

CABINET MEMBER OF RESOURCES

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham

Date: Monday, 12th October, 2009

Time: 11.30 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 (as amended March 2006).
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 Meeting held on 14th September, 2009 (Pages 1 - 4)

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following item to enable Members to be fully informed.)

4. Electronic Communications Policy (Pages 5 - 30)
5. Third Party Funding Budget (Pages 31 - 33)
6. Revenue Budget Monitoring for the Period April – August, 2009 - Chief Executive's Directorate (Pages 34 - 37)
7. Revenue Budget Monitoring for April – August, 2009 - Financial Services (Pages 38 - 39)
8. RBT Performance Report (Pages 40 - 49)
9. Complaints Forum (Pages 50 - 52)
- minutes of meeting held on 7th September, 2009
10. Website Strategy Group (Pages 53 - 54)
- minutes of meeting held on 16th September, 2009
11. Customer Access Group (Pages 55 - 58)
- minutes of meeting held on 21st September, 2009

12. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council)).

(The Chairman agreed that the following item be taken in the open session of the agenda.)

13. Additional RBT Performance Information (Pages 59 - 63)

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CABINET MEMBER OF RESOURCES
Monday, 14th September, 2009

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair)

An Apology for absence was received from Councillor Hodgkiss.

19. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6TH JULY, 2009

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th July, 2009.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th July, 2009, be approved as a correct record.

20. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR APRIL – JULY, 2009 - FINANCIAL SERVICES

Joe Johnson, Principal Accountant, presented briefly the submitted report relating to the above.

The report showed that the Financial Services Directorate was forecasting a break-even position against a net revenue budget of £10.5M by the end of March, 2010.

The report set out the summary year to date and projected outturn position for Financial Services as at the end of July, 2009.

Resolved:- That the latest revenue forecast outturn position for the Financial Services Directorate for 2009/10 be noted.

21. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD APRIL – JULY, 2009 - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE

Joe Johnson, Principal Accountant, presented briefly the submitted report relating to the above.

The report showed that the Chief Executive's Directorate was forecasting currently an overspend of £7,000 against a net revenue budget of £9m by the end of March, 2010.

Areas highlighted in the report covered:-

- Transport
- Vacancies and secondments

The report set out the summary year to date and projected outturn position for the Chief Executive's Directorate as at the end of July, 2009.

Resolved:- That the latest revenue forecast outturn position for the Chief Executive's Directorate for 2009/10 be noted.

22. RBT PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mark Gannon, Transformation & Strategic Partnerships Manager, presented the submitted report which summarised RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for June and July, 2009, across the areas of Customer Access, Human Resources and Payroll, ICT and Procurement.

Key points for this period included:-

- All targets had been achieved in Human Resources and Payroll, ICT in June and July and in Procurement for June, with only one Procurement measure failing in July.
- The target for seeing face to face customers within 15 minutes had not been met with only 88.41% of customers being seen year to date against a target of 90%
- Acorn Online, the new system which allows all officers to access Acorn data which profiles our Borough at the post code level was now live.
- The PO2 (% cheque requests processed on next payment run) failed in July with performance of 96.13% against a target of 98.46%. Investigations were ongoing to establish the reasons for this measure failing and to establish actions to prevent recurrence.

Resolved:- That RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for June and July, 2009, be noted.

23. COMPLAINTS FORUM

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Complaints Forum held on 6th July, 2009.

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

24. WEBSITE STRATEGY GROUP

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Website Strategy Group held on 13th July, 2009.

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

25. CONFERENCE - LGA ANNUAL CAPITAL FINANCE

Consideration was given to attendance at the following conferences:-

- I&DeA Global perspectives on local challenges: Local Government Leaders International Symposium to be held in London on 2nd

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October, 2009

- LGA Annual Capital Finance Conference to be held in London on 20th November, 2009

In addition, it was noted that attendance at the LGA Annual Rural Conference on 9th September 2009 had been agreed, but there had been no take up.

Resolved:- (1) That attendance at the I&Dea Global perspectives on local challenges: Local Government Leaders International Symposium be not authorised.

(2) That the Chairman (or substitute) be authorised to attend the LGA Annual Capital Finance conference to be held in London on 20th November, 2009.

26. E GOV BOARD

Consideration was given and discussion took place on the minutes of the E-Government Board held on 3rd July, 2009.

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

27. 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

28. ADDITIONAL RBT PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Mark Gannon, Transformation & Strategic Partnerships Manager, presented a report which summarised RBT's performance in respect of Procurement savings achieved and in respect of the Revenues and Benefits Service.

Resolved:- That RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for June and July, 2009, be noted.

(Exempt under Paragraph of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council)).

29. STAGE 3 COMPLAINT PANEL

It was noted that a meeting of a Complaints Panel held been held on 1st July, 2009, comprising Councillors Atkin (in the Chair), Austen and Littleboy. The Panel heard a complaint received from Mrs. E. regarding housing benefit due to herself being paid to her landlord despite the fact

that she had been promised the payment by several staff within the Service and at the Customer Service Centre.

The Panel had upheld the complaint insofar as a decision to pay the landlord directly on the grounds that it was in her best interests to do so was made without any or adequate consultation with the complainant. If there had been consultation, the Panel had felt it quite likely that a different decision would have been reached and the cheque paid directly to Mrs. E.

The Panel had recommended that an offer of £250 be made to the complainant for her time, trouble and out of pocket expenses as a consequence of the decision.

Resolved:- (1) That the Panel's findings be noted.

(2) That the complainant be awarded £250 compensation.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act – information which is likely to reveal the identity of individual)

30. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Treasury Management Adviser

Stuart Booth, Director of Central Finance reported that Butlers had been re-appointed as Treasury Management Adviser.

He confirmed that a rigorous process had been undertaken with four bids initially which were reduced down to two. Those two had then had to make presentations to the Council, and as a result of this Butlers were awarded the contract.

National Pay Award

Phil Howe, Assistant Chief Executive, Human Resources reported that the National Pay Award had now been accepted by all Trade Unions. The new rates would be paid in the October salary with back pay to April 2009. There had been no offer made to Chief Executives or Chief Officers at the present time.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Resources
2.	Date:	12th October 2009
3.	Title:	Electronic Communications Policy
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's

5. Summary

To provide an update on the revision of the Electronic Communications Policy incorporating modern technology changes and the inclusion of access to social networking sites for business purposes.

6. Recommendations

- **That the Cabinet Member for Resources note the progress made on the revision of the Electronic Communications policy including its circulation to employees and Elected Members.**

7. Proposals and Details

The policy has been updated to provide guidance to employees and managers on the use of social networking sites and personal blogs following the ability to now access these sites for business use.

In addition the policy has been generally refreshed and updated in line with the progression of technology.

The following changes have been adopted following consultation with the Corporate Management Team, members of the E-Gov Board, Trade Unions, the Corporate Information Governance Group, Communication Officers and HR Business Partners :

1.5 Home Working

The requirement to activate the 'Out of Office' email function to provide alternative telephone numbers has been removed due to the need for employees to be contactable whilst working from home.

2.5 Social Networking Websites, Personal Blogs etc

This section is an addition to the policy.

With these sites becoming increasingly popular it is appropriate that guidance is provided to employees as to what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relation to information that is posted on the sites, this includes personal use on personal equipment.

Points 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 provide cautionary advice and guidelines to employees who are provided with access to these sites for work purposes as well as guidance for use in an employees' personal time using personal equipment. It highlights that all employees are ambassadors for the Council and any views posted on such sites could be deemed to represent the views of the Council and in turn bring the Council into disrepute which may result in disciplinary action.

Points 2.5.3 and 2.5.4 set out the process for requesting access to social networking sites for work purposes and conditions of access.

Other changes

Minor amendments have also been made to the Checklist of Do's and Don'ts as detailed in the policy.

A template for 'Out of Office' messages has been produced and is detailed in the policy as Appendix 5.

All sections that have been amended are underlined and marked in red. The revised policy is attached.

Communication of the Changes and Policy

A team briefing was issued on 10th September drawing attention to the changes to the policy and the fact that employees would receive a direct email on the subject and that

read receipts for this email would be monitored. To date 3027 have read the email out of around 4000 active email addresses. Those people for whom a read receipt has not been received are being contacted again by email to remind them to open the email and read the revised policy. An email specifically for Elected Members drawing attention to the policy was sent on 1st October.

8. Finance

There are no financial resources required to revise the policy however the financial implications of not providing up to date advice and guidance to support the use of new technology may lead to additional employee resources being required to monitor and investigate misuse.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Human Resources have recently dealt with a number of disciplinary matters arising from the use by employees of social networking both within the Council and on personal equipment which has had serious implications for their employment and impacted upon the reputation of the Council.

The risk of not promoting the ability to gain approved access to social networking sites, personal blogs etc limits the Council's ability to communicate with a wider audience and keep up to date with the use of modern technology as other Councils now communicate with their communities using such methods.

The amendments and inclusion of a section specifically relating to social networking sites and personal blogs provides the necessary guidance to protect both the Council and the employee from potential disrepute and/or litigation.

The Council has a duty to ensure that staff are correctly trained and advised in the use of technology.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda implications

The amendments to the policy support all the priority themes.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation on the revised policy has taken place with Communications Officers, Information Governance Group, Trade Unions, Transformation Team, ICT, e-Gov Board and HR Business Partners.

Appendix 1: Electronic Communications Policy (amendments highlighted in red and underlined)

Contact Name:

Theresa Caswell, HR Officer, (82) 3710, theresa.caswell@rotherham.gov.uk

All enquiries to Kathryn Pease, HR Officer, (82) 3572, kathryn.pease@rotherham.gov.uk

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

**Electronic Communications
Policy**

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

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1.0 Introduction

This policy addresses the use of electronic communications by employees and will apply to all employees and Elected Members of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC), consultants, contractors and agents employed by RMBC and partner organisations provided with authorised access to the Council's equipment, systems or information.

It is every employee's responsibility to:

- read and comply with the requirements of the policy and its appendices.
- report any breaches of this code e.g. misuse of e-mail, Internet, Intranet, telephones etc. either to their line manager or via the Council's Confidential Reporting Code.

This policy can be made available in other languages and formats on request.

