

## **CABINET MEMBER OF RESOURCES**

**Venue: Bailey House, Rawmarsh Road, Rotherham**

**Date: Monday, 8th February, 2010**

**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 11th January, 2010 (Pages 1 - 10)
4. Revenue Budget Monitoring April-December, 2009 - Financial Services (Pages 11 - 13)
5. Revenue Budget Monitoring April-December, 2009 - Chief Executive (Pages 14 - 17)
6. Reducing Agency Costs - Internal Talent Pool (Pages 18 - 28)
7. Schools Support Staff Negotiating Body (Pages 29 - 32)
8. RBT Performance Report (Pages 33 - 45)
9. Complaints Forum (Pages 46 - 48)
10. Customer Access Group (Pages 49 - 52)  
- minutes of meeting held on 18th January, 2010
11. Website Strategy Group (Pages 53 - 55)  
- minutes of meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2010

27K

**CABINET MEMBER OF RESOURCES**  
**11th January, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair).

**K59. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7TH DECEMBER, 2009**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2009.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2009, be approved as a correct record.

**K60. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING APRIL-NOVEMBER, 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 November, 2009. It also stated that the Directorate had incurred £21,154 agency spend.

A process for collating details of spend on the use of consultants had been implemented and would be included in reports as from April, 2010.

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

**K61. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING APRIL-NOVEMBER, 2009 - CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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 underspend of £40,000 against a net revenue budget of £9M by the end of March, 2010.

Areas highlighted in the report covered:-

- Transport fleet
- Vacancies and Secondments
- Rotherham Newspaper
- Statutory Notices
- Worksmart

It was noted that discussions were taking place with regard to possible other funding options for the Rotherham Newspaper due to the current economic climate.

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

Resolved:- (1) That the latest revenue forecast outturn position for the Chief Executive's Directorate for 2009/10 be noted.

(2) That the Principal Accountant discuss with the Head of Communications and report the latest position with regard to Rotherham Newspaper to the next meeting.

## **K62. STATUTORY NOTICES**

In accordance with Minute No. K54(2) of 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2009, Joe Johnson, Principal Accountant, submitted a report on the provision of Statutory Notices placed in the local press and an analysis of the predicted £38,000 overspend position by the end of March, 2010.

A Statutory Notice was a notice that was required to be published in a certain format and in a certain manner to comply with the relevant legislative requirements. The Local Government Act 2000 stated that where an authority themselves published a newspaper, the duty to publish was to be construed as a duty to publish that notice in their newspaper and at least 1 other newspaper circulating in the area. The Newspaper Libel and Registration Act 1888 defined a newspaper as 'any paper containing public news, intelligence or occurrences or any remarks or observations therein printed for sale and published periodically or in parts or numbers at intervals not exceeding 26 days'.

It is for the above reasons why Statutory Notices could not be solely published in Rotherham News.

Over the last 12 months there had been 179 Planning Notices (£48,980), 432 Public Notices (£46,090) and 54 other (£10,990).

It was reported that the Online Services Manager was looking into the possibility of publicising such Notices on line in light of recent published articles suggesting that the previous barriers to such practice had been removed.

Resolved:- That the forecasted overspending relating to the publication of Statutory Notices be noted.

**K63. RBT PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented the submitted report which summarised RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for November, 2009, across the areas of Customer Access, Human Resources and Payroll, ICT, Procurement and Revenue and Benefits.

Key points for this period included:-

Customer Access

- All performance targets
- Average waiting time for face-to-face customers had significantly improved – 90% of customers being seen within 10 minutes
- Revenues and Benefits customer contact remained poor – 31% of customers abandoning their telephone call. TSP Team requested specific performance measures relating to the Process Review to ensure that this level of performance was satisfactorily addressed
- 4 complaints received in November, all relating to Revenues and Benefits Service. 3 upheld and 1 inconclusive
- RBT currently developing options for the staffing of Aston Joint Service Centre and for incorporating cashiers within the wider customer services network

Human Resources and Payroll

- All performance targets achieved apart from HRO2 (Accuracy of Payment) – 98.43% against a target of 99.5%. Understood to be due to a manual processing error and as a consequence 214 employees did not receive subsistence payments. These were minimal amounts in most cases and any affected employees who requested it were given cheque payments. Additional safeguards have been introduced to prevent a recurrence
- External audit of teachers pension return completed on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 and submitted to Capita by the statutory deadline
- Version 8.1 Yourself went live on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2009
- Preparation commenced for the early production of payrolls ahead of the Christmas holiday closure
- Version 9 Yourself due in February, 2010 including a mileage re-write and further organisation chart views
- Work Package 1 Transformation projects successfully drawing to a close with only 2 projects outstanding – timesheet automation and automation of establishment records

