODS SCHOOL

John Henderson, Executive Head Teacher, Canklow Woods Primary School provided the meeting with the background to the Federation of Whiston Worrygoose Junior & Infants School and Canklow Woods Primary School as the coming together of an outstanding school and one considered to be underachieving in Key Stage 2. Mr Henderson explained that the intention was that the work of the Federation would build upon the good work of the teachers at Canklow Woods Primary School. He presented the Key Stage 2 results for 2007/2008 for Canklow which exceeded the LA averages in all subjects and were in line with the National Averages in English and Maths and above in Science, Reading and Writing. A lack of enthusiasm from the Y6 cohort achieving these results provided the foundation for consideration of the wider influences on the lives of the children attending Canklow Woods Primary School. Mr Henderson outlined the deprivation indications which, when broken down highlighted that Canklow was an area of high deprivation. This was compounded by the view in multi-agency meetings where there was a sense of 'fire-fighting' and despondency about what can actually be achieved in the area. It was considered therefore that there was a need for multi-agency activities/actions which would impact upon the lives of children rather than concentration on KS2 results.

John outlined the actions which had been taken to bring the meeting together including the key points of Mr Robinson's letter to Ms Thacker. Parents of children were invited to meet with Mr Henderson to discuss issues which they considered of importance, the children of the school were canvassed for their opinions in line with 'Every Child Matters' and Mr Henderson then met with Ward Councillors. Subsequently, he met with Ms Thacker where agreement was made for a 20 year plan incorporating a multi-agency project team. The aim of the agreement was to impact upon the whole area in the long term rather than short-term fixes with short-term funding.

The Children's Board welcomed this outstanding achievement and congratulated John and his staff on the very high standards achieved. The Board considered how best to cascade lessons learned throughout the Borough.

Agreed:- (1) That John and his team be congratulated.

(2) That the LSP Chief Executive's group prepare an action plan on how to improve standards throughout the Borough and eradicate deprivation.

152. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND JOINT ASSESSMENT REVIEW

Joyce reported that the first draft of this document had been received recently and was being challenged by the Council. It was noted that details had been provided to Board Members.

Agreed:- That Board Members be provided with the relevant information.

153. JOINT PROCEDURES FOR CASE WORK SUPERVISION

Joyce presented the submitted report which informed the Children's Board of the first jointly produced policy/procedure that was approved by the JLT on 10 July 2008 and by the NHS Rotherham Clinical Governance Committee on 13 August 2008 for use within the 'Children's Trust' arrangement.

Formal case work supervision was intended to provide support and guidance for front line practitioners in the management of cases requiring targeted programmes of work. It also provided Supervisors i.e. Team Managers with an overview of all the children and families within their area of responsibility requiring enhanced services, and also information on how team members are working individually or collectively with cases and applying integrated assessment, care planning and information sharing processes.

The function of supervision was to ensure that the quality of services was of a consistently high standard and within the remit of agency policies. It

enabled the development of practitioner skills, knowledge and experience and was part of an ongoing culture of willingness to learn.

The procedure built on the existing supervision arrangements for social care staff and complimented existing Child Protection and Clinical Supervision Procedures used within health services.

It was hoped that the consistent use of this procedure across all partner agencies to supervise staff dealing with their most difficult cases would support and direct practitioners, enhance performance and bring benefits to children and families. Case studies and future Internal Management Reviews would elicit if supervision had changed practice for the better.

The effectiveness of formal supervision with a supervisor not necessarily from the same background or agency would only be known following a full evaluation.

Casework supervision was new to universal health services which may cause anxieties for some staff unfamiliar with this level of scrutiny. Feedback from the pilot sites was very encouraging; staff were reporting feeling better supported.

Agreed:- (1) That the use of the procedure across all children and young people's services from April 2009 be supported.

(2) That the procedure be monitored and evaluated in line with other aspects of the integration arrangement.

(3) That the procedure be owned by the Children's Board and reviewed annually.

154. DCSF SAFEGUARDING AUDIT AND CAA INSPECTION 2008/09

Joyce presented the submitted report which stated that keeping children and young people safe was a top priority for Rotherham's Children and Young People's Board and Safeguarding Children Board. The report provided a briefing on related government initiatives to support local Boards and confirmation that local arrangements deliver robust safeguarding locally and that the ongoing implementation of Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board's business plan would strengthen areas which would come under government scrutiny.