Every employee has a duty of care for equipment such as phones and computers that are provided for their use. It is expected that employees will take reasonable steps to maintain the security and safety of equipment. This includes not leaving equipment in view in unattended vehicles and storing it securely when not in use. Mobile phones must be secured by a PIN number to prevent unauthorised use if they are lost or stolen, the PIN number must not be written down or kept with the phone. The loss, damage or malfunctioning of any computer equipment or data storage device must be reported to the IT Service Desk.

Misuse or loss of communications equipment due to negligence will result in employees being requested to reimburse costs to the Council and may result in disciplinary action.

Whilst using the Council's communications technology systems employees should also ensure they comply with the associated Council policies on Data Protection and Information Security.

Failure to follow this code may constitute a serious disciplinary offence, which could lead to dismissal. It could also lead to criminal or civil action if illegal material is involved or if legislation, such as the Data Protection and Computer Misuse Acts, is contravened.

1.1 Electronic Communications and the Law

The most relevant legislation regulating electronic communications are:

- The Data Protection Act 1998 (relating to the use of personal information)
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990 (relating to unauthorised access and creation or distribution of computer viruses)
- The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 (which relates to unauthorised copying often referred to as software piracy)

Breach of any of the above can constitute a criminal offence. Where the Council believes a criminal offence has taken place, it has a duty to inform the Police. Using the Council's facilities in any way to break the law will be considered as gross misconduct under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

1.2 Content and Usage

Internet Access is restricted through the use of web filtering software which prohibits the majority of inappropriate or offensive material. The content of emails is also monitored for policy enforcement, messages containing either words or attachments which breach the policy are automatically blocked.

You should be confident that anything which you access or send meets the following criteria:

- There is a legitimate business need (other than mundane personal use described later in 2.1)
- That it is within the law and does not breach copyright
- That you have the authority to send the message (i.e. when committing the Department to a course of action)
- Communications must comply with the Council's Dignity at Work Policy.

General advice on e-mail etiquette can be found in Appendix 3. A template for 'Out of Office' messages is supplied in Appendix 5.

There have been a number of disciplinary cases relating to the sending and receiving of unsuitable messages. (See Appendix 1 for the type and content of material considered inappropriate). Be aware that the use of the Council's facilities for the sending or receiving of such messages is strictly prohibited, if you receive a message that breaches this policy please refer to paragraph 2.1.

1.3 Issue of Mobile Phones and other handheld technology

The criteria for the issue of mobile phones and other handheld technology will vary within each directorate, due to the nature of the service. Although the reasons for issuing mobile phones and other devices will depend on the requirements of the service, the principles of determining the need and benefits of issuing equipment should meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The issue of equipment will significantly reduce risk such that employees can be reached in the case of emergency.
- A measurable business benefit with regards to cost savings is gained through the issue of mobile phones and/or other devices.
- There is a clear business benefit resulting in enhanced customer service through better access.
- Sufficient legitimate out of hours contact is required to maintain cover and/or emergency contact for the service.

It is the responsibility of the appropriate manager to ensure that the criteria is met and that there is a clear business benefit and need for mobile phones or other handheld technology (e.g. BlackBerrys) to be issued within their budget.

Note: Should your role change and you no longer meet the above criteria your mobile phone and/or handheld technology (e.g. BlackBerry) will be withdrawn.

It is the responsibility of the senior managers of the Directorate to:

- Maintain an up to date record of the issue of mobile phones and other devices.
- Ensure that all employees issued with mobile phones and other hand held technology have received and signed acknowledgement of the Telecommunications Policy in relation to the use of mobile phones and other devices.
- Review the use of mobile phones and other devices to prevent excessive use via the monitoring officer in each Directorate.
- Review the issue of mobile phones or other handheld technology to ensure the issue criteria continues to be met.
- Ensure mobile phones and other equipment are returned when the user no longer meets the criteria, leaves the authority or is suspended on the grounds of misconduct.
- Ensure the appropriate risk assessment has been completed.

It is recommended that each Directorate identifies an officer as the point of contact for the administration of the above.

1.4 Procurement of Mobile Phones and Mobile Devices e.g. BlackBerrys

All mobile phones must be ordered through the Council's procurement process by the appropriate manager however Mobile Devices (e.g. BlackBerrys) must be ordered via the ICT Helpdesk. Handsets will be ordered from the contract network provider. Managers should note that the current minimum contract for handsets is two years. When ordering BlackBerrys, arrangements must be made with ICT for the set up of the handsets.

1.5 Home Working

The rules outlined in this Policy apply to any equipment and systems provided or accessible to you when working from home.

If you work from home on an occasional basis it is important that you are contactable to your internal and external customers. Arrangements should be made with your line manager and communicated with colleagues.

If you work from home on a permanent basis you should ensure that your alternative contact details are available to your customers and colleagues in line with the Home Working Policy. It is a requirement that employees whose role is home based and/or customer facing has either a dedicated Council telephone line or mobile phone.

COLLEAGUES MUST NOT REVEAL PERSONAL HOME/MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBERS WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION FROM THE HOME WORKER.

Where access to voicemail is provided, you should check your messages regularly or you should contact your team on a regular basis to check for urgent messages.

1.6 Voicemail

Where you have access to voicemail, this allows callers to leave a message at the dialled extension if the call has not been answered within five rings (15 seconds). You should ensure that you record a personal message on your voicemail so that the caller knows they have reached the correct extension.

You will be notified via e-mail when you receive a voice mail.

You can dial into the system, both internally and externally, to listen to messages and administer your mailbox using a password. You should keep your password confidential and should not divulge it to anyone or keep it written in a readily accessible place. When you have listened to your messages, ensure that you clear your inbox.

When leaving the office, ensure that you divert your phone straight to voicemail. On your return you should deactivate the divert. Legitimate use of voicemail to take calls when trying to avoid disturbance, either in the office or at home, is permitted.

2.0 Personal Use

Occasional and reasonable use of the Council's Electronic Communications systems is permitted providing that:

- It is in your own time i.e. outside normal working hours.
- It does not interfere with work performance or divert you from your duties.
- It is not used for furthering outside business interests or for personal monetary gain.
- The use of the Internet conforms to all other requirements in this policy.
- Usage does not adversely affect the performance of the e-mail system or corporate network.

The only personal usage tolerated is in the following areas:

2.1 Email

2.2 Mobile Phones

2.3 Telephones/Faxes

2.4 Internet Access

2.5 Social Networking sites, Personal blogs

2.6 Unofficial Bulletin Board

2.1 Email

A minimal level of mundane personal use is tolerated. This use must be outside your working time. Be aware that emails are monitored and that personally sensitive information should not be sent. Messages should not contain anything that others may find offensive or distasteful. Examples of material that is not permitted are those with a sexual content, jokes or chain letters, a more comprehensive list is detailed in Appendix 1. Personal encryption of messages is prohibited.

If you receive messages which breach this policy then you should do the following:

- If you know the sender, reply advising them that Council Policy prohibits that type of message and ask them not to send any more similar messages.
- If the message is from another Council employee then contact your Line Manager or Human Resources Manager for further advice.
- If you are offended or upset by the message you should refer to the Dignity at Work Policy, discuss it with your Line Manager or contact your Human Resources Manager.
- If the message is from outside the Council and you do not know the sender then advise the Service Desk who can arrange to have messages from specified senders blocked.

Such material may for example not be identifiable until the e-mail is opened and in these cases, employees will not be held responsible provided that they report it immediately. These items should never be passed on to other Council or non-Council individuals.

2.2 Mobile Phones

If you are provided with a mobile phone you can use it to make personal calls subject to the following:

- Personal use should not be excessive and any private calls should be avoided in normal working hours unless deemed “essential”.
- When making a personal call place a * after the number to identify it even if it is a Vodaphone to Vodaphone call at zero charge. N.B. Although some calls show zero cost on the bill (i.e. Vodaphone to Vodaphone) they are subject to a ‘recharge’ sum and therefore should be reimbursed to the Council
- You must reimburse the Council the cost of all personal calls. If private calls are paid for via salary deduction and misuse is found to have occurred, adjustments will be made for excessive calls/phone bills and private calls not using * as above.
- Ensure that when using the text messaging facility you do not use inappropriate language or send offensive material.
- Irrespective of re-imburement of calls employees should not use mobile phones or any other electronic communications equipment to further outside business interests.

- When employees receive their quarterly mobile phone bill, they will be responsible for identifying any personal calls and text messages. These calls and/or texts should be highlighted, costs calculated and the usage form completed with payment to Financial Services. The highlighted bill should be handed to your Line Manager. If no personal calls have been made, you should state no usage at the end of the bill and sign and date this and hand it to your Line Manager.
- Data relating to itemised calls will be forwarded to Internal Audit.

Private text messaging must be kept to a minimum and only used in emergencies. You will be expected to reimburse the Council for the costs of private text messages. The rules surrounding the use of electronic communications detailed in this policy also cover mobile phones and BlackBerrys including text and video messaging.

2.3 Telephones/Faxes

Personal use of landlines should not be excessive and any private calls should be avoided in normal working hours unless deemed “essential”. You will be expected to reimburse the Council for the cost of these calls in accordance with your section’s current administration arrangements. It is the manager’s responsibility to monitor private use of landlines and to ensure that arrangements are in place for the administration of repayment in line with current costs.

Excessive and/or abuse of personal use of Council telephones may lead to disciplinary action.

2.4 Internet Access

Limited personal use is tolerated outside of working time. Although every attempt is made to prevent access to unsuitable sites it is your responsibility not to access any sites containing unsuitable material (some examples are listed in Appendix 2). Be aware that all Internet access is routinely monitored and logged and sites containing unsuitable material are prohibited at all times. The downloading of information for personal use is not permitted at any time.

All Internet connections should be via the Corporate network. Under no circumstances should there be a dial-up connection through any other Internet service provider (ISP) such as Wanadoo, AOL etc.

2.5 Social Networking Websites, Personal Blogs etc

Social networking websites, blogs (personal diary accounts) and other such communication methods are useful tools for:

- promoting Council services e.g. libraries, museums via alerts e.g. “follow us on Twitter, Facebook” etc
- communicating with hard to reach groups e.g. young people, community groups etc.
- publicising events and news stories

- bringing people with special interests together e.g. theatre users who wish to discuss areas of common interest

Social networking sites are those which contain personal information about the respective individual and where social interaction between different parties takes place. These sites are becoming increasingly popular and whilst we cannot be prescriptive about what you do in your own time out of work, it is necessary for us to outline what we consider would be detrimental behaviour or written content on a site that could potentially lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

This section of the Electronic Communications Policy applies to the content that you publish on the internet (e.g. your contributions to blogs, message boards and social networking or content sharing sites) even if created, updated, modified or contributed to outside of working hours or when using personal IT equipment.