ICT

- All performance targets achieved
- Over 100 VOIP handsets deployed to Norfolk and Bailey Houses to facilitate the agile working of staff decanted from Crinoline House
- RBT restructured the ICT Section with 2 sections "Implementation"

- (focus on project work) and “Live” (responsible for the business as usual, day-to-day IT operations)
- Government Connect (GC) e-mail facility went live which allowed the Council to send and receive data securely to other organisations connected to the GC network including the NHS, Police, Central government and other Councils

#### Procurement

- All performance targets achieved
- Former BVP18 achieved 95.58% in November, 2009, an improvement on 2008. Average performance to date stood at 94.22%
- Procurement savings for the period to the end of October, 2009, were £407,000
- Council had been approved as signatories to the Government’s Prompt Payment Code which involved references from local suppliers

#### Revenues and Benefits

- Council Tax Collection Rate 74.38% at the end of November, 2009, 0.23% lower than the same point in 2008
- Overtime continued to be worked and, together with the strict recovery timetable, hoped that any shortfall in collection, compared with the previous year, would be addressed by the end of March, 2010
- The target for 2009/10 continued to be a Council Tax Collection Rate which placed Rotherham in the upper performance quartile for Metropolitan District Councils with a minimum collection level of 97.0%
- Average number of days taken to action a Council Tax Change of Circumstance was 12.45 days, below the 14 days target and significantly better than the last reported figure
- As at November, 2009 69.01% people paid their Council Tax by direct debit. The comparative point in 2008/09 was 68.59%
- NNDR collection rate was 78.76% at the end of November, 2009, 0.07% down on the same point in 2008. The figure was adjusted to incorporate the affect of the NNDR Deferral Scheme but also included over £280,000 in advance payments
- As at the end of November, 2009, there were 329 live cases on the NNDR Deferral Scheme, allowing deferral of £465,298.70
- The average time taken to process HB/CTB New Claims and Change Events continued to be closely monitored. As at 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2009, the figure was 12.51 days, a slight increase from the 12.08 days reported previously

- Average time taken to process HB/CTB New Claims and change Events continued to be a cause of concern. As at 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2009, it was 12.08 days

Resolved:- (1) That RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for November, 2009, be noted.

(2) That an update on the Revenues and Benefits Business Process Review be given at the next meeting.

#### **K64. SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources) reported that the Director of Children and Young People's Service had requested consideration of providing time off for employees to support Rotherham children with reading activities in schools. This had highlighted the wider context for employee volunteering activity and the need for a consistent approach.

A wide range of organisations had introduced policies and practice aimed at encouraging their employees to take part in volunteering activities recognising good practice in this area was beneficial for their Corporate Social Responsibility. Employees at an individual level would already be engaged in a range of voluntary activity e.g. School Governors. However, as a large employer, the Council was well placed to support and encourage volunteering activity to enhance the personal development of employees and/or teams in the Council to build up resources available to charities/community groups/the local community generally and to enhance the reputation of the Council within the community and its workforce.

Voluntary Action Rotherham had established a volunteer bureau to link individuals and organisations interested in volunteering to relevant activities. The volunteer bureau would provide an established and tested route to link employees to opportunities which would support local communities and organisations.

The following had been identified as potential volunteering activities:-

- Team Challenge Events
- Management/Board Mentoring
- Individual Time Allowance for Volunteering

The report set out suggested conditions to be applied if it was decided that paid time off was to be provided for volunteering together with an example time off allowance and associated qualification criteria.

It was noted that the Strategic Leadership Team had recommended that provisions be made for employee volunteering initially in support of the Right to Read project in schools. This was recommended on the basis of

a maximum of up to one day's leave with pay to be matched with one leave day i.e a maximum commitment away from the workplace of 15 hours.

Resolved:- (1) That the range of potential volunteering activity highlighted in the report be supported.

(2) That the employee volunteering framework be adopted.

(3) That a time allowance for employees to undertake initially the Reading Support project in Rotherham schools.

(4) That paid time off be permitted to the maximum of 7.4 hours (1 day) providing this was matched by the employee taking an equivalent personal leave day.

(5) That the above be subject to Service requirements and agreement of the employee's Line Manager.

(6) That the situation be reviewed after twelve months.

#### **K65. CORPORATE WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2009-12 - SIX MONTHLY UPDATE**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources) submitted a progress report on activity within the Corporate Workforce Strategy together with an update on development of new Indicators for workforce issues, preparation for the KLOE 3.3 in Use of Resources and findings from the audit of workforce planning.

The Strategy had been refreshed in May, 2009 to take account of the changing economic climate, CYPS issues, employee opinion feedback, year end workforce data, health and safety priorities and a gap analysis against the Use of Resources KLOE 3.3. Further projects had since been agreed in relation to the efficiency agenda and issues within CYPS together with implementation of an emergency planning skills audit.

