

CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

Venue: Training Room,
3rd Floor, Bailey House,
Rawmarsh Road,
ROTHERHAM.

Date: Monday, 13th July, 2009

Time: *10.15 a.m.

* Please note the start time for this meeting.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended March 2006) to the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Minutes of a meeting of the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group held on 19th June, 2009. (copy attached) (Pages 1 - 6)
 - to note the content and receive the minutes.
4. Minutes of a meeting of the RMBC Transport Liaison Panel held on 22nd June, 2009. (copy attached) (Pages 7 - 12)
 - to note the contents and receive the minutes.
5. Neighbourhood Centres Review Update. (report attached) (Pages 13 - 22)
 - to note the contents of the attached report.
6. Fitzwilliam Street, Wath - Ward 19 - Proposed Recommended Cycle Route. (report attached) (Pages 23 - 25)
Ken Wheat, Transportation Unit Manager, to report.
 - to inform the Cabinet Member of a proposal to provide a recommended cycling route on Fitzwilliam Street to link the north of Wath to Wath Town centre.
7. Consultation on new Planning Policy Statement 4 "Planning for prosperous economies". (report attached) (Pages 26 - 37)
Ryan Shepherd, Senior Planner, to report.
 - to consider a response to consultation draft PPS4.
8. UKSE Grants and loans scheme for Rotherham. (report attached) (Pages 38 - 41)
Geoff Link, Enterprise Manager, to report.
 - to report on the grants and loans scheme for Rotherham.

ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP
Friday, 19th June, 2009

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors McNeely, St. John and Sharman.

together with:-

Helen Sleigh	Senior Planner
David Edwards	Area & Environmental Planning Team Leader
Ryan Shepherd	Senior Planner
Ken Macdonald	Solicitor, Legal Services
Matt Edwards	Student, University of Sheffield – work shadowing Forward Planning officers
Steve Turnbull	Partnership Manager

1. INTRODUCTIONS/APOLOGIES

Helen introduced Matt Edwards Student from the University of Sheffield who had just completed his 2nd year studying Urban Regional Planning

Apologies were received from the following:-

Councillor Austen	
Councillor Dodson	
Councillor Hodgkiss	
Councillor Jack	
Councillor Littleboy	
Councillor R. S. Russell	
Councillor Whelbourn	
Bronwen Peace	Planning Manager
Gordon Smith	Quality & Design Co-ordinator
Phil Turnidge	Forward Planning Manager
Paul Woodcock	Director of Planning & Regeneration

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 24TH APRIL, 2009

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th April, 2009.

Resolved:- That the minutes be agreed as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

4. LDF CORE STRATEGY REVISED OPTIONS - MEMBER DISCUSSION

(i) Consultation Events

Helen Senior Planner detailed the following events which would be held throughout the Borough:-

Area Assemblies – focus groups to which one Ward Member invited to attend taking into account political differences, together with reps from community organisations.

Monday 15th June – an internal stakeholder event was held and Members had been invited to this event.

Friday, 19th June – today's Steering Group meeting, followed by a drop in session for All Members of the Council

Friday, 26th June – Stakeholder event/workshop discussions in the Bailey Suite
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. including lunch/networking

3 public drop in sessions:- Tuesday 21st July for the Rotherham South area at Dinnington Community Resource Centre (noting that the majority of development was proposed for Dinnington as a 'principal town'.)

Rotherham North – at Montgomery Hall – Wednesday 22nd July

Rotherham Central – Thursday 23rd July in the Bailey Suite

Details of all public drop-in sessions are now available on the Core Strategy web page.

Presentation to the LSP Achieving Theme Board on 1st July

Re: Parishes:-

- Bramley – meeting with the Parish Council on 7th July (at their request)
- Parish Networking meeting – Wednesday, 15th July, (NB this meeting has now been cancelled due to the Parish Liaison Meeting the following evening).
- Parish Liaison meeting – scheduled for 16th July

Contact was also proposed with: Rotherham Women's Network; Bio-diversity forum

Assisted by Yorkshire Planning Aid:-

4 drop-in sessions specifically re: Bassingthorpe Farm proposals:- Thursday 9th July at Thornhill Youth Centre; Monday 13th July at Wingfield Comprehensive School; Thursday 23rd July at The High Street Centre,

**3ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP -
19/06/09**

Rawmarsh; and Saturday 25th July at Greasbrough Town Hall.

Workshop with Rotherfed on 29th July;

Workshop with BME communities in conjunction with REMA on 29th July.

It was agreed that a full list of the consultation event dates would be circulated to Members.

It was emphasised that these proposals impacted on the whole of the Borough and at this stage were not about specific site allocations. This was the pre-submission consultation stage and as such any one could comment. It was explained that once this consultation ended the responses would inform what would become a submission document. That document would be submitted for an examination in public. An Inspector would then issue a report, the recommendations of which would be binding on the local authority. This current work was to establish the broad strategy and policy framework. The site specific discussions would follow when the Site Allocations document is under preparation.

It was critical that the purpose of this consultation was clear.

(ii) Member Discussion:

Map 1 (Option 1) – this was concentrating development in Rotherham urban area with development in the principal towns of Dinnington and Wath, together with urban extensions at Bassingthorpe Farm (3600 approx new homes) and Waverley (4,000 approx new homes)

This option would involve sequential release of land using brownfield sites within Rotherham urban area before moving to the edge of settlements and urban extensions.

This proposal included Bassingthorpe Farm.

This proposal could deliver the target housing requirement if densities on some sites were to be increased but may be short on employment land.

Members commented on:-

- Densities
- Flooding
- Expansion into the greenbelt in certain areas vs. putting other areas back into the greenbelt
- Amount of affordable housing particularly in rural areas for young families
- Sustainability of sites

Map 2 – Development in public transport corridors

This option showed more development at Swinton – land at Racecourse Road.

In this option there was more land which was contentious e.g. greenspaces at Picaddilly; land at the former Croda site (contamination and access issues etc).

Brampton Bierlow/Cortonwood – noting extension into greenbelt.

Development along the Rotherham to Maltby and Rotherham to Doncaster transport corridors.

This option could meet 30,000+ new dwellings and offered more choice as to which sites could be developed to meet housing and employment targets.

Members commented on:-

- Physical constraints at some sites e.g. incline; water courses etc
- Access problems
- Links with existing communities
- Mineral rights at Maltby up to 2042
- The need to be mindful of the investment in the Chesterfield Canal at Kiveton Park and safeguard future proposals for the canal

Map 3 – Dispersed Development

Sites identified had been colour coded: brown = proposed for residential which can be developed; yellow = a mix of residential and employment with some retail i.e. supporting uses for sustainable communities; purple = employment sites; also shows greenbelt boundary.

Discussion took place regarding the motorway and principal road network being shown more clearly.

It was explained that the hatched areas on this plan indicated the most sensitive sites, and sites in Bassingthorpe Farm area and Dinnington West which had major reservations.

With this option there would be more choice as this option could provide capacity for an extra 9,000 homes above what is needed. This included those sites with the most sensitive constraints.

The core strategy consultation also had options for an employment land strategy. It was pointed out that much employment land is currently outside of existing settlement areas e.g. at Templeborough. The existing UDP regeneration areas e.g. Manvers, Dinnington, Aldwarke etc were referred to and it was pointed out that one option would be to consider strategic employment areas which were different to these e.g. around

Maltby and Hellaby. This would also include some sites within settlements.

Members commented on:-

- Links to existing areas of unemployment
- Rotherham's Renaissance proposals for the town centre
- Future proposals to build Council houses
- Building design
- Current economic downturn and difficulties in meeting the Government's targets
- Viability of some sites for which planning consent had already been given
- Timescale
- The need to demonstrate a 5 year land supply
- The need for the Waverley development

Map 4 - automatic exclusions and other sites

This included sites within the green belt and other sites which have been excluded. Sites identified in blue would not go forward. It also shows sites which have been surveyed and recommended to be retained as per their existing allocation in the UDP.