2.5.1 Cautionary advice – Personal Use on Personal Equipment

The Internet and its social networking sites, blogs (personal diary accounts), message boards, forums and content sharing sites are open to all to view, therefore, for your own safety and protection, caution must be exercised when using such sites.

Anything that you publish, particularly personal information e.g. date of birth, address, photographs etc may be used by others either for illegal or nuisance purposes e.g. identity theft, spam e-mails.

Where you identify yourself as working in a public facing role that could be deemed contentious, such information could also give rise to unwanted attention from service users.

Any illegal activity which is posted on the Internet can also be viewed by the Police.

Employees of the Council are ambassadors for the service they provide and should be aware that any serious misconduct or criminal offences committed during or outside working hours which could bring the Council into disrepute may result in disciplinary action being considered.

Personal opinions should not be stated in blogs relating to official business. If a personal blog clearly identifies that you work for Rotherham Council, and you express any idea or opinion, then you should add a disclaimer such as ‘these are my own personal views and not those of Rotherham Council’. Please note that this does not preclude the Council from taking action in cases it considers misconduct.

2.5.2 Guidelines for use of social networking sites and blogs

The following applies to both employees who are provided with access to social networking sites, blogs or other such communications tools for work purposes and use of such tools in an employee’s personal time using personal equipment.

Employees must not:

- Reveal confidential information about Rotherham Council in online postings. This might include revealing information relating to the Council’s clients, business plans, policies, employees, Elected Members, contractors, financial information or internal

discussions. This list is not exhaustive and you should think carefully before making any postings. Please consult your line manager if you are unclear about what might be deemed confidential.

- Criticise or embarrass Rotherham Council, its clients or employees in a public forum (including any website), whether in jest or otherwise. You should respect the reputation of the Council and the privacy and feelings of others at all times. If you have a genuine complaint to make about a colleague you should raise the matter via your line manager using the correct channels e.g. Dignity at Work Policy or Grievance Procedure. If you have a concern or criticism about the Council and its practices you should raise this via your line manager or the Confidential Reporting Code. If you have a complaint about a particular Council service that you receive, then the formal Council Complaints Procedure should be utilised.
- Post comments that may be derogatory or defamatory towards colleagues, Elected Members, clients or contractors or may be deemed to be intimidatory or constitute harassment, whether in jest or otherwise. This list is not exhaustive and you should think carefully before making any postings.
- Use bad language, innuendo, discriminatory statements etc. that could potentially bring the authority into disrepute.
- Publish film or photographs on the Internet of activity that may bring the Council in to disrepute e.g. undertaking an illegal activity whilst wearing an RMBC uniform.
- Publish photographs of children or vulnerable adults on the Internet (without prior consent) in breach of safeguarding legislation.
- “follow” members of the public using a RMBC account as this could be misconstrued. Rather it should be up to an individual whether they “follow” or “become a friend of” the organisation and its departments.

2.5.3 Request Process

To gain access to social networking sites please complete an ICT Change Request form detailing the business purpose for your request – [click here](#)

2.5.4 Conditions of access

In terms of a social networking site account e.g. FaceBook, Twitter, Bebo etc., the following conditions apply:

- The applicant(s) must already have a generic e-mail address e.g. Recruitment
- An account must be anonymous and not assigned to a specific person e.g. Marketing Dept
- Passwords must be shared for business continuity reasons

These conditions apply when using social networking sites for work purposes only.

2.6 Unofficial Bulletin Board

This is a non-work facility, provided for employees to post items of interest and personal items for sale on. This should only be used outside normal working hours and must not be used to operate or promote private commercial activities.

Care should be taken to ensure appropriate language is used when posting messages on the bulletin board as any messages could potentially reflect on the Council or its employees. You must not post messages which are obscene, or harass or intimidate another person. Words and pictures are capable of being defamatory, if they are untrue or ridicule a person, and can result in damage to that person or an organisation's reputation.

Informality, especially on the "unofficial" bulletin board, may be felt appropriate but intent can easily be misconstrued.

3.0 Unacceptable Use

The accessing or distribution of offensive, illegal or unsuitable material is unacceptable and subject to disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

Offensive material is anything which is abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting. The persistent abuse of power, or the belittling of someone, either in public or private, which makes them feel upset, threatened, humiliated, vulnerable or undermines their self-confidence, through the use of Information Technology is unacceptable and will be deemed to be bullying or harassment. The Council's Dignity at Work Policy gives a list of examples of what constitutes bullying and harassment. In the specific context of electronic communications please see Appendix 1 for examples.

Employees must not engage in:

- Posting information that may tend to disparage, threaten, or harass others on the basis of gender, race, age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or national origin.
- Posting statements that are defamatory or information that is false or misleading concerning the Council or other organisations and their services/products.
- Distributing confidential or sensitive information about the Council or its service users that might compromise its confidentiality.
- Deliberately using email in such a way that it constitutes bullying or harassment.
- Originating or participating in email chain letters.
- Substantial personal use of email, including the transmission of large documents or programs which will add an unnecessary burden to the network.
- Sending jokes, games and other non-work related emails, in a "chatty" and informal style could lead to problems for both the Council and its employees – do not assume others share your sense of humour.
- Sending or receiving inappropriate material via e-mail (either within an e-mail or as an attachment) such as adult material (pornography), racism / hate, drugs, terrorist and violence, gambling, share dealing, paedophilia etc (unless specifically for work purposes).
- Receiving, archiving, storing, distributing, editing or recording sexually explicit material or materials of a disturbing nature using the Council's network or computing resources (Appendix 1 provides examples of what would be considered inappropriate materials)
- The use of Internet based email accounts i.e. Hotmail is prohibited unless a case for access has been approved.

The list above gives examples of the types of behaviour which constitute violation of the policy. This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other violations which are not listed here.

3.1 Misuse

Where misuse has been identified, employees need to be aware that disciplinary action will be taken. The following, although not an exhaustive listing, is an example of actions, which would warrant serious disciplinary action with possible suspension/dismissal and in certain cases potentially criminal prosecution:

- Employees accessing certain websites e.g. child pornography and terrorist sites for non-work purposes.
- Employees accessing and/or distributing materials of an unsuitable nature (please refer to Appendix 1 & 2) via e-mail or within an e-mail attachment.
- Defacement of the RMBC website and Intranet.
- Any involvement in 'hacking', virus propagation and spamming of the RMBC or any website or Contravention of the Computer Misuse Act.

4.0 Security arrangements and controls

Security incidents, including the following examples, must be reported to the Service Desk immediately:

- Where it is believed another person is using an employee's ID/ password. Attempts to log on as another user will result in cancellation of e-mail and Internet access and may result in disciplinary proceedings. Internet passwords should not be disclosed to anyone else. Each Internet user is totally accountable and responsible for usage on his / her account: this is also applicable where users have one "log on" password that gives access to both Internet and e-mail.
- If an employee believes another user is accessing prohibited material.
- Construction of personal / business [non-RMBC] websites.
- The settings of the PC anti-virus software being amended or disabled.
- Employees engaging in 'hacking' activities into non-RMBC web-sites (serious disciplinary action may result).
- If an employee accidentally accesses a prohibited site – this should be reported to the Line Manager as soon as possible after the incident and details of the incident should be logged.
- Unauthorised devices e.g. i-pods, cameras, non-RMBC memory sticks, external hard drives should not be connected to RMBC computers as this poses a risk to the security of the Council's network.

Any suspicious e-mails or attachments should not be opened or forwarded to others as they may contain a virus.

When using telephones, either landlines or mobile handsets, and whether for personal calls or in the course of your duties, you should take into consideration the location where you are making the call, whether or not it will distract colleagues and whether or not the nature of the telephone conversation is appropriate in front of colleagues and/or visitors to the Council. It is also important to be courteous and take into consideration that colleagues may not want to be interrupted by your telephone conversations.

Personal mobile phones should not be used during working hours unless necessary and should be kept on silent/vibrate when in the office.

5.0 Filtering and Monitoring

The Council has developed a range of measures for the use of this technology in order to protect the Council and its employees from potential litigation or complaint about inappropriate access and use of communications. Such measures already in place include:

- A filtering system which filters e-mails and images/attachments contained within e-mails of an unsuitable, offensive or illegal nature.
- A security system of filtering inappropriate Internet sites to prevent access and record attempts to access prohibited sites which are offensive and illegal.
- General monitoring of the extent of usage of all forms of communications, such as e-mail, Internet, telephone and fax usage which is reported to Line Managers on a regular basis.
- An e-mail disclaimer is automatically included in outgoing e-mails.

Monitoring is undertaken to:

- Provide evidence of business transactions
- Inform for training purposes and standards of service
- Access business communications e.g. to check e-mail etc when employees are on holiday or sick
- Prevent or detect unauthorised use of the Council's communications systems and/or criminal activities
- Maintain the effective operation of the Council's communication system including protection against viruses
- Ensure the Council's policies and procedures are followed.

Routine monitoring of the Council's communication can and does take place. Do not assume that there will be any degree of privacy for personal messages. Employees need to be aware that consent to such monitoring is a pre-requisite of using the Council's communications technology.

6.0 Leaving the authority

On leaving the authority you must return all equipment, including laptops, handsets (including SIM cards), chargers and hands free equipment (e.g. Bluetooth headsets). It is the Manager's responsibility to reallocate any equipment if required and contact Procurement to advise of the name of the employee who has taken over any mobile phone or BlackBerry or to arrange for return. Managers should note that return of mobile phone handsets may not be possible before the minimum contract period has expired.

Appendix 1

Offensive and Unsuitable Material

The following identifies the type of content considered inappropriate:

- Aggression including threats or violence, abuse or obscenities
- Material which promotes illegal acts
- Sexual advances, propositions, suggestive remarks
- Sexually explicit or pornographic material
- Discrimination of any kind including insults or “jokes” which are related to a person’s sex, sexuality, religion or belief
- Racist abuse including “jokes”, insults or taunts
- Offensive abuse, ridicule, “jokes” or name calling relating to a person’s disability
- Material which the person knows, or ought to have known, would offend a colleague with particular sensitivities, even if it is not explicitly offensive, e.g. religious views or beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation etc
- Care needs to be exercised in the tone, language and content of any messages sent by or to other Council or external equipment i.e. text messaging

This is not an exhaustive list. There may be other material which is not listed here which is offensive or illegal.