The current National Local Government Workforce Strategy (2007) was being revised and to be re-launched in 2010. Early indications were that the 5 priority themes would remain, although the revised emphasis would reflect current pressures facing local government, with more emphasis on:-

- Organisational Development – new ways of working, citizen focus, partnerships and value for money
- Leadership – visionary leadership, built through partnership with other

- agencies and Elected Members
- Skills – raising employee skill and knowledge levels, enabling innovation, high performance and multi-agency skills development
  - Recruitment and Retention – career progression, talent management, re-skilling, succession planning in support of efficiency programmes whilst still promoting local government working and addressing skills shortages where external advertising took place and supporting employability agendas
  - Pay and reward – modern pay structures, control of employment costs, total reward

The above were already clear within the Council's current Strategy, however, the change in emphasis clearly reinforced the expectation on services to pro actively manage their people resources alongside service development and planning.

The current Use of Resources assessment in operation at the time of this review did not include KLOE 3.3 which related to how the organisation planned, organised and developed its workforce to achieve strategic priorities. However, KPMG had agreed to pilot the assessment with the Council. A position statement had been reviewed by KPMG and feedback was being used to inform preparations for next year's assessment. Feedback had not highlighted any major gap areas, however, it was clear that the Council would have to both evidence how it was addressing major workforce issues and seeing outcomes, both corporately and within Directorates.

Most actions within the Strategy were either on track or had been completed. The actions that were either delayed or may carry forward into 2010 were set out in the report submitted.

Given the assessment of workforce planning in the revised Use of Resources assessment (and best practice), it was imperative that managers were supported to carry out quality workforce planning including the expectation of the Audit Commission key lines of enquiry.

The annual audit of workforce planning was currently in progress. The mini audit of workforce issues in service plans in April/May, 2009, and initial indications from the more detailed audit were that further attention was required to the systematic performance management of workforce issues, to support service development and transformation including a clear focus on future issues.

Work was in progress with Service Planning lead officers and Directorate workforce planning leads to review how workforce issues were integrated with service planning. Revisions were likely to be made to the workforce planning framework to simplify the approach for managers.



Resolved:- (1) That the progress and achievements against 2009/12 targets and potential for work being carried forward into 2010/11 be noted.

(2) That the progress on the new suite of workforce indicators and the pilot Use of Resources KLOE 3.3. assessment be noted.

(3) That Directorates respond to the outcomes of the audit of their workforce plans.

#### **K66. EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMME (EXCHANGE)**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources) reported on the range of employee involvement initiatives that had been carried out under the Exchange programme during April-September, 2009, which included:-

##### Reach-In

- 1 survey had been conducted during the period in question (Reach-In 8) for which the response rate was 46%
- Questions included internal communications
- Unite
  - o Almost 60% of respondents did not know how to submit an article to Unite
  - o Mixed opinion as to whether news from the Directorates was covered
  - o Online version would be more reader friendly
  - o 52% wished to see a letters or feedback page
  - o Suggested energy efficiency reminders be included
  - o Better alert system when a new edition was published.
- Briefings
  - o High neutral response received when asked about the amount of briefings received

##### Focus Groups

- 2 rounds of focus groups had been held during the period in question
- 1<sup>st</sup> round looked at navigating the intranet. To date approximately 90% of the suggested changes agreed had been made or were in the process of being made
- 2<sup>nd</sup> round focussed on new skills frameworks currently under development. As a result a number of changes had been made

##### Worker Representative Groups

- The Groups that continued to be active were Disabled Workers Group, Black Minority Ethnic Group and Women's Issues Network

##### Employee Suggestion Scheme

- April to August, the scheme received 125 suggestions, 75 of which were valid. 15 were recommended by the Panel for implementation
- Progress had been made with the number of outstanding suggestions for implementation with 27 suggestions being clear since the last

report to CMT. Of those, 21 were implemented. There were still 37 suggestions outstanding.

#### New Joiner Survey

- Continued to track new employees' engagement and satisfaction with the Council as an employer and includes questions on the recruitment process, their general induction, welcome and support received, performance and development and perceptions of Rotherham Council
- The current engagement index for 2008/09 was 84%
- As from October, 2009, the running of the survey would be carried out in-house and corporate findings reported every 6 months

#### Leaver Survey

- The questionnaire had been aligned with the new joiner survey and the employee opinion survey so that engagement and satisfaction could be tracked throughout the 'life' of the employee
- RBT were currently investigating the feasibility of providing electronic surveys to those who were e-enabled prior to them leaving the Council

Resolved:- (1) That with regard to Reach-In, focus groups and worker representative groups:-

(a) that the Strategic Leadership be asked to encourage their own Directorate Management Teams to submit topics for consultation and

(b) the actions arising from the initiatives continue to be supported.