A national safeguarding stocktake was planned as part of the Government's continuing programme of work to support Local Safeguarding Children Boards and to identify further ways of improving their effectiveness. It would be conducted in close collaboration with local authority and other partners and would report in spring 2009. It would be accompanied by a study to examine the processes of commissioning, conducting and implementing Serious Case Reviews (to report in summer 2009) and also a review of safeguarding arrangements in independent schools, non-maintained special schools and boarding schools (to

conclude in February 2009).

Ofsted were also consulting the details of any future inspections into safeguarding arrangements, which would form part of the Corporate Area Assessment.

Recent events in Haringey have reinforced the importance of strong partnership working to fulfil statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Board Members asked for details of the situation having regard to the national position following the death of Baby 'P'.

Joyce reported that the Council were carrying out a full review of child protection procedures, which had commenced in July and would be completed shortly.

Sarah reported that NHS Rotherham were carrying out a similar exercise.

Agreed:- (1) That the government's plans be noted and quarterly updates on the progress of the Safeguarding Board and the eventual local and national findings from the Reviews be submitted to the Board.

(2) That a further report be submitted to the Board when the date and details of the inspection of local safeguarding arrangements in Rotherham were published by Ofsted.

(3) That joint working continue to take place between the various agencies to protect the safety of children.

(4) That the Safeguarding Board Manager meet with representatives of the Police, NHS Rotherham and Internal Audit to achieve a satisfactory overview of joint working arrangements.

155. SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS

Joyce presented the submitted report by Nicole Erlen, Barrister which was an Independent Review of three completed Serious Case Reviews.

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board has a statutory responsibility to undertake Serious Case Reviews as a result of abuse or neglect and in other circumstances where procedures or practice need to change and to ensure public confidence in Children's Services.

The report updated activity in this important area of the Safeguarding Children Board's work and the progress of actions by Children and Young People's Services and partner agencies in response to recent Serious Case Reviews.

The Board welcomed the evidence of good practice identified and noted

the risks and uncertainties set out in the report.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be received and the progress in completing actions on the recommendations of the three completed Serious Case Reviews, be noted.

(2) That Nicole be invited to present her report to relevant members,

156. THE STAYING SAFE ACTION PLAN 2008/09

Joyce outlined matters set out in the submitted report which stated the 'Staying Safe' consultation was launched by the Government in July 2007, and during that period, parents, children and young people, members of the general public and practitioners were consulted about their concerns in relation to children's safety. The consultation closed on 31 October 2007.

The resulting government action plan set out the work which the Government would take forward over the next three years to drive improvements in children and young people's safety, which would be measured by the new Public Service Agreement to improve children and young people's safety.

The Staying Safe Action Plan covered three main areas: universal safeguarding, involving work to keep all children and young people safe and to create safe environments for them; targeted safeguarding to reduce the risks of harm for vulnerable groups of children and young people; and responsive safeguarding, involving responding effectively when children are harmed

Rotherham has already made significant progress in areas of child safety, for example, reducing road traffic accidents involving children and encouraging safe outdoor play and activities for children and young people. However, there is always work still to be done. This report outlines the key areas of the plan and describes work that has begun to map local developments and identify any gaps which require further action.

The Children and Young People's Board and Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board have to balance attention to new areas of safeguarding activity whilst maintaining traditional a focus on traditional child protection work.

The Staying Safe Action Plan is ambitious and already a number of the government's initiatives are behind schedule.

Child safety is a priority in Rotherham and the Council and partner members have already achieved a number of successes. The gap analysis exercise has been valuable in raising awareness of planned initiatives and agencies will be ready to respond to them.

The Board welcomed the action plan set out and emphasised the need to continually monitor progress, to match the actions with the Children's Plan and to ensure that all matters were up to date.

Agreed:- That the Staying Safe Action Plan 2008 be noted and 6 monthly updates on local progress and the implications of planned national initiatives for the safety of children and young people be submitted to this Board.

157. FREE SWIMMING PROJECT - SUMMER 2008

Joyce outlined matters set out in the submitted report which briefly gave the outline proposal for the Free Swimming Project, informing the Board of the take-up by children and young people and considered options for future activity.

Cabinet Members noted that despite concerns about safety the position is that we have facilitated a successful and healthy opportunity for a large number of young people.

Board Members welcomed the information that there had been 10,259 free swims.

Board Members also welcomed this joint initiative which had been funded 50/50 between the Council and NHS Rotherham.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be noted and the success of the Project be welcomed.