In general terms messages should not be sent that are likely to cause offence to other employees or bring the reputation of the Council into disrepute.

Appendix 2

Unsuitable Web-Sites

Certain websites cannot be accessed as a filter controls the access to the majority of unsuitable sites; examples of such sites are detailed below along with other examples of unacceptable use:

- Accessing, displaying, downloading or disseminating threatening, obscene or pornographic material including sites that display full or partial nudity or depict/ graphically describe/display sexual acts, activity or content etc.
- Racism/Hate.
- Militancy & Extremist.
- Drugs - sites that promote or provide information about the use of prohibited drugs (unless for work related purposes).
- Terrorist/violence/weapons
- Gambling
- Internet auctions
- Games – downloadable entertainment or games, or playing games over the Internet
- Hacking - sites that provide information about or promote illegal or questionable access to or use of computer or communication equipment, software, or databases
- Share dealing
- Paedophilia
- Downloading files, software or videos from the Internet or e-mail system unless there is a business related use for the material i.e. software that may enable a Web page to be viewed correctly
- Downloading, using or distributing copyrighted material without proper authorisation
- Construction of personal / business [non-RMBC] websites
- Sending and requesting 'junk mail', fund raising requests or chain letters are banned.
- Saving data to Internet files [known as 'X' files] is not allowed.

Appendix 3

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communications: Checklist of Do's and Don'ts

Electronic communications have transformed the way we work. They improve efficiency, productivity, information sharing and customer service. But technology is moving at an increasingly fast pace and revised advice and guidance on the use of electronic communications is necessary.



A detailed document (Electronic Communications Policy) has been produced which brings together all the current advice and guidance under one policy. This is a checklist of what to do and not to do which should be read in conjunction with the full policy which is available on the intranet or from your Line Manager.

Usage of electronic communications is monitored and filtered to make sure that the facilities are not misused. Limited personal internet use is allowed outside normal working hours. All e-mail messages are recorded and management may, under certain circumstances, monitor specific usage and have access to mailboxes.



Access to web-site material containing adult material, racism/hate, drugs, gambling, terrorist activities, share dealing or paedophilia is banned at all times. Non-business sites such as entertainment, sport and travel should be limited to reasonable access during non-working hours i.e. lunch-time.

WHERE MISUSE IS IDENTIFIED, DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL BE TAKEN UP TO AND INCLUDING DISMISSAL. MISUSE OF THE INTERNET, E-MAIL, TELECOMMUNICATION OR COMPUTER EQUIPMENT CAN CONSTITUTE A CRIMINAL OFFENCE. WHERE THE COUNCIL BELIEVES A CRIMINAL OFFENCE HAS TAKEN PLACE, IT HAS A DUTY TO INFORM THE POLICE.

Fax and Telephone (Landlines & Mobiles)

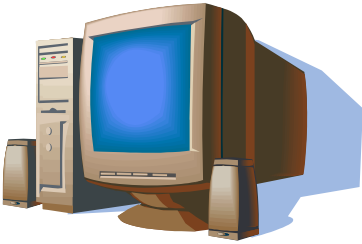
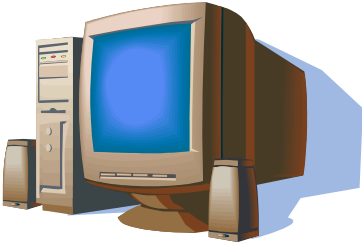
	<p>DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer telephones promptly and politely (internal & external) • Take messages accurately • Stagger lunch breaks and start or finish times to increase cover • Limit personal calls for emergencies only • Reimburse the Council for any personal calls made • Use landlines rather than mobiles if a cheaper alternative • Take care when disclosing sensitive or confidential information by telephone • Switch off mobile phones during meetings, presentations & when driving • Divert your mobile to the voicemail service when unavailable • Keep your mobile phone and SIM card safe at all times • Report your mobile phone/SIM card stolen or lost to your Line Manager • Restrict the faxing of lengthy documents wherever possible • Take care over the content, style and tone of faxes • Include a confidentiality statement on the cover sheet for confidential information to be sent
	<p>DON'T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make international and premium rate calls unless authorised • Make excessive private calls during work hours • Make or receive mobile telephone calls while driving on Council business <u>without hands free kit</u> • Use mobiles or BlackBerry devices during meetings as this can be a distraction to others • Send inappropriate or offensive messages using your mobile telephone e.g. text, video messages • Use private mobiles for Council business and claim reimbursement <u>unless in an emergency situation</u> • Send inappropriate text messages to another Council phone or external phone • Leave mobile phones unattended or in parked vehicles • Disclose sensitive, confidential information on a fax or over the telephone • Keep a personal identification number (PIN) in the same place as a SIM card • <u>Use the voicemail system to 'screen' calls whilst in the office and available to take calls.</u>

Electronic Mail (E-mail)

	<p>DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep messages short, clear and to the point • Ensure comments are accurate, justified and suitably worded • Use file compression software for large attachments – and ensure the recipient has the facility to open them • Check your mail box regularly and clear unwanted e-mails • Use folders to store items for efficient retrieval • Do not store messages unnecessarily either in Outlook folders or in personal folders – delete messages ‘past their sell by date’ regularly • Be aware that all emails can be monitored • Ensure the “out of office” facility is enabled for planned absence – click here for a template message • Use a Council recognised email signature format – employees and Councillors • Avoid taking paper copies of emails unless for correspondence files or meetings • Take care with language when posting messages on Unofficial Bulletin Board • Avoid “mail storms” – long discussions sent to a wide distributions list • Target your message - use distribution lists to send “all staff” emails rather than highlighting individual names • Beware of viruses • Remember emails have the same legal status as paper mail
	<p>DON'T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use all capitals or use gimmicks such as smiley faces or fancy fonts – this is very informal • Open any suspicious emails or attachments • Reveal your password to anyone else • Attempt to log on as another user • Read or send personal emails in normal working hours • Make excessive personal use of emails • Put your ‘out of office’ on whilst working at home • Read and post messages on the Unofficial Bulletin Board during working hours • Send sensitive or emotional messages • Send an email if it could embarrass the receiver or the Council • Send or request ‘junk mail’, fund raising requests or chain letters • Reply to SPAM (Slang term for unsolicited mail) • Send or import software programs by email or any other means unless there is a recognised business need • Use the urgent flag read receipt too often • Use the BCC and CC as a political tool when emailing colleagues • Import screensavers from outside the Council • Use inappropriate language or include abusive comments that can be interpreted as threatening harassing or insulting • Express personal views which may be misinterpreted as those of the Council • Distribute or store any material of a sexually explicit image or material of a disturbing nature via email or attached to an

email

Internet and Intranet

	<p>DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beware of viruses and follow security instruction and anti-virus procedures • Recognise all internet access can be monitored • Keep personal use to a reasonable level of access outside normal working hours, over lunch or after work • Use Council equipment for researching work projects and keeping up to date on developments • Talk to your line manager if you are unsure about any issues regarding access • Use the intranet to access Council policies and procedures
	<p>DON'T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access unauthorised web-sites / material • Use internet based email services e.g. 'Hotmail' • Download software onto your computer without authorisation • Disclose your password to anyone else • Disable or amend the settings of your anti-virus software • Attempt to 'hack' into any web-sites or computer systems • Construct non Council web-sites • Participate in non-professional chat services • Attempt to connect to the internet through any non-Council dial-up connection i.e. Wanadoo / AOL • Place documents on the intranet without prior authorisation • Illegally copy any computer software • Play games on the Internet • Introduce knowingly viruses to the Council's network • Induce or allow others to do any of these things

Appendix 4

Useful names and Contact Numbers

For IT Support - ICT Service Desk (33) 6300

For help on HR issues please contact the relevant HR Manager as detailed below.

2010 and Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Services	Odette Stringwell (33) 4176
Children and Young People's Services	Paul Fitzpatrick (82) 3786
Environment & Development Services	Julie Thackray (82) 3726
Finance, Chief Executive's & RBT	John Vjestica (82) 3707
HR Consultancy Team	(33) 4141

Appendix 5

E-mail Out of Office – Corporate Template

"I am currently unavailable until (date). If your enquiry is urgent, please contact (name & contact details)

When unavailable due to meetings:

"I am out of the office until (date/time as applicable). I will respond to your email when I return on (date/time as applicable). If your enquiry cannot wait, please contact (name and contact details)."

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Resources
2.	Date:	12th October 2009
3.	Title:	Third Party Funding Budget – Bi annual report
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

To consider an update report regarding the council's provision of a budget to cover 'third party' funding for Rotherham generated landfill grant applications.

6. Recommendations

That members advise how to proceed with the 'third party' budgetary allocation for the remainder of the year, and what provision should be made for financial year 2010/11.

7. Proposals and Details

RMBC has made available a third party funding budget for land fill tax credit grants for Rotherham based projects that are seeking funding. At the start of the financial year 2009/10 the total budget was £45,464.97 (including carry forward from 2008/09 of £28,818.97). During this financial period no payments have been made. A commitment of £10,890 has been made. A report was submitted to the Deputy Leader meeting in March 2009 where it was agreed that last year's under spend be carried forward into the current financial period. The Deputy Leader stressed that the Authority should explore better ways of promoting the availability of this funding to organisations wanting to deliver environmental projects. In April a report was submitted to the Groundwork Trusts Panel and it was agreed that both Groundwork Dearne Valley and Groundwork Creswell would promote the fund and work with organisations wishing to apply for grant aid from landfill tax credits. Further promotion of the budget has been done through voluntary organisations and press releases.

No projects have received third party funding during 2008/09:

The following additional commitment has been made:

Kimberworth BMX Track upgrade	£5,390
Rosehill Skate Park - Groundwork	£5,500

Given the slow rate of project submission it is anticipated that there will be a substantial under spend by the end of the financial year. The situation has been made worse by one of the main grant operators WREN, which has stopped receiving applications from organisations in the Rotherham area, (excepting activities in Swinton and Wath), as a result of WRG, who are the landfill operator, having no landfill operations within the area. WRG's landfill site in Thurcroft is still not operational, and they have not indicated when it will be.