(ii) next stage

It was explained that this strategic document was part of the Local Development Framework which would sit beneath the Regional Spatial Strategy. In planning terms it would take the Council to 2026. It was pointed out this would be the Council's legal document and the policy framework by which the Council would judge planning applications.

The new LDF would comprise a number of documents – most importantly this Core Strategy, together with later allocations Development Plan Document.

It was the Core Strategy proposed options, that is currently out for consultation. At the conclusion of the consultation the Forward Planning team would assess all the consultation responses and refine the Core Strategy.

That Core Strategy would then be submitted for examination in public by an independent Inspector, who would listen to all the arguments. At the conclusion of that examination the Inspector would send a binding report to the Council. The Council would then have to adopt this document. It was explained because of the timescale involved any applications e.g. Waverley would need to be judged on the back of the RSS, the current UDP and some of the Core Strategy Options work. It was acknowledged that this would be difficult.

Housing would continue to be delivered over the plan period. The Document would be ready for submission in 2010; followed by the enquiry. Therefore it may be 2011 before this document was adopted by the Council. Work would then progress into 2011 on the allocations.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were referred to the attached information about the Key Stakeholder Event on Friday 26th June in the Bailey Suite – Members were welcome to attend.

6. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the LDF Members' Steering Group be held on FRIDAY, 17TH JULY, 2009 at 10.00 a.m. at the Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.

RMBC TRANSPORT LIAISON GROUP
Monday, 22nd June, 2009

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Goulty, Littleboy, McNeely, Sims, Swift, Whysall, Wootton and Austen.

together with:-

Dave Cooper	Rotherham Community Transport
Stephen Hewitson	Rotherham Community Transport
David Stevenson	Stagecoach East Midlands
Richard Simons	First
Pam Horner	SYPT
Rupert Cox	Stagecoach Yorkshire
Shayne Howarth	Stagecoach Yorkshire
Tom Finnegan-Smith	RMBC Transportation Unit

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Councillor Smith welcomed everyone present to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor Clarke	RMBC
Councillor Hodgkiss	RMBC
Councillor R. S. Russell	RMBC
Councillor Whelbourn	RMBC

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23RD MARCH, 2009

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd March, 2009 were noted.

3. ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES (NOT COVERED BY THE AGENDA ITEMS)

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. UPDATES FROM RMBC TRANSPORTATION UNIT:- LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/2010.

Tom Finnegan-Smith, Senior Engineer, RMBC, presented the submitted report which outlined the Council's proposed LTP capital programme for 2009/2010, as part of the South Yorkshire programme.

Details of the individual programmes were referred to as follows:-

Total block allocation 2009/2010 = £37.5m

This was then allocated as follows:-

Integrated Transport = £22.8 and Maintenance = £14.6

Re: Integrated Transport:-

It was pointed out that £11.5 had been allocated to the South Yorkshire Strategic Pot to include work on key bus corridors, congestion schemes and worst first road safety projects and works to support Objective 1 programme.

£11.45m of which Rotherham was allocated £2.2m for its own local priority schemes.

This programme including the strategic allocation, partnership schemes and the Councils schemes were detailed in APPENDIX A

Re: Maintenance:-

Rotherham's allocation = £2.18: this had been allocated as follows:-

Highway maintenance = £1.48m – details shown in APPENDIX B

Bridge maintenance - £565,891 – details shown in APPENDIX C

Street Lighting = £139,477

Members present commented on:-

- West Bawtry Road improvement scheme – reinstatement of Long Lane, Treeton
- Middle Lane
- Rotherham – Swallownest Bus Corridor
- Aston Comprehensive/Leisure Centre congestion at school times
- Scrutiny Review of road safety outside of schools
- Waverley Link Road
- A57 M1 to Todwick crossroads
- College Road – signalisation
- Proposed highway maintenance on Moorgate Road

It was explained that major schemes business cases were being prepared for submission to the DfT for both Waverley Link Road and the A57 M1 to Todwick crossroads and these development costs would be funded from the LTP strategic pot.

It was agreed:- That the contents of the report be noted.

5. **UPDATES FROM THE TRANSPORT OPERATORS:-**

- (i) First

Richard Simons reported on First's service changes as from 19th July, 2009. He explained that the changes had been made because the current Rotherham tender for the network expired on that date. The main result of this was that at times another provider would operate services at night and on Sundays. This would affect about half of the services in Rotherham. Information would shortly be available for passengers.

Particular reference was made to:-

- Service 25 from Rotherham to Dinnington – via Todwick/Aston and Service 23B from Dinnington to Sheffield – these services had been combined through a slight route change. However journey times should be quicker.

Members commented on Service 26 via Parkway Markets and asked how much longer did this make the journey?

It was explained that the journey was a few minutes longer. However it now provided a link for people to access the industrial estate and work. Also when coming out of Sheffield there was an extra pick up at Arundel Gate.

- Rotherham to Blackburn - incomplete journeys due to parked cars. It was explained that the problem was possibly contractors parking re: decent homes work in the area and this was an issue for Rotherham 2010 Ltd. to deal with.

It was explained that this was a long standing issue with vehicles obstructing the route. It was on the list of hot spots for highway intervention but there was reluctance to implement parking restrictions. This estate route was not ideal.

It was also reported that the Council's Transportation Unit had previously surveyed this area and not identified any problems. However further information from residents about hot spots was welcomed.

It was agreed:- That the Transportation Unit would make contact with Rotherham 2010 Ltd.

(ii) Northern Rail

Pam Horner, on behalf of Northern Rail, reported significant rail engineering works on the Doncaster – Scunthorpe – Cleethorpes route. An Engineering works special timetable was available which summarised the service changes. These works would particularly affect people from Rotherham using the stopping train to Doncaster. Bus service provision was being made available to travel to Cleethorpes. The works had been scheduled from 22nd June to the end of September.

It was reported that concern had been expressed by the Councillors and

MP for Cleethorpes about these works being carried out during the summer and affecting the local economy at this important time of the year. It was explained that the official response was that the works were being done so that services next year would be speeded up and improved. It was hoped also that usage would increase. Much related to satisfactory and safe track access during the summer.

There were also timetable changes on services beginning in Doncaster e.g. Trans Pennine Services.

In response to a question about using the concessionary fares pass it was explained that on local rail services the concessionary fare pass was available for use after 9 a.m. on any train operating wholly within South Yorkshire on the local rail network or any train operating across the boundary into West Yorkshire provided that the journey was unbroken.

(iii) Rotherham Community Transport

Stephen Hewitson reported that two new Dial a Ride "CT in SY" vehicles had been delivered replacing two older ones that had been taken out of service.

From 11th May there had been slight changes to booking arrangements and fares for the Dial a Ride service which were now standardised across South Yorkshire.

Dave Cooper, Community Links Co-ordinator, reported that the Community Links project, piloted in Rotherham, had now been rolled out across South Yorkshire.

The SYITA Members Working Group for Community Transport met in May and had discussed the Service Delivery Plan to March 2010 and noted aims which included the harmonisation of all Community Transport in South Yorkshire (CT in SY) fares and the introduction of a common "Door 2 Door" livery for "CT in SY" vehicles.

Work with Disability Sport South Yorkshire to provide support for their County-wide activities and built on the successful involvement of Rotherham CT with a local Disability Sport initiative was highlighted.

(iv) Stagecoach East Midlands

David Stevenson reported that from 19th July Service 19A – evenings and Sunday services – would operate via the White Gates estate in North Anston. There would also be an extension on Sundays during the summer to this service to Sherwood Forest and Edwinstowe.

Incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism had decline since the last meeting. Previous incidents had been dealt with by the Police.

(v) Stagecoach Yorkshire

Rupert Cox reported on services changes with effect from 19th July:-

- Services X12 and 227 – had been removed.
- Service 220 – evenings and Sundays – route through the Dearne Valley – this service would operate every ½ hour
- Services 226 and 220 (Wath Shuttle) – frequency improvements on the route – Wath to Cortonwood – Wombwell every 20 minutes
- Services 108/109 and 218 – minor amendments

(vi) South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive

Pam Horner reported on:-

- Changes to evening operations – mostly to be delivered by Veolia, with the possible introduction of newer vehicles
- Noting tickets not interchangeable between operators unless hold a Travel Master. This was likely to be a major issue for passengers buying either a Day Saver or Monthly Ticket as they would not be able to use them in the evenings. This would impact on shift workers and others going out socialising in the evenings. SYPTE were therefore suggestion passengers purchase a Travel Master but noted this was more expensive and would cost more if multi-operator journeys were made.

However, it was emphasised that the PTE was obliged to award the tender to the lowest priced operator.

- Engineering works – Doncaster to Cleethorpes:- detailed information would be provided for Elected Members for their surgeries.
- Bus Rapid Transit North – Consultation:- a Member briefing had been held and this would now go out to stakeholder consultation e.g. employers, operators, public – for six weeks.
- Rotherham Railway station:- a communications plan was currently been worked on re: refurbishment of the railway station. Works was scheduled to start November, 2009 and details would be made available about DDA access during the works.
- A630 improvements:- a booklet would be sent to Elected Members detailing improvements e.g. Whinney Hill, Fitzwilliam Road and College. Gillian Palmer was managing a six weeks consultation on this.

Those present discussed interchangeable fares and questioned why the new tender could not include a clause relating to providing increase services for the Council tax payer. It was explained that it was down to the legislation. However the SYPTE's legal team were working on this and information about the new legislation was awaited.

The Chairman thanked the Operators for their updates.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following item was raised:-

Rotherham Show 2009

It was pointed out that this year's Show was to be held in Rosehill Victoria Park in Rawmarsh. Reference was made to concerns about car parking and to efforts to establish a Park and Ride scheme. However it was suggested that the bus companies could operate a good PR exercise if they offered either a free or reduced fares service over the two days of this event.

It was understood that Stagecoach, through a contract with the PTE and the Council, would provide a Shuttle Service.

Everyone present agreed this was excellent news and that information should be included in Rotherham News.

7. DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS 2009-2010

The following dates were agreed:-

MONDAY, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2009 – 10.30 A.M. – COUNCIL CHAMBER

MONDAY, 23RD NOVEMBER, 2009 – 10.30 A.M.

MONDAY, 22ND MARCH, 2010 – 10.30 A.M.

MONDAY, 14TH JUNE, 2010 – 10.30 A.M.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER

1.	Meeting:	CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
2.	Date:	13th JULY, 2009
3.	Title:	NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES REVIEW UPDATE
4.	Programme Area:	HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

5. Summary

The Cabinet Member is requested to consider the attached report which has been referred for information by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods on 29th June, 2009.

6. Recommendation:-

That the Cabinet Member notes the contents of the report.

7. Proposals and Details

Please refer to the attached report.

8. Finance

Please refer to the attached report.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Please refer to the attached report.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Please refer to the attached report.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix A – report re: **Neighbourhood Centres Review Update**

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date	29th June 2009
3.	Title	Neighbourhood Centres Review Update
4.	Directorate	Neighbourhood & Adult Services

5. Summary

On the 2nd March 2009, Min No: 157 refers, the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods received a report which included an overview of the review being undertaken by the Neighbourhood Investment Service, on behalf of the Director of Independent Living, of the 58 neighbourhood centres attached to sheltered housing schemes.

It was agreed that a further progress report relating to the review of neighbourhood centres would be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods in June 2009.

This report provides a further update on the review and details the review findings to date, including emerging proposals and recommendations relating to future use.

A full summary, including site location maps, investment requirements and other financial information is attached at Appendix 1 and is also available in the Members Room Library at the Town Hall.

6. Recommendations

That the Cabinet Member:

- **Notes the progress of the review to date and considers the early review findings and option appraisal per centre**
- **Notes that the four indoor schemes will be reviewed separately and a report submitted at a later date**
- **Agrees that the report is referred to the Cabinet Member for Adult, Social Care and Health and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation for information**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background - On the 29th September 2008, the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods agreed that a full asset review should be undertaken of 62 neighbourhood centres. The Neighbourhood Investment Service is also undertaking a detailed review of community buildings in partnership with colleagues in EDS and this is being aligned with the neighbourhood centres review to further develop and support final recommendations. To manage the workload, the Neighbourhood Investment Service were tasked with reviewing 58 of the centres attached to a sheltered or aged persons housing complex, with a further four internal sheltered scheme centres to be reviewed separately. It is now proposed that this work is completed between October 2009 – 2010 and is jointly delivered with 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

7.2 Sheltered Housing Neighbourhood Centres – the Sheltered Housing Neighbourhood centres are located in various settlements throughout the Borough and have formed an integral part of the Council's sheltered housing provision. The centres were created as purpose built communal facilities offering many benefits to aged persons, such as reducing social isolation and maintaining independence. For many residents living on sheltered housing schemes the centres often acted as a key focal point by allowing them to participate and socialise through the provision of activities at a local level. In many cases the centres also incorporate warden accommodation, a guest bedroom and laundry facilities.

7.3 Neighbourhood Centre Review - The review findings to date highlight that the use of the centres, revenue expenditure and investment required in each centre varies significantly. Initial findings and recommendations relating to each of the centres are provided in an overview which is attached as Appendix 1, the details include:

- Centre Location
- Ward
- The facilities available within each centre
- Condition of the centre
- Service requirements/usage
- Risks
- Rental income, expenditure and the payback period
- Costs to improve to ensure 'fit for purpose' and DDA compliance
- Initial community comments/concerns/aspirations
- Other community facilities located within the neighbourhood.

7.4 Consultation with Ward Members - Initial Ward Member consultation is now complete. 63% of all ward members or at least one ward member within each ward has attended meetings with the Neighbourhood Centres Manager and Neighbourhood Investment Service to discuss and develop initial recommendations and assess the potential impact of the review

findings for each centre within their ward. Of those involved, the following issues were raised:

- The importance of the centres in preventing isolation and social exclusion.
- Loss of laundry as some bungalows cannot accommodate independent washing facilities: in addition reduction of borough wide laundry service.
- Further loss of services for aged persons following changes to e.g. meals on wheels service, laundry services etc.
- The rental income exceeds the expenditure on the majority of centres and no visible or recent investment or ring fencing of monies is apparent.
- Misuse of centres by Council and 2010 Ltd operatives.
- The need to explore the potential to opt out of the charge and service.
- Support for increased use e.g. NHS locality based services, and Safer Neighbourhood Teams, mobile workers etc at appropriate charge.
- Sensitive letting of void flats and accommodation attached to centres.

7.5 Emerging recommendations - Based upon the identified use, investment requirements, revenue expenditure and proximity to other communal facilities, initial recommendations are as follows:

- 46 centres (79%) to be retained and their use maximised.
- 5 centres (9%) need further investigation to determine options for alternative use.
- 7 centres (12%) – more detailed resident consultation is required to be undertaken to inform recommendations due to the potential for these to be decommissioned.