(2) That further exploration with N.H.S. Rotherham and any other interested partners to run the Project again during the Easter and Summer 2009 school holidays be supported.

158. BRIEFING PAPER ON ROTHERHAM'S PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Joyce outlined the matters set out in the submitted report which summarised the introduction of the cross Government 'Prevent Strategy', which was concerned with the prevention of 'violent extremism', Rotherham's response to the strategy and the key role that C&YPS had in both the strategic development and the operational delivery.

The Government had clearly stated its commitment to supporting action at a local level to counter the threat from violent extremism. The determining factor for size of grant allocation by the Government was the size of the local Muslim population, reflecting the fact that, centrally, Islamic extremism was and was felt to be the major area of concern. Local discussions however, had reflected upon a wider range and definition of 'extremism', both political and ideological, and it was believed that the successful delivery of this agenda, particularly that involved and harnessed the support of communities, needed to be very well

communicated and ensured that successful community cohesion was ultimately the most effective preventative tool.

The 'Prevent Strategy' recognised that Local Authorities and key partner agencies were presented with a complex and challenging agenda requiring the delivery of an effective and innovative programme of work across the community. The development of new approaches could often present some level of risk, and that was certainly potentially the case here. In recognition of these risks and uncertainties, the Rotherham Prevent Action Plan would ensure local delivery of the prevent agenda within a carefully managed framework.

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

(2) That vulnerable children and young people are protected from exploitation through radicalisation by the promotion of a cohesive Rotherham community, safeguarded against violent extremism be endorsed.

159. INTEGRATED SERVICES PROGRESS REPORT

Joyce outlined the matters set out in the submitted report which updated the Board on the integration agenda regarding locality services and the Integrated Safeguarding Unit.

Key actions were highlighted for integration as follows:-

- Staffing and accommodation
- Policies, Procedures and Performance
- Organisational Development
- Integrated Safeguarding Unit

The Government agenda directing Children and Young People's Services to Trust arrangements was well embedded within Rotherham. Not to comply with this requirement would leave the service in a vulnerable position. The Audit Commission in collaboration with RMBC's Auditors, KPMG, were conducting an assessment of readiness for integration. This would give an independent evaluation of progress for the Children and Young People's Board members. The evaluation would be ready early January.

Agreed:- (1) That the current progress of the Children and Young People's Services Integration agenda be noted.

(2) That a special meeting of this Board be held early in the New Year to review progress.

160. PROTECTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN ROTHERHAM FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Joyce presented the submitted report which provided an update on

progress across Rotherham around arrangements to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation.

Working Together, April 2006, states that *'The LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) should actively enquire into the extent to which children are involved in prostitution in the local area. They should assume that it is a local issue unless there is clear evidence to the contrary'*. In other words there needed to be a recognition that sexual exploitation of young people was a national issue and its management required both a national and local strategic response.

Key areas of note in relation to protecting children and young people from sexual exploitation were highlighted:

- Structures
- Risky Business Project
- Activity

Sexual exploitation was an area that every Local Authority was required to address unless there was clear evidence to the contrary. Rotherham had developed some good services and resources and any reduction would significantly impact on the effective management and intervention in what was known to be an extremely damaging form of child abuse. The strengthening of processes to accurately report the extent of the problem within Rotherham had informed planning for the stabilisation and further development of the existing resources.

Cabinet Members suggested that the action plan be reviewed and updated to ensure progress is monitored.

Agreed:- (1) That the revised Sexual Exploitation Action Plan and its continued implementation be endorsed.

(2) That the changes to the Risky Business Project be endorsed.

(3) That the progress being made within this area of work be welcomed.

(4) That a further report be submitted to an early meeting of this Board clarifying progress.

161. KS1 ASSESSMENT RESULTS - SUMMER 2008

Joyce outlined the matters set out in the submitted report which informed the Board of the performance of Rotherham pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, in 2008.

The LA aspired to be at least in line with the national average, in all aspects and at each level, as a key milestone in the drive for improved standards at this KS1. The lack of sustained improvement over the last three years made this ambition increasingly challenging. However the

commitment remains and an increase in the level of challenge and support continues to be directed to schools.

The report stated all schools must conduct a form of statutory assessment at the end of each Key Stage (at age 5, 7, 11, 14 and 16). At the end of Key Stage 1 (age 7) children undertake a formal assessment, informed by Statutory Assessment Tasks (SATs) which, from 2005, had been reported as teacher assessment.