Biffaward and Veolia Trust continue to support projects in Rotherham.

8. Finance

There has been no spend since the last report from the £45,464 Third Party Funding budget. Total commitments to date are £10,890. This leaves a potential under spend of £35,574 for the current financial year. Therefore members may wish to review the position in January 2010 and if necessary re-allocate a proportion of this under spend back into the Council's core budget.

The Third Party Funding budget for 2009/10 was £16,646

The budget was credited with £28,818.97 of carry forward from 2008/09

Therefore the total budget for 2009/10 was £45,464.97

Total commitments for 2009/10 are £10,890 (subject to approval from the funding body)

9. Risks and Uncertainties

It is probable that there will be an under spend on this budget this financial year.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Applications for third party funding are assessed on how the project contributes towards the priorities of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan priorities and align with cross cutting issues such as sustainability and equalities. This will continue to form part of the assessment process, as well as more information from the applicants on linkages, and project outputs and outcomes.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

This report follows a report to Deputy Leader and Advisors in March 2009 and a report to the Groundworks Trust Panel in April 2009

Contact Name :

Asif Akram, Project Development Officer

x 3883

asif.akram@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1	Meeting:	Cabinet Member For Resources
2	Date:	Monday 12th October 2009
3	Title:	Revenue Budget Monitoring for the Period April – August 2009
4	Directorate:	Chief Executive

5 Summary

This is the latest Budget Monitoring Report for the Chief Executives Directorate for 2009/10. The service is currently forecasting a breakeven position against a net revenue budget of £8.9m by the end of March 2010.

6 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- **Note the latest revenue forecast outturn position for the Chief Executive's Directorate for 2009/10.**

7. Proposals and Details

This report advises Members of the Revenue Budget monitoring for the period up to the end of August 2009 and shows that the Directorate is currently forecasting a break-even position by the end of the financial year 2009/10.

There are several areas to highlight:-

- Transport fleet – the drivers currently undertake non contractual, unbudgeted overtime. Working schedules are still under review and the external contract is being revised in the next financial year.
- There are also several vacancies and staff secondments across the Directorate which are offsetting other minor overspends and is therefore helping it achieve its near break-even position.
- The Rotherham newspaper is partially funded by contributions from the new HR RMS package. But, due to the current economic climate the number of advertisements being placed has reduced. This has led to a potential year end pressure on the Newspaper.

8. Finance

The summary year to date and projected revenue outturn position for Chief Executives (as at the end of August 2009) are detailed in Appendix 1, the table below shows the summarised position:-

Head Of Account	August 2009			Forecast 2009/10		
	Profiled Budget £'000	Actual Spend To date £'000	Variance Over(+) /Under(-) £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Variance Over(+) /Under(-) £'000
Chief Executive	2,545	2,561	16	5,753	5,753	0
Human Resources	461	447	-14	1,111	1,111	0
Legal and Democratic Services	860	860	0	2,059	2,059	0
TOTAL	3,866	3,868	2	8,923	8,923	0

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The projected out-turn is an estimate and consequently may change. Careful scrutiny of expenditure and income and close budget monitoring remain essential through the year.

Delivery of a balanced budget is subject to the potential pressures in section 7 of this report being managed.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget within the limits determined in March 2009 is vital to achieving the Council's Policy agenda. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Assistant Chief Executive, the Strategic Director of Finance and budget holders have been consulted in the production of this report.

Contact Name: Joe Johnson, Principal Accountant, Extension 2074
joe.johnson@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM MBC
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

FINANCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE JULY 09																	
Last Reported Projected Net Out-turn £000	Service Division	EXPENDITURE/INCOME TO DATE (As at 17th August 2009)									NET PROJECTED OUT-TURN						* Note
		Expenditure			Income			Net			Annual Budget £000	Projected Out-turn £000	Current projected year end Variance Over (+)/ Under (-) spend £000	Financial Impact of Management Action £000	Projected Year end Variance Over(+)/Und er(-) spend £000	Revised Financial RAG Status	
		Profiled Budget £000	Actual Spending £000	Variance (Over (+) / Under (-) Spend) £000	Profiled Budget £000	Actual Income £000	Variance (Over (+) / Under (-) Recovered) £000	Profiled Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance (Over (+) / Under (-) Spend) £000							
0	Directorate Office	293	290	-3	-41	-41	0	252	249	-3	756	735	(21)	0	(21)	G	
0	Communications & Marketing Team	240	320	80	0	-76	-76	240	244	4	720	720	0	0	0	G	
0	Equalities, CCI & Sustainable Dev. Team	143	150	7	-4	-8	-4	139	142	3	420	425	5	0	5	G	
0	Performance and Quality	117	121	4	-12	-12	0	105	109	4	316	331	15	0	15	G	
0	Policy and External Affairs	115	133	18	-16	-29	-13	99	104	5	299	299	0	0	0	G	
0	Partnership & Research Team	98	112	14	-30	-51	-21	68	61	-7	203	187	(16)	0	(16)	G	
0	Scrutiny & Member Support	852	882	30	-22	-42	-20	830	840	10	2,504	2,528	24	0	24	G	
0	Members Development	11	11	0	0	0	0	11	11	0	32	32	0	0	0	G	
0	Infrastructure & Corp Initiative Bud.	293	293	0	0	0	0	293	293	0	486	486	0	0	0	G	
0	Human Resources	415	565	150	-23	-120	-97	392	445	53	1,167	1,167	0	0	0	G	
0	Legal and Democratic Services	1,090	1,483	393	-394	-736	-342	696	747	51	2,111	2,111	0	0	0	G	
0	TOTAL CEX DIRECTORATE	3,667	4,360	693	(542)	(1,115)	(573)	3,125	3,245	120	9,014	9,021	7	0	7		

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1	Meeting:	Cabinet Member For Resources
2	Date:	Monday 12th October 2009
3	Title:	Revenue Budget Monitoring for the Period April – August 2010
4	Directorate:	Financial Services

5 Summary

This is the latest Budget Monitoring Report for the Financial Services Directorate for 2009/10. The service is currently forecasting a break-even position against a net revenue budget of £10.5m by the end of March 2010

6 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- **Note the latest revenue forecast outturn for the Financial Services Directorate for 2009/10.**

7. Proposals and Details

This report advises Members of the Revenue Budget monitoring for the period up to the end of August 2009 and shows that the Directorate is currently forecasting a break-even position for the financial year 2009/10.

8. Finance

The summary year to date and projected revenue outturn position for Financial Services (as at the end of August 2009) are detailed in the following table:-

	August 2009			Forecast 2009/10		
	Profiled Budget £'000	Actual Spend to date £'000	Variance Over(+) /Under(-) £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Variance Over(+) /Under(-) £'000
Central Finance & Management Team	601	631	30	1,440	1,440	0
Audit And Governance	186	192	6	448	448	0
Service Finance	673	688	15	1,629	1,629	0
Transformation & Strategic Partnerships	109	135	26	262	262	0
RBT Client Function	2,127	2,131	4	6,698	6,698	0
TOTAL	3,696	3,777	81	10,477	10,477	0

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The projected outturn is an estimate and consequently may change. Careful scrutiny of expenditure and income and close budget monitoring remain essential through the year.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget within the limits determined in March 2009 is vital to achieving the Council's Policy agenda. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Strategic Director of Finance and budget holders have been consulted in the production of this report.

Contact Name: Joe Johnson, Principal Accountant, Extension 2074
joe.johnson@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Resources
2.	Date:	12th October 2009
3.	Title:	RBT Performance Report for August 2009
4.	Directorate:	Financial Services

5. Summary

This report summarises RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for August 2009 across the areas of Customer Access, Human Resources and Payroll, ICT and Procurement.

6. Recommendations

The Cabinet Member for Resources is asked to:

- **Note RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for August 2009.**

7. Proposals and Details

Full details of performance against operational measures for August 2009 for all workstreams are attached at Appendix A.

7.1 Customer Access

7.1.1 *Overall Performance*

All performance targets were achieved during August 2009.

Average wait time for face to face customers continues to improve following the performance clinic held. This month, over 75% of customers were seen within 5 minutes.

In addition, we have seen a 5% reduction in volumes across the Customer Access portfolio of services in comparison to August 08.

7.1.2 *Complaints*

Two complaints were received in August 2009. Both of these were closed as upheld and the appropriate action taken to ensure officers responsible for the errors are aware of the correct processes. Lessons learned from all complaints have been shared with the wider team and will be fed into the Corporate Complaints group.

7.2 Human Resources and Payroll

7.2.1 *Overall Performance*

All targets for operational measures were achieved for August 2009.

7.2.2 *Current Projects*

A supplementary Yourself release (Version 7.1) went live on 10th August 2009 providing revisions to front end questions and other suggested improvements for the contract variations wizard. This development has been very successful and allowed the Service Centre to withdraw the paper CON2 document from use by RMBC Directorates. The CON2 will still be available for use by Schools until the end of September allowing for a month's lead in time for the new wizard as school's return for the new academic year.

The Teacher's Annual Service Return was processed and delivered to Capita (the teachers' pension service provider) during August ahead of the final deadline. The RMBC Finance Team is now arranging for the external Auditor, KPMG, to provide the final authorisation of the TR17 thereby completing the 2008/09 year end process.

7.2.3 *Payroll Activity*

The Teachers' pay award details have been received and will be processed for September pay day along with the usual annual increment process. Pay scales were revised and the new values published on the intranet.

7.2.4 *Future Activity*

The Service Centre continued to provide temporary management cover for the Millside Learning and Development Centre. The HR Service Centre is currently reviewing this arrangement following a request to permanently transfer the transactional activity to RBT. A change request response has been provided to the Client with a view to permanently transferring this facility and four employees to RBT from 1st October 2009.

Work is ongoing on the new bus ticket salary sacrifice scheme with a draft legal agreement produced between Travelmaster Ltd and RMBC. Documentation is subject to review by the Council's Legal team but work is underway to produce marketing material and advisory booklets for employees ready for the launch of the scheme later this year. The scheme will provide a positive benefit to employees who travel to work by bus and will be coupled with the launch of a discounted rail ticket to provide an inclusive travel package.

A number of Schools expressed an interest in piloting the RMS system for recruitment. These Schools will be contacted in early September with training and access provided.