7.6 Retain and maximise use - the centres proposed for retention are reasonably or very well used by residents for a range of activities and have a lower investment requirement and revenue cost. These centres will be programmed for essential repairs and improvements as per the indicative 15 year investment programme attached as Appendix 2. A questionnaire has been circulated to residents within schemes where centres are proposed for retention. The questionnaire seeks to identify ways in which centres can be more proactively used by residents and others. Encouraging increased use of the centres will also provide additional income to support the investment programme and long term sustainability. The survey has identified that tenants would like to see the following improvements within their centres :-

- Increased activities e.g. bingo, coffee mornings, games etc.
- Investment and refurbishment

RMBC would need to determine how social activities will be facilitated and managed, particularly if any changes to the role of the Warden were made in the future. A suitable investment programme will also need to be drawn up subject to the outcome of final recommendations for each centre.

7.7 Investigate options for alternative use - These are centres with little or no current use and/or are located within close proximity to other communal

facilities where there is the potential for combined facilities. Investigating an alternative use has included:

- Potential conversion to a residential unit or disabled persons unit
- Demolition and redevelopment of land (where permissible)
- Office accommodation for mobile or locality based officers

To assist this work, the Forward Planning Service has been instructed to commence site appraisals of all centres with a target completion date of end of June. An analysis of the current planning regulations attached to the buildings will enable a better understanding of the scope for future use and any proposed conversions and will identify any planning constraints for each site. The majority of the neighbourhood centres adjoin bungalows. In this case, demolition of the centre and retention of the adjoining bungalow would be difficult and expensive. As such, this option is not being recommended.

NHS Rotherham, Safer Neighbourhood Teams, and mobile workers may be interested in utilising the centres for locality based service provision and in support of Neighbourhood Management. This would help to support and achieve the council's aims and objectives set out within the NAS service plan, corporate priorities and Worksmart objectives. Options will be further developed in advance of ward member and resident consultation being undertaken to determine views on proposed alternative uses.

7.8 Further resident consultation - In-depth on site resident consultation will be undertaken with residents attached to centres with little or no use commencing at the beginning of July and concluding by the end of August. This will be confirmed with Ward Members prior to commencing the process. Initial resident questionnaires will be sent to enable us to establish their circumstances and their preferred option for the future of the centres. Following the questionnaire, consultation events will take place with affected residents, Parish Councils, Ward Members and TARA's where they will be provided with the survey results, further information relating to the review and the next steps. Individual home visits will take also place by agreement with those unable to attend formal meetings. The consultation will be undertaken to determine whether the tenants would like the centres to be retained, agree to an alternative use being investigated or agree to the potential conversion of void accommodation for RMBC and SNT office bases. The consultation timetable is attached as appendix 3.

7.9 Unoccupied living accommodation - There are currently 13 flats unoccupied where schemes have been de-designated from sheltered housing schemes to aged persons units and no longer have resident wardens occupying tied tenancy accommodation. The flats are located on the first floor and have shared and direct access in many cases into the centre, which causes security implications if letting to the general waiting list. The Neighbourhood Centre Manager is currently liaising with Key Choices and the Empty Homes Team at 2010 Ltd to establish a sensitive lettings policy. The potential to utilise void accommodation for SNT, Neighbourhood Partnership teams and Worksmart mobile workers as office bases has been identified however these teams will require a larger than average unit to

accommodate approximately 15 staff with secure storage areas for SNT police teams, to include a separate meeting room. Currently 2 storey centres with unoccupied flats would enable the SNT and NPT to occupy the first floor accommodation whilst keeping the ground floor open for community use. Further inspections by the SNT Inspector are taking place in order to confirm suitability and the funding requirements for conversion.

8. Finance

8.1 Any changes to the way the centres are provided and funded in the future could impact significantly on their viability in that currently they rely solely on income from tenants, or small amounts of income from activities. Any proposals need to ensure that a suitable funding structure is in place to support final recommendations. All tenants who reside on a Sheltered or Aged Persons Scheme with a communal facility pay £4.08 per week communal facility charge. This is payable whether or not they use the communal facilities. The annual combined income is estimated currently at £445,000. This income is the only source of income available in relation to everyday maintenance, refurbishment, running costs and the Neighbourhood Centres Manager salary. This income could be lost or reduced if a permanent alternate use was agreed, and would need to be replaced by formal income arrangements with individual organisations. Any alternate use by Council and any partner agencies would require a significant contribution being made in order to balance and maintain current income levels and running costs as without this, centres could not be sustained. Any additional monies generated from the new hire charges would also need to be credited back to the capital budget allocation and reinvested back into the centres to support increasing management and running costs.

8.2 As part of the review analysis, it has emerged that under Health and Safety regulations it will be a requirement to have in place an asbestos monitoring procedure, legionella checks, fire risk assessments and PAT testing that must take place and be reviewed annually. If carried out by EDS, this would be subject to a fee estimated at approximately £59k. 14 centres are supplied with district heating via a central boiler house and it has been determined recently that costs for the centres up to now has been borne by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. It is estimated that the annual increased cost will require an additional estimated £72k. Currently, the wardens are allocated 5 hours per week to clean the neighbourhood centres, however any changes to the role of the wardens role will require an alternative arrangement. EDS have indicated that a separate cleaning contract would cost in the region of £105k per annum. These potential additional costs will now need to be factored into centre running costs for those being retained and will have an impact on the balance of revenue and expenditure for individual centres. This would need to be considered and reflected in any final recommendations and could alter the weekly amount charged for sheltered housing tenants.

8.3 The investment required for the 46 centres proposed for retention is **£2,517,346** to undertake essential repairs and carry out improvements to the

building. These costs would need to be scheduled to take place over 15 years as detailed in Appendix 3. Funding to undertake the investment profile will be subject to resources being identified within the HIP programme or a successful bid for resources from the Corporate Medium Term Capital programme.

9. Risks and uncertainties

9.1 There are legal implications relating to the alternative use of Neighbourhood Centres. Currently tenants have to pay for the centre as a communal facility and the Council are obliged to provide it. It may be necessary to change the terms of the tenancy agreements if the communal facility is to be no longer available or changed to a nearby site. Also if the alternative facility is too far from the site or shared with properties of a different status there may be a danger that sheltered properties will lose their immunity from right to buy claims.

9.2 A number of tenants have already complained about paying for a communal facility that they neither need nor use. Complaints could rise if the facility is moved off-site, and it could be harder to resist calls to make use and payment for the facility optional rather than obligatory. If however residents are allowed to opt out of paying for the facility, it may become non-viable thus depriving those residents who do need the service and the opportunity to use it. Also if an opt out is allowed and a sufficient number of residents withdraw the immunity from the right to buy may be lost.

9.3 The removal of an on-site communal facility which some residents use and which forms an essential part of their sheltered housing might also be considered as an interference in their home or family life, which would be a contravention of the Council's obligations under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights having effect in UK law by virtue of the Human Rights Act 1998. The details of each proposal will need to be examined with support from Legal services to determine whether there is such interference and if so if there is a relevant exception.

9.4 Before final recommendations are agreed for each centre, the range of issues detailed throughout this report will need to be carefully examined. In addition to those detailed above, these can be summarised as:

- The costs attached to any proposed change of use or conversion and the availability of funding to support any investment required need exploring. Funding requirements will also need to be considered on a programmed basis and would be subject to available HIP resources or an early bid to the Corporate Capital Programme.
- Planning restrictions following the site appraisals may restrict the scope of available options for future use.
- Risks attached to the letting and subsequent management of former warden accommodation will need to be carefully mitigated.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

10.1 Neighbourhood Centres have the potential to be a thriving community resource to assist and support older people and vulnerable people to live independently whilst offering opportunities to act as a base for more integrated local service delivery. However since they were developed, the use of the centres, the social profile of the tenants and the role of the warden has changed significantly and many now require refurbishment to a modern, contemporary standard. Policy developments around self directed support and enabling older people to retain their independence does not necessarily mean that older people will want to use an on site facility, preferring instead to access community and commercial facilities available to the wider community.