Should Rotherham's schools show insufficient progress this could result in:

- Declining and lower standards at the end of KS2
- Significant numbers of children underachieving, which reduces their opportunities post statutory education
- The Council's rating, in relation to the quality of services and its statutory responsibility to raise standards will be affected through the CPA and APA systems
- The Council's intervention rating with DCSF could be increased.

Agreed:- That strenuous efforts be made to improve the level of performance.

162. MINUTES OF THE SAFEGUARDING BOARD HELD ON 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2008

Key issues and concerns from the minutes of the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board held on 19th September, 2008 were discussed. The Board acknowledged the challenging nature of the safety of children and the wide range of actions being taken to protect children wherever possible, including the audits of services being carried out by the various organisations.

163. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Joyce was pleased to report that there was some success with the appointment of apprentices by RMBC, which was a start to providing public sector job opportunities for a range of young people.

Agreed:- That a report on future developments be submitted to an early meeting of this Board.

CHILDREN'S BOARD
16th January, 2009

Present:- Councillor S. Wright (in the Chair); Andy Buck, Mike Cuff, Jason Harwin, Anne Lawrence, Richard Tweed and Janet Wheatley.

164. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Matt Jukes.

165. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CHILDREN'S BOARD HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER, 2008

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10th December, 2008 were received as a correct record.

166. MATTERS ARISING

The Board noted action being taken on the various decisions.

167. CURRENT ISSUES/CONCERNS

It was noted that issues and concerns would be raised as part of matters later on the agenda.

168. READINESS FOR INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES - PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Andrew Wells, Audit Commission reported upon an audit review of the readiness of integration.

The Council and NHS Rotherham jointly commissioned a piece of work to test the readiness for integration of the Council's Children and Young People's Services and NHS Community Health Services. This has been carried out through both desktop assessment of documents and a range of interviews.

The Audit Commission and KPMG have now concluded their study into Rotherham's readiness for integration.

The Audit Commission and KPMG have found no areas of major concern or oversight and they recognise that a huge amount of effort has been put into the planning of integration in terms of time and resources.

The report's findings are very positive and, in addition, there is recognition that there is more to do in the future to further embed practices and evaluate impact and outcomes.

Andrew was pleased to report the excellent working arrangements

between the Audit Commission and KPMG and between the Council and NHS Rotherham.

Board Members welcomed the findings of this audit review.

Agreed:- That the position be noted.

169. ARE WE THERE YET? AUDIT COMMISSION AND KPMG STUDY INTO READINESS FOR INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Joyce Thacker presented the submitted report.

This was the formal response to the report made by Andrew Wells on the previous agenda item.

Agreed:- That the outcome from the study of the Audit Commission and KPMG be noted.

170. READINESS FOR INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES JOINT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Andy Buck, Chief Executive, NHS Rotherham and Joyce Thacker, Strategic Director, Children and Young People's Services, presented the submitted report on the further progress made towards the integration of children and young people's services in Rotherham.

In July 2008 the NHS Rotherham Board noted and agreed 15 further actions needed to achieve integration. With regard to timescale, the Board agreed to receive a further progress report in January 2009 with a view to full integration being in place from April 2009.

Since July, considerable progress has been made against the 15 agreed actions. In addition, NHS Rotherham and RMBC jointly asked their respective external auditors to jointly undertake an assessment of their state of readiness for integration. This has been reported on separately.

An overall assessment is that further positive progress has been made with plans for integrating children's services. This view is supported by the external auditors. The NHS Rotherham Board need to consider the outstanding NHS HR issues and the health visiting service action plan before they can make a final decision about completing the planned integration of these services.

The financial implications of integrating children's services have not changed. However, the implications of the NHS HR issues need to be assessed by the NHS.

Joyce Thacker reported on outstanding issues and circulated the Action Plan in place to meet them.

Board Members noted the outstanding matters and the complexities involved and the next steps being taken.

These would be considered by the NHS Rotherham Board on 19th January, 2009.

Agreed:- That the progress being made towards the integration of children and young people's services be noted and a further report be submitted to the next meeting.

171. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Children's Board be held on Wednesday, 18th February, 2009 at 4.30 p.m.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
19th December, 2008

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Jack and Swift.

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell); Councillors Boyes, Burton, J. Hamilton, P. A. Russell and Whelbourn.

143. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

144. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

145. BUDGET

Andrew Bedford, Strategic Director of Finance, gave a presentation on the above entitled "Medium Term Financial Strategy – Moving Rotherham Forward to Our Future".

The presentation covered:-

- Agenda
- Local Investment Priorities
- Budget Issues
- Prevailing Economic Climate
- Inflation Projections 2008-2012
- Job Evaluation and Equal Pay
- Restructuring the Budget – Extent
- Savings Targets
- Political Priorities
- Funding Opportunities
- Timetable

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

- savings targets for Neighbourhoods and Adult Services
- Council Tax levels and stability of
- oil prices impact
- inflationary and deflationary periods

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

146. TELL US YOUR VIEWS - ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

Andrew Bedford, Strategic Director of Finance, presented briefly the submitted report which set out details relating to the Council's corporate-wide feedback procedure 'Tell Us Your Views', which incorporated corporate compliments, comments, suggestions and complaints, for the twelve months from 1st April, 2007 to 31st March, 2008.

'Tell Us Your Views' was the collective name for the corporate system for dealing with compliments, comments, suggestions and complaints from local residents and other users of our services, about the Council, its services and the actions of its staff.

The procedures for complaints received about the care services of Adult Services and Children and Young People Services were set out under an Act of Parliament. Complaints made via these arrangements were registered in a way which allowed them to be included within the 'Tell Us Your Views' statistics set out in this report. However, separate annual reports were also prepared in relation to Children Services and Adult Services to comply with wider elements of the Act and specific elements of the Outcomes Framework for Social Services.

It was noted that there were 882 complaints received in 2007/08 compared to 1,312 received in 2006/07.

The report set out the position on complaints received by each Area Assembly.

The report also set out in detail:-

- Review of Overall Performance for 2007/08.
- Rotherham 2010 Ltd.
- The Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2007/08.
- Complaint Numbers.
- Performance in Responding.
- Future liaison with the Ombudsman.
- Scrutiny Review of Corporate Complaints.
- Learning from Complaints.
- Compliments, Comments and Suggestions.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey.
- Key Tasks for this Year.

There were no financial implications contained in this report.

Failure to respond appropriately to complaints was likely to impact on the Council's reputation. It was also likely that important learning was not undertaken and potentially further complaints generated against the

Council including those to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Finally, given the Council's commitment of working towards achieving the Government's replacement standard for Charter Mark, the Customer Service Excellence standard, by Summer, 2009, there was a need for the Council to continue to demonstrate that it had a feedback procedure that was being performance managed effectively and was embedded within the Council.

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

- need to feedback not just where services had been amended due to learning from a complaint, but also why a service may not have been amended
- staff being made aware of positive comments and compliments
- complaints received by area assembly
- potential for handing out a basic form for completion when someone wished to compliment the Authority rather than requesting them to write a letter, bearing in mind the need to capture and not solicit positive comment

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

147. REVIEW OF THE USE OF CONSULTANTS

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, presented briefly the submitted interim report indicating the latest position in respect of the above review which had been initiated by this Committee as part of the 2007/08 work programme.

The review had commenced in Spring 2007 under the chairmanship of former Councillor Robin Stonebridge, supported by Councillors Boyes, Sangster, Whelbourn, R.S. Russell and Clarke. A series of review meetings were undertaken and evidence collected during the course of 2007 into early 2008. Councillor Whelbourn, as Chair of this Committee, was now to progress the review to completion.

It was anticipated that the first draft of the review group would be submitted to this Committee early in the new year.

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

- framework/process for appointing consultants
- scrutiny of consultants to be used
- relative fees for local authority work and private work
- value for money and performance

Resolved:- That the information be noted and work continue.

148. WORKING WITH PARISH COUNCILS - PART II REVIEW

Further to Minute No. 139 of the meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 4th December, 2008, Councillor Austen presented the submitted report relating to the Part II Scrutiny Review of Working with Parish Councils 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 :

- the points that the review group had focused on
- the key findings

The final report was submitted.

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

- reinforcement of the good work from the first review
- potential time factor problems in processing certain issues sometimes dependent on structure of parish council e.g. complaint deadlines.

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 approved as far as this Committee is concerned 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,

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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.

149. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

150. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor McNeely reported that the review of choice based lettings was ongoing

(b) Councillor Austen reported that the Debt Recovery Review Group had been established and would be holding its first meeting in the new year

(c) Councillor Jack reported ongoing work for the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel in relation to breastfeeding and older people's issues.