7.3 ICT

7.3.1 *Overall Performance*

All targets for the ICT Service were achieved in August.

7.3.2 *VOIP Contract*

The corporate VOIP proposal was agreed by CMT in August. This is a key milestone in one of the most ambitious ICT projects that RMBC has undertaken.

7.3.3 *Doncaster Gate*

Around 140 Financial Services staff moved in to Doncaster Gate in August from a variety of other buildings. There were no major technology problems and the feedback from staff has been very positive.

7.3.4 *Digital Region*

The ICT Client had 2 meetings with Thales in August. Discussions centred on planning the migration of the RMBC network to Digital Region circuits. The first RMBC services over Digital Region are expected to go live in Spring 2010 with the migration to be complete by the end of 2012. An engagement session for Members and key officers has been scheduled for 13th October. This will introduce the Digital Region project and explore opportunities for engagement.

7.3.5 *A Transactional Website*

The re-development of the RMBC website continues to go well and attention has now turned to how we can offer a truly transactional website to citizens. The Customer Access and ICT Clients attended a full-day workshop with RBT in August to agree a strategy for giving the public more access to the data the Council holds. It was agreed that the following projects should be looked at to understand if a business case exists:

- Develop a mechanism to allow customers to create an account and be authenticated on to the website.
- Deploy a data matching tool that will sit between our major databases and cleanse and match customer records.
- Creation of a series of e-forms which lets a customer log 'report a' type incidents directly in to the CRM with no need for an agent to be involved.
- Creation of a new area of the website that allows customers to log in and:
 - See any jobs they have logged via the contact centre
 - See the balance of their Council Tax account
 - Pay their Council Tax
 - Request a copy of a bill
 - Setup a direct debit agreement
 - Notify change of circumstances
 - View/Print summary of benefits entitlements
 - View/Print benefits payments
 - View/Print progress of a benefits claim
 - View/Print progress of calculation
 - View/Print progress of Landlord Statements
 - Apply for free school meals
 - Apply for Rothercard

7.4 Procurement

7.4.1 *Overall Performance*

All targets for the Procurement workstream were achieved in August.

7.4.3 *BVPI8*

Former BVPI8 achieved 93.78% in August 2009 which is an improvement on the August 2008 performance of 91%. Average performance to date stands at 94.74%.

Work continues to drive up performance against this indicator with regular reports to Members and Champions continuing to address issues arising from late transaction reports. A Performance Clinic has been arranged for 10th November 2009 to look at the continued performance issues with this measure.

8. **Finance**

The contract with RBT includes a service credit arrangement, the effect of which is that should an operational measure not achieve its target a calculation based on the amount by which the target was missed including weighting results in a financial penalty for RBT as a direct consequence of any underperformance.

Penalties for the failure of measure HRO2 in May are continuing to be clawed back following over-performance in June, July and August.

Following over-performance of PO2 in August, it is likely that penalties for the failure of this measure in July will be clawed back.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Transformation and Strategic Partnerships (TSP) Team work with RBT to proactively identify and manage risks to prevent negative impacts on performance that may affect our CPA/CAA rating or service delivery.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The partnership is responsible for key areas of service delivery and therefore has a key role in the delivery of key national and local performance indicators. The partnership also supports the Council service areas in their service delivery.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

RBT performance reports for August 2009.

Contact Name:

Mark Gannon
Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Manager
Extension 54526
mark.gannon@rotherham.gov.uk

Customer Access Measure	Ref	Target	June	July	August	Status	Comments
Customer Access Overall Performance		100	107.06	107.15	106.61	★	Overall status of Customer Access OMs
Cost per Transaction (F2F)	CAO1		15.28			?	Quarterly measure; target to be agreed
Cost per Transaction (Telephony)	CAO1		3.96			?	Quarterly measure; information for monitoring only
Versatility Measure	CAO2				92.12	?	New measure; target to be set following baselining
First Contact Resolution by Channel (F2F)	CAO3		100	100	100	?	Target to be set following baselining
First Contact Resolution by Channel (Telephony)	CAO3		95.71	97.14	94.29	?	Target to be set following baselining
Average Call Quality Assessment	CAO4	95	96.64	97.67	97.15	★	
% of Contact not Abandoned (F2F)	CAO5	85	99.76	99.4	99.84	★	
% of Contact not Abandoned (Telephony)	CAO5	90	94.6	97.96	96.06	★	
Complaints Handling	CAO7	90	96	100	100	★	Reported quarterly with additional information for tracking
Provision of MM Data	CAO9	100	100	100	100	★	

More than 2% above target
 Within 2% of target
 More than 2% below target
 Unable to report at this time



HR&P Measure	Ref	Target	June	July	August	Status	Comments
HR&P Overall Performance		100	106.38	106.31	106.42	★	
Accuracy of Contracts	HRO1	95	100	100	100	★	
Accuracy of Payment	HRO2	99.5	99.65	99.84	99.77	★	
% of Enquiries Resolved at First Point of Contact	HRO3	80	96.33	95.7	96.57	★	
P45s issued within 3 working days	HRO4	98	100	100	100	★	
Manual Cheques issued within 1 working day	HRO5	98	100	100	100	★	
Non-Statutory Returns by Due Date	HRO6	100		100		★	Quarterly Measure
Quality of Information Given to Caller	HRO7	90	100	100	100	★	
% Contracts of Employment Issued within 15 working days	HRO8	90	100	100	100	★	
CRB Process	HRO9	95	100	100	100	★	
Provision of MM Data	HRO10	100	100	100	100	★	

More than 2% above target
 Within 2% of target
 More than 2% below target
 Unable to report at this time



ICT Measure	Ref	Target	June	July	August	Status	Comments
ICT Overall Performance		100	116.57	109.31	107.34	★	
% Availability of Website	ICTO1	99	99.99	100	100	★	
% Availability of Business Critical Applications	ICTO2	99	99.99	99.99	99.99	★	
% Availability of Telephony Systems	ICTO3	99	100	100	100	★	
% Faults Fixed in Agreed Timescales	ICTO4	94	98.2	98.74	96.86	★	
% ICT Change Requests Completed in Agreed Timescales	ICTO5	99	99.72	99.61	99.58	★	Measure reporting from June
% Complex Change Requests Completed to Agreed Specification	ICTO6	85				⚠	Measure dependant on resolution of Cross Cutting Measure CCS1
% Calls Fully Closed at First Point of Contact	ICTO7	25	43.84	35.64	32.75	★	
% Print Jobs Completed as Agreed	ICTO8	95		100	99	★	
Utilisation & Availability	ICTO9					⚠	New measure to be implemented to measure Service Desk productivity
Average Time Taken to Answer Calls	ICTO10	85		93.24	93.62	⚠	Target now 85% within 21 seconds in line with customer charter; issues with reporting show performance as % within 30 seconds; issue to be rectified

More than 2% above target
 Within 2% of target
 More than 2% below target
 Unable to report at this time



Procurement Measure	Ref	Target	June	July	August	Status	Comments
Procurement Overall Performance		100	109.81	107.29	104.52	★	
% Catalogued Goods or Services Delivered within Lead Times	PO1	88.72	95.6	91.71	91.31	★	
% Cheque Requests Processed on Next Available Payment Run	PO2	98.46	99.00	96.13	99.64	★	Performance back on track in August
% Undisputed Invoices Input within 25 calender days	PO3	99.22	99.46	99.48	99.49	●	
% non-eRFQ Open Requisitions Consolidated into Purchase Orders	PO4	75	94.15	87.33	84.2	★	
% Framework Agreements Risk Assessed for Impact on Local Economy	PO5	96	100			★	Quarterly measure
% Orders Placed Against Electronic Catalogue	PO6	17	22.16	21.43	21.81	★	
% eRFQ Open Requisitions	PO7		100			🚧	Turnaround now agreed as 85% within 4 working days; nil return for August and July
% Framework Agreements Developed with consideration given to Sustainability	PO8	98	100			★	Quarterly measure
Provision of MM Data	PO9	100	100	100	100	★	

More than 2% above target
 Within 2% of target
 More than 2% below target
 Unable to report at this time



Revenue & Benefit Measure	Ref	Target	June	July	August	Status	Comments
Revs & Bens Overall Performance		100	100	100	100	?	
% Council Tax Collected	RBO1	97	28.54	37.76	46.69	?	Annual measure
% NNDR Collected	RBO2	98.50	30.72	39.91	48.36	?	Annual measure
Time Taken to Process HB/CTB New Claims and Change Events	RBO3	15	13.69	14.75	15.33	?	Annual measure
Number of Fraud Prosecutions & Sanctions per 1000 caseload	RBO4	4.25	1.96	2.67	3.28	?	Annual measure
Cumulative Council Tax Arrears as compared to Council Tax Year End Total Collectable Debt	RBO5	4.8	5.62	5.62	5.62	?	Annual measure
Year End Council Tax Write Off as % of Collectable Debt	RBO6	0.27	0.07	0.09	0.12	?	Annual measure
Number of Changes in HB/CTB Entitlements within the year per 1000	RBO7		601	597	645	?	Annual measure
Level of LA Overpayments not to exceed LA Error Local Subsidy Threshold	RBO8	0.48	0.34	0.34	0.31	?	Annual measure
Total Amount of HB Overpayments recovered in period as % of HB Overpayments outstanding	RBO9	41	19.87	25.6	33.16	?	Annual measure
% New Benefit Claims Decided within 14 days of Receipt	RBO10	90.5	93.81	93.3	93.62	?	Quarterly measure
Total Amount of HB Overpayments written off during the period as % of Total Amount of HB Overpayments	RBO11	6.99	0.95		0.95	?	Annual measure
% Applications for HB/CTB Reconsideration / Revision Actioned & Notified within 4 weeks	RBO12	75	94.06	90.00	94.29	?	Annual measure
% HB/CTB Appeals Submitted to the Tribunal Service in 4 weeks	RBO13	85	100	100	100	?	Annual measure
Provision of MM Data	RBO14	100	100	100	100	★	

More than 2% above target



Within 2% of target



More than 2% below target



Unable to report at this time



NB figures are for monitoring purposes only for annual and quarterly measures

COMPLAINTS FORUM
Monday, 7th September, 2009

Present:-

Councillor Wyatt
Sarah Griffiths
Emma Hill
Mark Leese
Stuart Purcell
Jayne Wild

In the Chair

2010 Rotherham Ltd.
Environment and Development Services
Corporate Complaints Officer, RBT
Neighbourhood and Adult Services
Financial Services

Apologies for absence were submitted by Zoe Burke, Mark Gannon, Rachel O'Neil and Andrea Pearson.

43. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Agreed:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th July, 2009 be approved as a correct record.

44. CEDAR NOMINALS - RAISING CHEQUES FOR COMPENSATION

Mark Leese outlined problems experienced with reporting on any compensation payments that had been paid to complainants. He stated that if Services added 7930 on Cedar to their cost codes it would enable Finance to extract the details of any payments.

Stuart Purcell reported that he already engaged with Finance so NAS may already do this.

The Chair referred to a recent review of the Ex-Gratia Policy in an attempt to bring some consistency to payments made and queried whether this would affect compensation payments?

The Complaints Procedure stated that Directors could authorise a payment up to a value of £500; anything further had to be submitted to the Cabinet Member for approval. A number of factors could make up a compensation payment e.g. goodwill gesture, time and trouble and out of pocket expenses such as telephone calls or postage.

Mark stated that the use of the nominal would also enable more accurate information to be gathered and bench marking to take place at subsequent meetings if warranted.

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

(2) That officers liaise with Finance about adding the nominals.

(3) That members of the Group be provided with a copy of the recent Ex-Gratia Policy.

45. SIEBEL SYSTEM**(a) Errors and Protocol to Amend**

Mark Leese reported on issues with regard to incorrect/incomplete inputting information onto the Siebel system which affected the integrity of the resultant report.

He circulated a proposed report template which showed the Siebel reference number, the date received, subject, customer name, created by, owner, action required, review date and the date record amended. Quite often it was the case that the officer had not pressed the 'next steps' button or had not completed the registration. It was proposed that Directorates correct any errors that were identified to them within 2 weeks.

The current reports only included cases which had been categorised correctly and that, therefore, there was a risk that the performance reported may be inaccurate.

Agreed:- (1) That Mark Leese circulate the incomplete entries to Complaints Officers on a monthly basis.

(2) That Jayne Wild liaise with Rachel O'Neil to ascertain the status of the Quarter 1 monitoring report and the annual review.

(b) Input Issues

Stuart Purcell reported that within Neighbourhoods and Adult Services there was a high internal target to get a set number of compliments per month and, that their current average was approximately 50-60. The Admin Officers struggled to input them on a one-for-one basis because of their numbers as well as the complaints, comments and Ombudsman enquiries. In order to reduce the backlog, Stuart had instructed them to enter them on a Service Area basis only so it was known which particular Team received the complaint and how many they had received.

As these were not in Siebel, they were in the data extracts, as provided by Mark for Quarter 1, as the agreement was that the reports only include data held in the Siebel CRM system.

Mark Leese suggested that this issued be discussed with Rachel O'Neil and the possibility of either simplifying the compliment register or agreeing that the report could include data held in other sources..

Agreed:- That Stuart discuss with Rachel O'Neil.

46. STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS

Mark Leese stated that it had been his and Rachel O'Neil's intention to review some of the Stage 3 complaints that had taken place but there had

been gaps in the information entered onto Siebel with regard to the investigations and reports. Mark had e-mailed out to individual officers but the reports were not there to review.

There was also the issue of performance reporting days which was flagged against the Directorates but they did not have too much control in most cases. If officers felt this was an issue for them there may be a need for a separate meeting to discuss this.

Stuart felt that the monitoring report needed to reflect the fact that there was another Service involved in Corporate complaints and highlight where the deadline was breached.

Stuart also highlighted the fact that there was no written protocol where a complaint that encompassed 2 Directorates and that this had been an issue on a Stage 3 involving EDS and NAS.

Agreed:- That this issue be included on the next agenda.

47. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Mark was to attend the LGA Seminar on 17th November, 2009, the agenda for which he would circulate. If there were any issues the Group wanted him to raise should contact him.

(b) Using the Freedom of Information calculator, Mark was to collate the costs of a complaint from Stage 1 to completion within RBT. Mark would also include any Stage 2 and Stage 3 complaints if they were received. This would provide an insight into the true cost of staff time in dealing with a complaint.

48. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting be held on Monday 9th November, 2009, commencing at 1.30 p.m.

WEBSITE STRATEGY GROUP
Wednesday, 16th September, 2009

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Jon Ashton, Pete Hayes, Pete Lawrenson, Rachel O'Neil, Steve Pearson and Jenny Vaughan.

Apologies for absence were received from Jayne Evans, Gannon and Holmes.

30. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12TH AUGUST, 2009

Agreed:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th August, 2009, be agreed as a true record.

31. MIGRATION UPDATE

Rachel O'Neil circulated the Website Strategy Implementation Plan and took members through the main points.

She reported that the "go live" date had now been put back by 2 weeks as there had been a problem with the design proof supplied by Jadu. It was anticipated that during the first week in October the user content would be migrated over to the new CMS to give people an opportunity see what the website would look like. A health check would also be undertaken to ensure that website principles are adhered to.

She confirmed that a presentation and report would be going to CMT and Cabinet during October.

The plain words training had now been completed to ensure writing for the web training for all appropriate staff. X Forms training was scheduled to take place on Friday 18th September and this training would also include galaxy sites.

A discussion ensued around whether the site would be interactive when it went live and if so would there be a twitter feed. It was agreed that this was important but it would need to be closely monitored.

Information had been requested from RBT in relation to the impact of other systems and this was still awaited but was expected before the end of the week.

It was anticipated that a realistic "go live" date for the new website would be November 2009.

32. REGISTRATION CATEGORIES

Jon Ashton circulated a draft document in relation to the Rotherham Registration Categories. He commented that he felt all categories had been covered but asked whether there needed to be any additional

categories. It was suggested that reference needed to be made to the area for social care and safeguarding. It was agreed that a category would be added.

The Chair asked for a copy or the final version be emailed to him in order for him to circulate it for further comment.

Agreed:- (1) That the suggested categories be accepted with the inclusion of a category for social care.

(2) That a copy of the amended version of the list be emailed to the Chair.

33. GALAXY SITES

Jon Ashton gave an update in relation to galaxy sites, and provided examples of galaxy sites already set up within other authorities. He confirmed that Jadu had provided a number of links to the various sites and he agreed that he would circulate these to members of the group after the meeting.

34. DIRECTORATE EDITORS

The minutes of the meetings held on 13th August, 2009 and 9th September, 2009, were noted.

35. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on Monday 12th October, 2009, at 1.30 pm.

CUSTOMER ACCESS GROUP
Monday, 21st September, 2009

Present:-

Councillor Wyatt
 Clare Bailey
 Richard Garrard
 Asim Munir
 Rachel O'Neil
 Jackie Scantlebury
 Mark Leese

In the Chair
 Children and Young People's Services
 Environment and Development Services
 Chief Executive
 Customer Access Client Manager
 Neighbourhood and Adult Services
 RBT

39. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11TH MAY, 2009

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th May, 2009 be approved as a correct record.

40. CUSTOMER ACCESS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

Rachel O'Neil circulated a report to be submitted to CMT, detailing the progress currently being made against the implementation plan.

The actions and target dates that are required to implement the Customer Access Strategy are detailed in the action plan, in Appendix A.

Particular discussion ensued on the following actions-

Joint Customer Services Centres opened – GREEN status.

1.5 **Maltby CSC** opened successfully, positive feedback being received from customers but footfall is low. This is expected to increase following completion of the Maltby swimming pool.

Aston CSC is on target to open Spring 2010.

Rawmarsh CSC opening is on hold, pending a funding shortfall. It is hoped to open by Winter 2010. Revised plans are being designed in conjunction with the PCT. Rawmarsh will probably have only 3 booths for customer advice. One proposal is to have a library in the CSC if it is possible to do so and liaison was taking place with the Cultural Services Manager. Due to a lack of space, it would not be possible to offer a Social Service facility.

The meeting discussed Information sharing protocols.

Review and expand payment methods – AMBER status.

1.6 This action was now progressing, despite a slow start. It is anticipated that the cashier issue will have been sorted at the time

of the move to Aston.

Channel shift targets achieved each year – RED status

2.1 23% increase in face to face transactions achieved due to number of CSCs being opened. Due to cost element of face to face demand, the aim is to encourage utilisation of self serve facilities in the future.

The meeting discussed the need to maximise face to face transactions through networking CSCs, balanced against the need to offer opportunities for customers to contact the Council by their own preferred methods.

Through the delivery of the channel shift targets and transformation of services using business process re-engineering, face-to-face contact to cost 3% less year-on-year – RED status

2.2 Measures were not in place to track face to face contact in 2008-2009. We have tracked 2 quarters of face to face costs in 09 – 10 within the RBT service only. Costs remain static at £15.28.

The meeting discussed the need to track all CSC costs and performance through each Directorate, the network of localities and areas of service delivery which could be carried out by other Organisations, for example by Post Offices, and what range of service was suitable.

The meeting was informed of a separate piece of work to be undertaken in the future looking at outreach centres and how to improve access for customers.

Agreed- (1) That the contents of the report be received and noted.

(2) That a further report be submitted on 1.5 – Joint Customer Service Centres – in particular, the reasons for the delay for the Rawmarsh opening date.

41. CUSTOMER CHARTER

Rachel O'Neil reported that it is hoped every Directorate will be producing statistics on how they are operating their Customer Charter. However, there is a need to report this information through to the Chief Executive's Performance Team on a corporate basis, through Performance+, in order for the information to be amalgamated and rolled out corporately.

It is extremely difficult to obtain all the information from some Directorates.

The meeting was made aware of this issue and asked to consider a way forward in order for a quarterly corporate performance report to be compiled. This report would be presented to CMT and Cabinet, to include the Corporate Charter, and should give the overall picture of how

Directorates are delivering against key targets.

Customer feedback is good but there are areas of contact where customers have said the service is not good.

The meeting discussed:-

- Quality of data
- Need for clear definitions
- Was the Corporate Charter complete and were Directorates comparing like for like?
- Need to standardise performance monitoring across Directorates
- Quality of information fed through to Elected Members
- How Performance+ will impact on the Customer Charter
- Need to explore possibilities of “closing” an enquiry – i.e. by telephone conversation rather than a letter/e mail

A further issue raised was a need to look at Service Level Agreements for Councillors’ Surgeries, and, if so, how are they conform to Corporate Charter Standards.