10.2 The asset review when complete needs to take into account the broader developments across the Council to ensure that the remaining centres compliment, rather than duplicate existing resources available locally. The review and its outcomes contribute to and are reflected within the Individual Well-being and Healthy Communities outcome framework, as follows:

- Improved Quality of Life – by creating opportunities for improved housing standards to meet household aspirations and an improved quality of life, through facilitating Empty Properties brought back into use to meet identified housing needs and removing obsolete housing and environmental blight.
- Exercise Choice and Control – through enabling a range of housing options to be presented to households affected by regeneration programmes; ensuring individuals can exercise choice and control over their housing options and home life (Objective 6)
- Personal Dignity and Respect – through creating housing choices and tools which promote independent living, personal dignity and respect, investing in quality neighbourhoods, ensuring residents can enjoy a comfortable, clean and orderly environment.
- Freedom from discrimination or harassment – through providing quality housing and independent living, targeted to meet specific need, to support improved health and well-being, facilitated by a transparent process agreed with the client from the outset (Objective 2). The Brief appended at Appendix 2 contains requirements to provide move-on accommodation for vulnerable client groups.
- Economic well-being – providing high quality housing, through high design standards and meeting identified needs in order to create sustainable neighbourhoods, offering high quality and extended choice of housing provision, to meet current and future aspirations.

10.3 Alignment with Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan is clear from Rotherham Safe. Dealing with empty properties is clearly an aspect of the Corporate Priority “Rotherham Safe”, where the cleaner, greener agenda is

set out, emphasising a preventative approach. In addressing the **Rotherham Safe** priorities the strategy contributes to delivering the following key strategic actions;

- Maintaining the current overall low crime rate in Rotherham, as well as in continuing to address people's concerns about anti-social behaviour and their fear of crime.
- Aiding the development of a sustainable housing stock.
- Supporting the Rotherham Renaissance Masterplan and reinforcing the town centre's role as a place for urban living.
- Increase satisfaction with local neighbourhoods.
- Making the connection between national and local strategies.
- Providing a link between regional, national and local organisations

In addition it will contribute to the **Sustainable Development** cross cutting theme by protecting and enhancing the environment, **Rotherham Alive** by ensuring a place where people feel good, are healthy and active, **Rotherham Achieving** by helping raise the quality of life in the most deprived communities and **Rotherham Proud** by increasing the satisfaction in the local area as a place to live and putting pride in the hearts of our communities.

Alignment with delivery of four themes of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy: Community of Interest – All communities of interest can be affected by Empty Properties and benefit by their re-use.

11. Background Papers and Consultation:-

Sheltered Housing Community Building Review – 2nd April 2007

Neighbourhood Centres Review update – 29 September 2008

Sheltered Housing Review of Charges- 2nd March 2009

Contact Name: Sharon Pedersen, Property Investment Co-ordinator,
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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Economic Development, Planning and Transportation Matters
2.	Date:	13th July 2009
3.	Title:	Fitzwilliam Street, Wath; Ward 19 Wath Proposed Recommended Cycle Route
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

To inform Cabinet Member of a proposal to provide a recommended cycling route on Fitzwilliam Street to link the North of Wath to Wath Town centre.

6. Recommendations

Cabinet Member is asked to resolve that

- 1. The results of the consultation exercise be noted.**
- 2. Authority be given for the detailed design to be carried out and for the scheme to be implemented.**
- 3. The scheme be funded from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Programme for 2009/2010.**

7. Proposals and Details

As part of the Councils' commitment to improve accessibility within the Dearne Valley area and also to help improve the health of its residents by becoming more physically active, a scheme has been derived to encourage cyclists of all abilities to access existing leisure and employment facilities within the area such as Wath Town Centre and the Trans Pennine Trail. The scheme is shown in outline on drawing 122/U458, attached as appendix A.

The proposal is aimed at encouraging cyclists of all abilities to make more bicycle journeys using this proposal of a newly created recommended cycle route. This will be supported by leaflet dropping all the residents of Fitzwilliam Street, Wath asking that whenever possible they park their vehicles off the highway on Fitzwilliam Street in order to provide a route along the road that is clear of stationary vehicles. In addition to this we will also be contacting schools within the area to include them and their pupils within the proposal with a view to increasing the number of cycling trips made as part of their journey to school and also a leisure option.

With regard to engineering works, it is our intention to remove the centre warning line along Fitzwilliam Street (mirroring adjacent roads) and providing painted cycle symbols on the road and cycle signs on lamp columns to highlight the recommended route. At this stage the proposals incorporate Fitzwilliam Street only as this route runs parallel to Sandygate. However, depending upon the success of the scheme further improvements will be considered at locations such as the controlled crossing on Biscay Way to include cycle friendly crossing facilities, the bridge over A633 Manvers Way to permit cycle use on the bridge and Dearne Road.

8. Finance

It is estimated that the works will cost approximately £10,000 and funding is anticipated to be available from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2009/10.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Without any increase in the number of cycle trips made as a result of this proposal, any further investment may have to be focussed on engineering solutions which may be controversial e.g. waiting restrictions to provide a clear cycle route.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The proposed scheme is in line with the Councils' main themes of Alive, Safe and Achieving and also accords with the Equalities Policy.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation with the South Yorkshire Police and Ward Members has been undertaken with regard to the proposal. No objections to the scheme have been received as a result of any of these consultations.

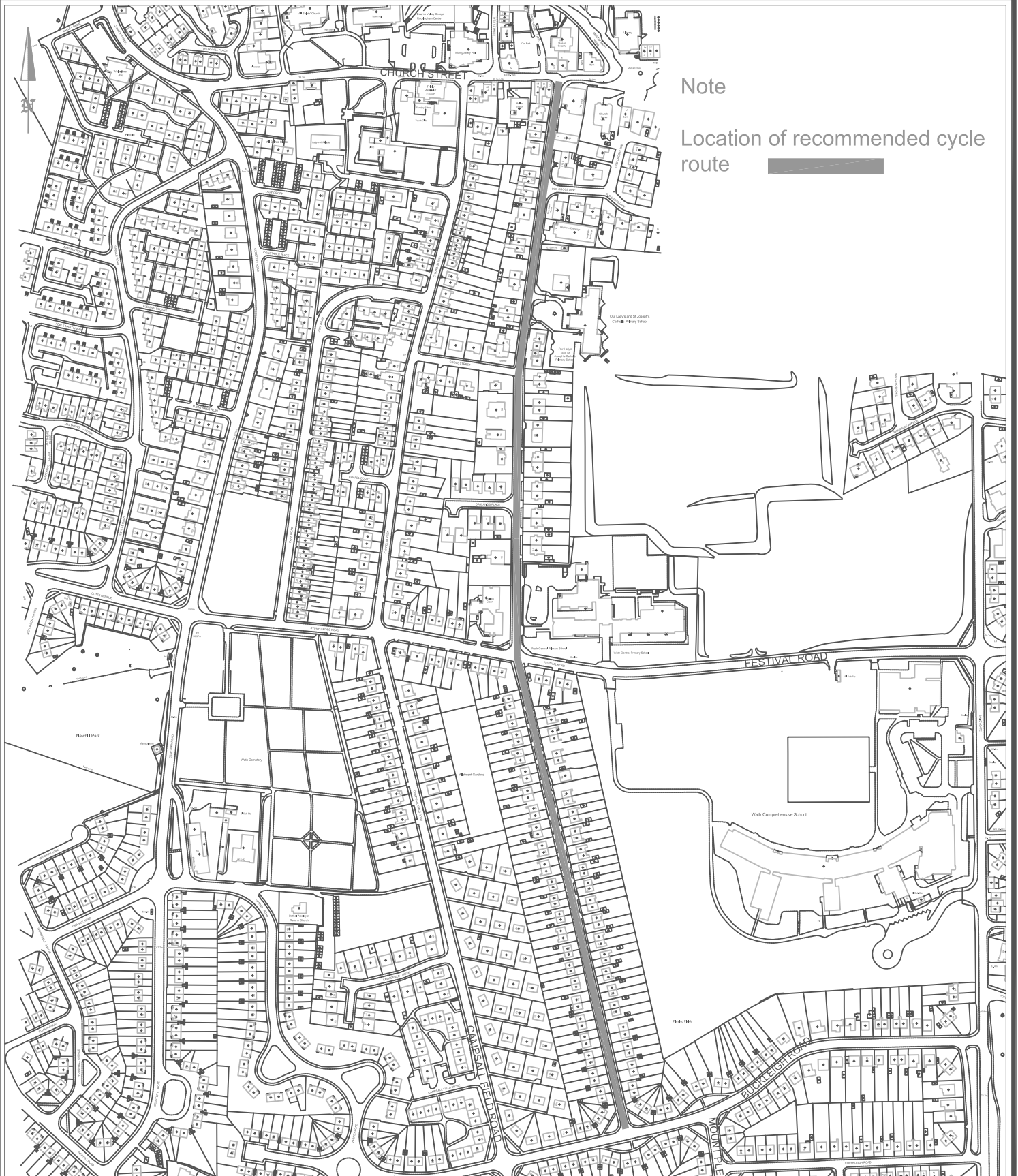
Contact Name : *Nigel Davey, Engineer, Ext 2380*
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Strategic Director:
Karl Battersby Bsc (Hons) MTPL MRTPI