(d) Councillor Swift referred to the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel involvement in the review regarding traffic around schools.

151. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

152. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (financial/business affairs).

153. ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

Further to Minute No. 136 of the meeting of this Committee held on 5th December, 2008, Colin Earl, Director of Internal Audit and Governance, presented the submitted report which detailed the impact of the economic downturn in Rotherham, both on Council services and on the public. The report had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 17th December,

2008 and action approved.

The report consolidated the recommendations made in the previous reports and made practical suggestions for progressing the recommendations. The report also highlighted the findings and conclusions from further work done into options for providing direct financial support to people at risk of repossession.

There were no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, the report made reference to a range of actions that would give rise to costs if approved. These included:-

- Publicity Campaigns.
- Launch Event.
- Drop-in surgeries.
- One Phone Number.
- Internet Development.
- Administration.

Wherever possible, these should be met from existing resources.

Additionally, there would be potentially significant financial implications of pursuing any of the options for providing direct financial support to those most in need. The implications would need to be fully assessed in the event of any of the options being further explored.

The credit crunch presented a large number of risks to the public, businesses and public services. The impact on the Council's own services was subject to a separate report that would be presented to Cabinet in the near future. This report and its appendices dealt with the implications for the public and businesses and explained how public services could help to mitigate the risks.

It was noted that, since the report was written, the latest position was :

- the Partners' Core Group had met a couple of times
- the dedicated credit crunch website was close to implementation
- roadshow arrangements were well progressed
- work continued on publicity arrangements

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

- co-ordination of activity and effort was vital
- activities of Rothersave
- publicising activity and potential help available was vital in terms

of awareness and keeping people away from illegal money lenders

- response to the event held at the Magna Centre on 5th December, 2008
- establishment of links e.g. South Yorkshire Financial Inclusion Group
- awareness raising activity e.g. articles in the Rotherham Community Newspaper and utilising Rother F.M.
- scrutiny review of advice centres
- need to be aware of the connection between debt and poor health
- health colleagues inclusion on the Partners' Core Group
- potential links for referring people through the British Legion
- need to provide leaflet information for distribution through area assemblies and utilisation of notice boards in area assembly areas and parish councils

Resolved :- That this Committee :-

(1) supports the establishment of a Partners' Impact Core Group which would meet to collate and share information on the impact of the economic downturn and the various agencies' response to it.

(2) notes the establishment of an internal Council Credit Crunch Recovery Group to monitor the impact of the credit crunch on Council services, in accordance with a Cabinet resolution.

(3) supports further work on an immediate publicity campaign designed to maximise public awareness of the advice and support available.

(4) supports further exploration of the costs and practicalities of the setting up of a single 0800 'first contact number'.

(5) supports the proposals to produce a Comprehensive Consultation Strategy.

(6) notes the current details of the possibility of providing funds through Credit Unions and the further work being carried out on this option.

(7) supports the ongoing work being done to provide direct support through a range of existing and prospective housing schemes.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
16th January, 2009

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell); Councillors Austen, Barron, Boyes, Gilding, J. Hamilton, Jack, McNeely, P. A. Russell and Swift.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Burton.

154. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

155. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

156. SCRUTINY SELF EVALUATION FRAMEWORK 2009

Further to Minutes Nos. 24 and 71 of the meetings of this Committee held on 29th June and 28th September, 2007 respectively, Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, presented briefly the submitted report relating to the above and requesting endorsement to revisit the framework and report the findings and recommendations back to this Committee at the end of the municipal year.

Submitted as appendices were :

- findings and recommendations from the workshop which were subsequently agreed
- approved action plan

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

- system for reporting back Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions on scrutiny recommendations arising from reviews or scrutiny panel meetings
- accessibility of the Town Hall and meeting spaces
- provision of portable hearing loops
- application of the findings from the scrutiny review of community engagement both within and outside the Council (e.g. developing function with partners)
- joint meetings between this Committee and Cabinet

- Cabinet annual report regarding its response to scrutiny recommendations
- pre decision scrutiny
- continuing emphasis in the Member Development Programme on developing effective scrutiny

Resolved:- (1) That the Scrutiny Self Evaluation Framework be revisited as now reported.

(2) That a further report on the findings and recommendations of (1) above be submitted at the end of the municipal year 2008/09.

(3) That the position regarding the acquisition of portable hearing loops be pursued.

(4) That the proposals for joint meetings between this Committee and Cabinet be pursued.