The meeting discussed:-

- Benchmarking issues
- Electorate access points and involvement of MPs
- Are Directorates measuring response times, tracking outcomes or action taken?

Agreed:- That Rachel O’Neil compile a note on proposed changes, as discussed, and circulate to all Members of the Customer Access Group.

(2) That Rachel O’Neil discuss the matter with Richard Copley, as discussed.

42. **AVOIDABLE CONTACT – NEXT STEPS**

Rachel O’Neil circulated a note on NI14 – a National Indicator which focuses on reducing avoidable contact between members of the community and the local authority. The indicator is currently only measured within RBT through Customer Service Centres.

The note set out:-

- Examples of avoidance contact
- Services that are incorporated into the measuring
- The purpose of the NI14 indicator
- How avoidable contact is currently measured
- What does the analysis tell us
- Areas of future development

Analysis shows there is an opportunity to strengthen some high level areas.

The meeting discussed:-

- ❖ Average cost of each interaction
- ❖ Efficiency savings (possibly per annum) to eradicate and reduce avoidable contact levels to 10%
- ❖ Contact/issues re. dustbin collections/housing repairs/streetlight repairs
- ❖ Customer journey mapping
- ❖ Customer expectation
- ❖ Content of response letters – “jargon” balanced against legal content and understanding the terminology

Agreed:- That Rachel O’Neil compile a short report, of all avoidable contact logged, and circulate to all Members of the Customer Access Group on a monthly basis.

43. CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE – UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS

Rachel O’Neil reported that all Directorates had now been assessed against the Customer Service Excellence. Every Directorate had successfully achieved this status.

A final report was expected this month from eqsc????, after which Directorates would be asked to focus on corporate areas of work which had only been partially complied with.

In addition, Jasmine Speight had been invited to attend a meeting in London to share Best Practice. It is hoped further regional sub-committees would follow as a result.

The meeting discussed peer assessments and felt this was the best way to proceed in future.

Agreed:- That a formal press release be issued when the final report is available.

44. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting of the Customer Access Group be held on Monday, 2nd November, 2009 at 11.00 a.m.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Resources
2.	Date:	12th October 2009
3.	Title:	Additional RBT Performance Information for August 2009
4.	Directorate:	Financial Services

5. Summary

This report summarises RBT's performance in respect of Procurement Savings achieved and in respect of the Revenues and Benefits Service for August 2009. The report is to be read in conjunction with the full RBT Performance Report.

6. Recommendations

The Cabinet Member for Resources is asked to:

- **Note RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for August 2009.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Procurement

7.1.1 *Savings Performance*

Procurement savings for the period to the end of July 2009 were £307k.

7.1.2 *Addressable Spend Tracking*

Addressable spend figures for August 2009 are found in the table below:

Savings in month of July	Savings year to date	Estimated Savings to year end	Addressable Spend in August	Addressable Spend Year to Date
£307,279	£1,260,036	£2.993m	£2.786m	£10.807m

7.2 Revenues and Benefits

7.2.1 *Council Tax*

At the end of August 2009 the Council Tax Collection Rate was 46.69%. This is slightly down on the corresponding point in 2008/09 when the collection level stood at 46.99%. A strict recovery timetable remains in place and, as explained in the last report, the target for 2009/10 is that RBT achieve a Council Tax Collection Rate which places Rotherham in the upper performance quartile for Metropolitan District Councils, with a minimum collection level of 97.0% regardless of quartile position.

The following table illustrates recovery action taken in the year to date compared with the same point in 2008/09: -

Council Tax Collection – Recovery Procedures		
Documents Issued	At August 2009	At August 2008
Reminders	23,935	25,063
Summonses	7,031	7,655
Liability Orders	6,183	5,870

In line with arrangements for Christmas 2008, bailiff activity in Rotherham will cease for the Christmas holiday period on Friday 11th December 2009.

The average number of days taken to action a Council Tax Change of Circumstance was 12.89 days at the end of August 2009, exceeding the smaller is better target of 14 days. This is a Performance Management Measure that carries no penalty for non-achievement.

The percentage of people paying their Council Tax by direct debit was 67.50% at the end of August 2009. The figure at the comparative point in 2008/09 was 66.82%. Rotherham's performance in terms of direct debit take up is reasonably good when measured against other Metropolitan District Authorities. A graph illustrating the 2008 comparable position (based on CIPFA Benchmarking Data) is attached to this report as Appendix B.

7.2.2 NNDR

At the end of August 2009 the NNDR collection rate stood at 48.36% compared with 50.32% at the same point in 2008/09. Obviously the current economic situation is contributing to the shortfall and anecdotal evidence suggests, not surprisingly, that the position in Rotherham is similarly reflected in other local authorities. However, RBT have highlighted that at the end of August there was one large payment that needed to be reallocated against 2009/10 collection. This is causing the current year position to be slightly understated and, will, once correctly allocated, significantly reduce the degree of year on year shortfall.

The following table illustrates the current levels of recovery action being taken: -

NNDR Collection – Recovery Procedures		
Documents Issued	At August 2009	At August 2008
Reminders	2,696	2,588
Summons	650	736
Liability Orders	469	415

7.2.3 Other Service Measures

Performance against the remaining Strategic and Operational Measures is not currently giving cause for concern although the position in respect of the average time taken to process HB/CTB New Claims and Change Events has worsened further since the last report, currently standing at 15.33 days against the local interim target figure of 15 days. The increase in benefits customer caseload as a result of the current economic downturn is continuing to be a factor contributing to the situation. RBT are looking at how to improve this performance to ensure that the target is hit by year end. More detail on this will be reported in the next monthly performance report.

8. Finance

The contract with RBT includes a service credit arrangement, the effect of which is that should an OM not achieve target a calculation based on the amount by which the target was missed, allocated weighting of the measure, etc results in a financial penalty for RBT as a direct consequence of any underperformance.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Transformation and Strategic Partnerships (TSP) Team work with RBT to proactively identify and manage risks to prevent negative impacts on performance that may affect our CPA/CAA rating or service delivery.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

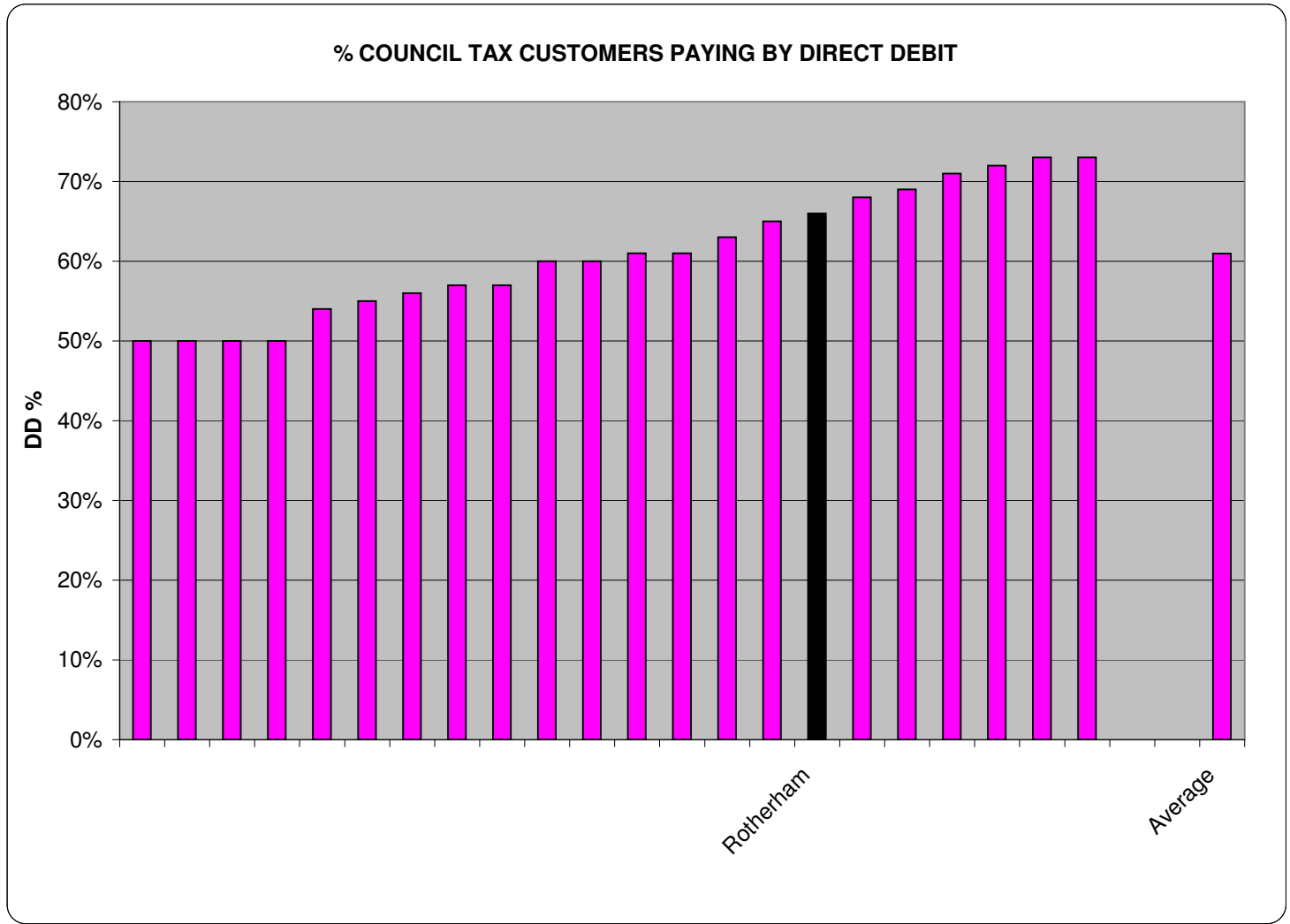
The partnership is responsible for key areas of service delivery and therefore has a key role in the delivery of key national and local performance indicators. The partnership also supports the Council service areas in their service delivery.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

RBT performance reports for August 2009.

Contact Name:

Mark Gannon
Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Manager
Extension 54526
mark.gannon@rotherham.gov.uk



Authority:

Data:

Rotherham

Average	61%
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