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Environment & Development Services
Bailey House, Rawmarsh Road,
Rotherham S60 1TD

Client:



Note
Location of recommended cycle route 

Title Fitzwilliam Street Wath
Proposed Recommended Cycle Route

Appendix A

Dwg. No. 122/U458

Scales (if A4) NTS

Drawn N Davey

Date 06/09

Chd. by

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation
2.	Date:	13 July 2009
3.	Title:	Consultation on new Planning Policy Statement 4 'Planning for prosperous economies'
4.	Programme Area:	Forward Planning, Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

This report sets out a draft response to the Government's consultation on new Planning Policy Statement 4 'Planning for prosperous economies' and an accompanying good practice guide on assessing need, impact, and the sequential approach.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member notes the content of this report and approves submission of the attached response as the Council's reply to these consultation documents.

7. Proposals and Details

Background

The Department for Communities and Local Government has published a consultation paper on a new Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for prosperous economies (PPS4). Alongside this a good practice guide on assessing need, impact and the sequential approach has also been published for consultation.

This draft PPS will consolidate national planning policy on economic development into a single streamlined planning policy statement. In its final form, this PPS will replace Planning Policy Guidance Note 4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms, Planning Policy Guidance Note 5: Simplified Planning Zones (which will be republished as practice guidance) and Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for town centres. It will also replace sections of Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable development in rural areas and annex D of Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport.

Summary and key elements of draft PPS4

Appendix A sets out the recommended response to this consultation. The following section highlights some of the key elements and changes within the consultation document.

The draft PPS combines guidance on economic matters into one document, containing guidance relevant to employment land and economic development proposals, town centre developments, rural economies and car parking standards.

Key changes to current guidance are:

- Provision of a definition of what constitutes economic development
- Clear guidance that economic proposals should be considered favourably unless the costs outweigh the benefits.
- Applications for town centre uses outside existing centres and not allocated in an up-to-date development plan no longer have to provide evidence of a 'need' for development. However the sequential, accessibility, impact and scale tests in current PPS6 have been re-packaged into a requirement to provide 'sequential' and 'impact' assessments. Assessing the 'need' for town centre uses remains a requirement in the preparation of the LDF.
- The impact assessment now includes considerations relating to climate change and design.
- In terms of town centre developments new requirements include identifying floorspace deficiencies, setting out a spatial vision and management strategy for the growth of centres in the Core Strategy, considering the need for policies and thresholds dealing with the scale of new developments in different centres.
- It confirms the use of maximum parking standards.

At a national level planning policy relating to economic development has been overshadowed by housing, reflected in the lack of an update to PPG4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms since it was published in 1992. Therefore this draft is to be welcomed.

In terms of guidance on LDF preparation, there is an emphasis on maintaining a robust evidence base which is updated at regular intervals. Whilst this is welcomed (and expected) it does have resource implications. For example Policy EC11 indicates that Local Planning Authorities should use their annual monitoring reports to keep the need for further development and the vitality and viability of centres under review.

In terms of economic development the encouragement of local planning authorities to proactively encourage sustainable economic growth and the prioritisation of development on previously developed land is welcomed. An emphasis on site phasing and release policies is also noted.

The Council already has maximum parking standards in place and Policy EC10 regarding the use of maximum parking standards is welcomed.

Whilst the PPS removes the “need” test for new town centre uses at the planning application stage, at policy EC1.4 it retains the requirement to assess need for retail and leisure developments as part of the plan making process. Indeed Policy EC7.1 reiterates the five tests from current PPS6 (need, scale, sequential approach, impact and accessibility) in selecting sites for new town centre developments. This puts a clear emphasis upon robust ‘need’ assessments to support LDF site allocations. The retention of an element of the needs test in some form is welcomed although it is considered that this could also be helpfully retained when considering planning applications.

It encourages mixed use developments with less of a focus on single or restrictive use allocations. Whilst welcoming the mixed use approach this will need to be managed carefully through LDF policies to ensure that such sites do deliver adequate employment land.

Policy EC12 emphasises a positive approach to planning applications for economic development, with proposals being considered favourably unless other reasons outweigh the benefits. This extends to taking an evidence based approach to economic proposals which do not have the support of plan policies. Given the emphasis now upon slimming down LDF development control policies to avoid trying to deal with all circumstances, this could be an area of potential contention in the future.

Policy EC21 clearly indicates that for town centre proposals in out-of-centre locations permission should be refused where the requirements of policies relating to the sequential test, impact test and climate change are not met. However it does state that proposals should be considered favourably where adverse impacts may be minimal and outweighed by economic, social and environmental benefits. Again the importance of a robust and up to date development plan and evidence base is clear as EC21.2 indicates that judgements about the extent and significance of any impacts should be informed by these.

Overall, whilst the document attempts to combine a number of PPSs together, this has partly been achieved by including minimal explanation or contextual information;

rather it is a list of policies. Whilst being somewhat streamlined it is still a complex document which would benefit from further explanatory paragraphs. In this respect the accompanying draft practice guide addressing parts of draft PPS4 is welcomed.

Good practice guide

The response to this consultation is attached at appendix B. This document provides more detailed advice in respect of key elements of the draft PPS relating to town centre uses. As noted earlier draft PPS4 is complex and this good practice guide is to be welcomed.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from the consultation documents. There may however be resource implications in the future when PPS4 is issued in its final form, arising from the emphasis upon ensuring a robust evidence base and for ongoing monitoring.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Draft PPS4 would replace a number of existing statements of national planning policy and once finalised will guide the preparation of the LDF and the determination of planning applications in respect of economic and town centre issues. It is therefore important that the Council responds to this opportunity to influence national policy.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

In its final form PPS4 will be taken into account in the preparation of the Local Development Framework and as such contributes to the Strategic Themes and Cross Cutting Themes by ensuring that economic development meets the needs of the modern economy and supports sustainable communities through access to employment opportunities and promoting equality in terms of choice and opportunities.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Appendix A – draft response to PPS4 consultation
- Appendix B – draft response to Planning for Town Centres good practice guide
- Draft Planning Policy Statement 4 – available from <http://www.communities.gov.uk/>
- Planning for Town Centres: Good Practice Guide on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach – available from <http://www.gvagrimley.co.uk/towncentresgoodpracticeguide.xml>

Contact Name : *Ryan Shepherd, Senior Planner, Ext.3888,
ryan.shepherd@rotherham.gov.uk*

Appendix A:

Response to consultation draft PPS4
Rotherham MBC

Name	Ryan Shepherd
Organisation	Rotherham MBC
Address	Forward Planning, Bailey House, Rawmarsh Road, Rotherham, S60 1TD
E-mail address	ryan.shepherd@rotherham.gov.uk
Please state whether you agree to your response being made public	Yes

Before responding to the specific consultation questions we have provided a number of general comments below.