(5) That the need for further training on the role and work of scrutiny be referred to the Members' Training and Development Panel for consideration.

157. PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 87 of the meeting of this Committee held on 10th October, 2008, Steve Turnbull, Head of Public Health, presented the submitted report indicating the latest position against the key population level indicators relating to the health of Rotherham residents.

The report highlighted the position specifically in respect of the following four national indicators which were included in the Local Area Agreement:-

- All Age All Cause Mortality
- Obesity : Year 6
- Breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks
- Teenage Conceptions

Also highlighted was the position in respect of the following two significant public health issues:

- Chlamydia Screening
- Alcohol related Hospital Admissions

It was also reported that Steve Turnbull, Head of Public Health, had been seconded for a year to manage the Rotherham Partnership. Negotiations were continuing to ensure that public health remained a high priority within the Council and that there was sufficient capacity to support delivery of the Public Health Strategy.

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

- accuracy of the baseline obesity figures
- need to communicate to elected members notification of television programmes covering public health issues in Rotherham
- elected member involvement in the RMBC Obesity/Health Network
- reporting arrangements for the Health Network
- scrutiny representation on the performance clinic relating to alcohol related hospital admissions
- data comparison between the NHS Rotherham Community Health Centre walk in clinic facility and alcohol related hospital admissions
- dental health/obesity/school meal provision and concerns regarding some schools reducing the lunch period to twenty minutes

Resolved:- (1) That the latest information on health trends and the latest position statements on key indicators be noted.

(2) That the proposed development of a RMBC Obesity/Health Network be noted and supported and reports from the Network be submitted to this Committee.

(3) That Councillor Jack be nominated as the scrutiny representative on the performance clinic looking at alcohol related hospital admissions

(4) That the secondment of Steve Turnbull, Head of Public Health, to the Rotherham Partnership be noted.

(5) That a report be submitted to this Committee on the future delivery of the Public Health Strategy.

158. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th December, 2008

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be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman and, arising therefrom:

(a) Tell Us Your Views – Annual Report 2007/08 (Minute 146)

A progress report be submitted in March, 2009 with regard to key tasks for the year.

(b) Working With Parish Councils – Part II Review (Minute 148)

Scrutiny chairs feed into Councillor Austen how Parish representations were working.

159. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) The Mayor reported that the latest meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered:

- nominations to the Annual Health Check Working Group
- Children and Young People's Services Commissioning
- Provision for Ethnic Minority Learners
- Anti-Bullying Strategy
- Management of Sure Start Children's Centres on School Sites
- Children and Young People's Services – Revenue Budget 2008/09 and 2009/10

(b) Councillor Boyes reported :-

- the review of active leisure for children was in its latter stages
- the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel had considered the image of Rotherham and the Budget 2008/09 and 2009/10

160. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.

161. NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting be held on 28th January, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

162. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (staffing and financial/business affairs).

163. BUDGET 2009/10

Andrew Bedford, Strategic Director of Finance, outlined the budgetary process so far and latest funding gap. He reported briefly on the upcoming budgetary meetings and timescale for finalising the budget. Due to the funding gap, further savings options were still being sought.

Reference was also made to the fact that expressions of interest in the possibility of voluntary early retirement were being canvassed.

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, and the scrutiny panel chairs reported on the budget round of discussions at their respective meetings and common themes raised and points made included:

- lateness of the budget reports, on the day of the meeting in some instances
- lack of quality/depth of information in the reports
- reference to further savings options yet to be decided
- concerns that no real opportunity to examine proposals at scrutiny meetings and not always right person there to answer questions
- concerns regarding the opportunity for scrutiny to examine the referred to further savings options
- concerns regarding potential impact on staffing levels
- concerns regarding assumptions made that Members would not consider cutting particular budgets
- lack of explanation of the impact of a reconfiguration of one service on other services
- concerns that budget reports were not presented consistently as confidential material
- the need for the budget to be considered at special meetings of scrutiny panels and not as part of routine agendas

- view that the reports presented were of an interim nature due to the lack of options, detailed content and impact, not containing the information expected to be able to make a decision
- need to get the further savings options and detail back into the scrutiny arena within the approved budget timetable

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

(2) That the further budgetary proposals and detail be submitted to this Committee for an overall scrutiny response.

(3) That, with regard to (2) above, Andrew Bedford and Cath Saltis liaise with the Chairman to determine the meeting date.