The definitions set out in annex A of current PPS6 should be retained and included in PPS4. Whilst they appear in the draft best practice guide recently published for consultation this document does not, and will not, form part of government guidance. They remain vital to the plan making process and the determination of applications. Their absence from PPS4 may give rise to confusion, for example, over the definition of edge-of-centre. It is therefore important that these definitions are included in the PPS itself.

Whilst the PPS removes the “need” test for new town centre uses at the planning application stage, at policy EC1.4 it retains the requirement to assess need for retail and leisure developments as part of the plan making process. The retention of an element of the needs test in some form is welcomed. However we would make the following points regarding the importance of considering ‘need’.

- Whilst the guidance is clear about removing need as key test for applications, it is difficult to understand how some consideration of need cannot be considered as it appears intrinsic to some elements of the impact test. When looking at the impact of proposals on existing centres it appears reasonable that some consideration of how proposed floorspace will impact planned investment. An excess of floorspace may have an adverse impact on the town centre as a whole by reducing vitality and viability. Essentially this would be a case of insufficient catchment expenditure to support the centres floorspace. To determine this impact inevitably requires some consideration of the 'need' for the proposal. This also seems to be supported in the accompanying good practice guide on need, impact and the sequential approach.
- Need would also help in making the sequential test more robust. At present the parameters of any sequential test are set by the need for the proposal; the scale and type of development is clear and this

Appendix A:

enables a more transparent approach to considering the suitability of alternative sites. In the absence of this first stage the sequential test may become far more subjective and a less transparent process.

The Council already has maximum parking standards in place and Policy EC10 regarding the use of maximum parking standards is welcomed.

In terms of economic development the encouragement of local planning authorities to proactively encourage sustainable economic growth and the prioritisation of development on previously developed land is welcomed.

The PPS provides a clear emphasis on maintaining a robust evidence base which is updated at regular intervals, and ongoing monitoring. Whilst this is welcomed (and expected) it does have resource implications for local authorities which should be acknowledged.

- 1. Do you support the consolidation and streamlining of national planning policy on economic development into a single policy statement? What do you think are the costs and benefits of the approach?**

Yes No

Comment: Streamlining in general is welcomed, although there is potential that the detail of differing PPSs can be lost. Whilst the document attempts to combine a number of PPSs together, this has partly been achieved by the removal of explanation and contextual information – rather it is a list of policies. Whilst welcoming the accompanying good practice guide, although the draft PPS is somewhat streamlined it is still a complex document which would benefit from further explanatory paragraphs. The replacement of much of PPS7 leaves the remaining advice relatively slim; if the streamlined approach is being adopted perhaps PPS7 in its entirety should have been subsumed.

- 2. Does the draft Statement include all that you understand to be policy from draft PPS4, PPG5, PPS6 and PPS7? If not, please be specific about what paragraphs in any of these documents you feel should be included in this document? Please can you explain why this should be the case?**

Yes No

Comment:

- 3. Other than where specifically highlighted, the process of streamlining policy text previously in draft PPS4, PPS6 and PPS7 to focus on policy rather than guidance**

Appendix A:

is not intended to result in a change in policy. Are there any policies which you feel have changed in this process? Please tell us what you think has changed and provide alternative wording that addresses your concerns.

Yes No

Comment:

- 4. Does the structure of the draft Statement make it easier to understand what is required at different stages in the planning process? Are there any improvements you would like to see made?**

Yes No

Comment: The plan making and decision making chapters could usefully include subsections which grouped similar paragraphs together (such as the town centre related ones). Whilst bringing advice on economy related uses together is helpful, there are necessarily differences in approach particularly with the town centre uses, which sub division could help make clear. The use of policy rather than paragraph numbering is not particularly helpful; both in terms of being inconsistent with other PPG/PPSs and in making for unhelpful referencing. For example "EC21.1(2)" - this is far too similar to the complex approach taken in planning regulations and does not help with making the document easy to read or reference.

- 5. Do you think the restructuring of the impact test from the consultation draft of PPS6 achieves the right balance and is it robust enough to thoroughly test the positive and negative impacts of development outside town centres?**

Yes No

Comment: The impact test as set out is clearer than in consultation draft PPS6 and appears sufficiently robust. However concerns remain around the resource implications of assessing impact statements. The role of the development plan and other data against which to judge impact statements emphasises the importance of robust and up to date development plans and evidence base. Along with the additional skills required to analyse and interpret more technical data and acknowledging other pressures upon LPA resources, there is a danger that some LPAs may have difficulty with the revised impact test. Please also see the earlier additional comments relating to the 'need' test.

Appendix A:

6. **Should more be done to give priority in forward planning and development management to strategically important sectors such as those that support a move to a low carbon economy, and if so, what should this be?**

Yes No

Comment: Policy EC4 provides for LDFs to plan for new or important sectors depending upon local economic strategies. Whilst further guidance could be provided, inevitably a balance must be struck with ensuring flexibility.

7. **Is the approach to the determination of planning applications set out in policy EC21 proportionate?**

Yes No

Comment: Again the importance of a robust and up to date development plan and evidence base (see earlier comments) is clear as EC21.2 indicates that judgements about the extent and significance of any impacts should be informed by these. Concerns remain, particularly with respect to EC21.1(3) that the favourable approach to proposals could be exploited where LPAs do not have up to date evidence base against which to assess proposals given resource constraints.

8. **Do you think the requirement for regional spatial strategies to set targets for employment land targets for each district in their area should be imposed? Please give reasons for your view.**

Yes No

Comment: The imposition of targets is not supported, particularly given the changing economic climate. The current approach adopted in the Yorkshire and Humber Plan is more appropriate, where employment land guidance including employment land targets is set out but also includes policies allowing local authorities to make alternative provision where more up to date or locally specific data is available.

9. **Do you agree the policies do enough to protect small or rural shops and services, including public houses? If no, please explain what changes you would like to see.**

Yes No

Appendix A:

Comment:

- 10. In response to Matthew Taylor, we have altered the approach to issues such as farm diversification. What do you consider are the pros and cons of this approach?**

Yes No

Comment: It is acknowledged that rural settlements may benefit from development, even though they may not be the most sustainable locations when looking borough-wide. Where LDF policies can provide guidance in terms of appropriate scale for such developments, this approach is supported.

- 11. Do you think that the proposals in this draft PPS will have a differential impact, either positive or negative, on people, because of their gender, race or disability? If so how in your view should we respond? We particularly welcome the views of organisations and individuals with specific expertise in these areas.**

Yes No

Comment: The guidance needs to be stronger. There is a lot of reference to the “environment” and “sustainability”, but not a lot of reference to equality and deprivation; although the consideration of the Impact of proposals on deprived areas and social Inclusion objectives (as part of the Impact test) is welcomed. The potential impact on all sections of the community (both communities of place and communities of interest) should be a specific and prioritised consideration within national planning guidance, and within local authority development proposals. We need to look locally at the unique population make up of localities and factor that in, in any planning guidance or economic development. Successful economic development will have a knock on effect in improving social and environmental outcomes.

Location of employment: The location of employment close to where people live is particularly important for the most deprived communities including disabled people, who are statistically underrepresented in car use and have limited access to public transport. Women who are also underrepresented in car use, in particular Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women who are disproportionately underrepresented in car use and in employment generally

Appendix A:

compared to BME men and women generally.

Children and Young People: If adults in deprived areas benefit by site specific economic development then there will be a positive impact on child poverty. Reference should be made to the importance of positive planning for support facilities such as crèches.

Positive impact and community aspiration: There is the potential of positive impact on Race, Disability and Gender. The guidance document should make specific reference to deprived geographical communities and Communities of interest (COI). The guidance should also acknowledge how this could have a direct positive effect on economic development by raising aspirations and leading to better regional economic activity and development.

Skills matching: Reference or consideration should be given to the need to look at both matching employers to areas and the skills of the local population to employers.

Community Cohesion: Consideration should be given to providing spaces that provide opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds and ages to meet and interact positively.

Appendix B:

Response to consultation draft Planning for
Town Centres: Good Practice Guide on Need,
Impact and the Sequential Approach

Rotherham MBC

Name	Ryan Shepherd
Organisation	Rotherham MBC
Address	Forward Planning, Bailey House, Rawmarsh Road, Rotherham, S60 1TD
E-mail address	ryan.shepherd@rotherham.gov.uk
Please state whether you agree to your response being made public	Yes

1. Does the structure of the guidance clearly differentiate between plan-making and development management?

Yes – the document structure makes it easy to read and follow.

2. Does the guidance clearly differentiate between the roles and responsibilities at the regional and local levels?

Yes – the ‘how to use this guide’ section is helpful in guiding those with different interests to relevant parts of the document.

3. Does the guidance explain clearly how ‘need’ should be considered in plan-making?

Yes, however further clarification may be needed with regard to the impact test section which refers to considering ‘need’ and appears to conflict with the draft PPS4 which restricts considering ‘need’ to the plan making process only. However I would note that we support the guidance in the practice guide, which reflect our views set out in our response on the draft PPS4, that an element of ‘need’ should still be considered in the assessment of proposals.

4. Does the guidance explain clearly how the sequential approach should apply to plan-making and development management?

Yes

5. Does the guidance explain sufficiently how impact should be considered in terms of plan-making and development management?

Appendix B:

Yes – this is particularly welcomed in light of the expanded scope of this test in the draft PPS. However I would refer back to the response to Q3 above.

- 6. Do the case studies adequately exemplify the points made? Should other case studies be considered to illustrate particular points? If so, please feel free to recommend examples of good practice from either a plan-making or planning application perspective.**

The case studies are helpful and informative, as are the checklists and how to boxes throughout the document.

- 7. Does the guidance provide sufficient advice on town centre uses other than retail and leisure?**

Yes. Experience of commissioning borough wide retail and leisure studies has made it clear that for non-retail uses assessment methodologies are less advanced and more qualitative. Appendix C therefore is particularly helpful.

- 8. Is any further clarification needed on definitions/terminology, in particular regarding the question raised by the NRPF on the definitions of net retail sales area, set out in Appendix A?**

No. However I would re-iterate comments provided in our response to the draft PPS that the definitions (in particular tables 1 and 2) should also remain within any final PPS and not be demoted wholesale to practice guidance which has less weight in planning terms.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning & Transportation
2.	Date:	13th July 2009
3.	Title:	UKSE Grants and Loans Scheme for Rotherham
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

To provide funding support to pre-starts and small businesses by way of a package of grants and loans granted in trust to RMBC/RiDO by UK Steel Enterprises Ltd.

6. Recommendations

To approve the proposals to provide local small businesses and start-ups with grants and loans to help them with their business start-up and development, with a particular reference to ex-Corus employees and their families.

7. Proposals and Details

Proposal for Grants/Loans use

The Grants and Loans from this fund would be made available to pre-starts and small businesses based in the Rotherham Borough area. It is proposed that the total pot of £90,000 be split into two lots: £40k for grants to pre-starts, and £50k for a loan scheme to be made available to early stage businesses.

Grants (Pre-Starts) Potential Grant Pot of £40k

Who

People looking to start a business within the next 6 months within the Rotherham Borough

What

These small grants (up to £500) can be used to pay for the purchase of equipment or software to be used in the new business, or towards professional fees (accountants-solicitors-patent applications – etc).

Eligibility

There must be evidence of a sound business idea, a commitment to pursue the business full time, and either a business plan, or evidence of working towards a business plan. The applicants must be supported by a Business Coach and or Mentor.

Non-Eligibility

Any retail business in receipt of or applying for a town centre vitality grant.
Any business that is considered not to be a suitable or ethical trade within the guidelines of the local authority.

Decisions:

The grant applications will be subject to the scrutiny of a small panel,(RiDO) whose decision will be final. The panel will comprise RiDO Enterprise Manager, RiDO Community Coach Manager and a RiDO Business Adviser. Following their recommendation the applications will be passed for approval by the RiDO Business Development Manager.

Loan Scheme (New Starts) Potential Loan Account of £50k

Who

Any SME business that has started trading is based in Rotherham.

What

Loans of up to £2,500 to be used to help with the development/growth of the business either to purchase small capital items , software development, website development or new product/ market development etc.

Eligibility

Businesses must have a current business plan and be supported by a business coach, a RiDO Business Adviser or Business Link adviser.

Non Eligibility

The loan cannot be used to replace losses within the business or to fund working capital.

Any business that is considered not to be a suitable or ethical trade within the guidelines of the local authority

Decisions

Each loan application would be reviewed by a RiDO business adviser, and passed to the Grants and Loans panel for recommendation for approval, as per the grants scheme (above).

It is proposed that the Loan Scheme is administered by Donbac, who already operate the Microloan scheme. (Donbac is a registered Enterprise Agency and Loan Fund provider, with full credit licence approvals. They are members of the Community Development Finance Association and have been approved by UKSE to handle this Loan scheme). RiDO will check and refer the loan applications to Donbac, who in turn will provide a collections process and advise on defaults. RiDO would be responsible for chasing up any defaults up until any default was referred to a court process.

it is further proposed that the loan rate initially be set at 5% (to be reviewed after 6 months) and the loan period to be between one year to a maximum of two years.

8. Finance

UK Steel Enterprise are granting a total sum of £90,000 to Rotherham on the proviso that it is used to provide grants and loans support to new and small businesses. In particular UKSE wish this money to benefit ex-employees of Corus and other parts of the steel industry, and/or families related who are looking to start a business in the Rotherham area.

No monies will flow through the Council's finance system. The grants will be paid directly by UKSE, and the loan fund will be held jointly in trust by Donbac on behalf of UKSE.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There are no real risks to these proposals as the monies are being granted in trust to RMBC/RiDO for them to discharge and administrate the grants and loans in an equitable and fair manner. The loan scheme is being set up as a finite fund, and although payments may help the fund continue for as long as is appropriate, this is not seen as an evergreen fund.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

This programme will assist in the following areas of the Economic Plan:-

- Strand 1.2 Productive and Enterprising Businesses
- Strand 2.1 Revising Aspirations and Encouraging Enterprise
- Strand 2.2 Encouraging Employability

This scheme will assist the regeneration of the local economy in Rotherham following the difficulties encountered by the present recession. It will support job creation and diversification of the local economy by attracting new start-ups and directly help those that may have been affected either directly or indirectly by redundancy, giving those people an alternative career option.

This project also fits within the enterprise strand of the Rotherham Economic Masterplan.

It will have a direct impact on National Indicators NI 171 and NI 172 – to increase the number of VAT registered businesses and number of businesses showing growth

The scheme will work alongside existing pre-start and awareness services that support the growth of start-up enterprises and existing businesses, It will contribute to the new business registration rate LAA stretch target which is 28 per 10,000 population by March 2011.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Rotherham Economic Masterplan 2008
Rotherham Enterprising Neighbourhoods Project – 2009-2011

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