(2) That with regard to the Employee Suggestion Scheme:-

(a) that the Strategic Leadership Team was responsible for ensuring that outstanding suggestions were implemented during 2009/10 or included in Service Plans for 2010/2011.

(3) That with regard to Back to the Floor:-

(a) that the Strategic Leadership Team be asked to commit time to Back to the Floor activities and produce publicity/photo relating to it and

(b) that the Strategic Leadership Team be asked to ensure their Directors participated in Back to the Floor or Walking the Floor activity.

#### **K67. EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY UPDATE**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources) submitted a report on follow up actions from the 'Your Voice' employee opinion survey conducted in June, 2008.

The report set out actions that had been completed, were in progress and those not progressed under the themes of:-

- Fairness (Equality and Diversity)
- Job Security
- Senior Management
- Pay and Benefits
- Work-Life Balance and Health and Safety
- Customer Service
- Communication

Also within the report was a summary of the progress the Directorates had made some of whom had been more active than others in implementing actions. In order to gain maximum benefit from the survey, it was vital that appropriate action was taken and communicated to employees so they could see the benefit of completing the questionnaire. Survey result activity should be included in workforce plans and performance managed.

It was noted that the Strategic Leadership Team would ensure within their respective Directorates that actions were progressed and subsequently communicated to employees and that survey updates would be included on the SLT agenda.

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

**K68. CUSTOMER ACCESS GROUP**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Customer Access Group held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2009.

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

**K69. E GOV BOARD**

Consideration was given and discussion took place on the minutes of the E-Government Board held on 2nd November, 2009.

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

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member For Resources</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Revenue Budget Monitoring for the Period April – December 2009</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Financial Services</b>

**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

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

7.2 Within this forecast outturn the Directorate has incurred the following Agency Spend to the end of December:

Supplier	Month 9 Spend (£)	Cumulative Spend to date (£)
Duttons	1,800	21,151
Hays Accountancy		520
Badenoch & Clark		1,283
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>22,954</b>

7.3 A process for collating details of spend on the use of Consultants has been implemented and information will be provided in Budget Monitoring Reports from April 2010.

## 8. Finance

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

	December 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	1,082	1,148	66	1,440	1,440	0
Audit And Governance	337	342	5	448	448	0
Service Finance	1,223	1,233	10	1,629	1,629	0
Transformation & Strategic Partnerships	198	253	55	262	262	0
RBT Affordability	5,022	4,971	-51	6,698	6,698	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,862</b>	<b>7,947</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>10,477</b>	<b>10,477</b>	<b>0</b>

## 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  
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**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member For Resources</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday 8th February 2010</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Revenue Budget Monitoring for the Period April – December 2009</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>

**5 Summary**

This is the latest Budget Monitoring Report for the Chief Executives Directorate for 2009/10. The service is currently forecasting an underspend of £40k 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 December 2009 and shows that the Directorate is currently forecasting a £40k underspend 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 (£15k pressure).
- There are also several vacancies and staff secondments across the Directorate which are offsetting other minor overspends
- The Rotherham newspaper operates as a traded service and is partially funded by contributions from the new Human Resources Recruitment Management System. However, due to the current economic climate the number of advertisements being placed is less than was anticipated. This has led to a potential year end pressure on the Newspaper of £25k.
- The cost of placing Statutory Notices in the local press will exceed the budget by £41k.
- Human Resources have received additional funding for the Worksmart project.(£25k) which is due to expire at the end of 2010/11 and there is also a vacancy on the Trade Union Secondment budget (£10k). These are being used to offset pressures across the wider Directorate.

There is no agency expenditure to report in this financial year, although there has been expenditure incurred on Job Evaluation in 2009/10, this is funded via a centrally held budget. A process for collating details of spend on the use of Consultants has been implemented in accordance with Scrutiny Review recommendations and information will be provided in reports from April 2010.

## 8. Finance

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

Head Of Account	December 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	% Variation from Budget
Chief Executive	4,292	4,237	-55	5,674	5,623	-53	-0.93
Human Resources	830	811	-19	1,111	1,078	-33	-2.97
Legal and Democratic Services	1,615	1,667	52	2,121	2,167	46	2.17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,737</b>	<b>6,715</b>	<b>-22</b>	<b>8,906</b>	<b>8,868</b>	<b>-40</b>	<b>-0.45</b>



**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.

Delivery of a balanced budget is subject to the potential pressures in section 7 of this report being effectively 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  
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**ROTHERHAM MBC  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE DECEMBER 09																		
EXPENDITURE/INCOME TO DATE (As at 11th January 2010)												NET PROJECTED OUT-TURN						
Last Reported Projected Net Out-turn £000	Service Division	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(+)/Under(-) spend £000	Revised Financial RAG Status	* Note	
		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								
(47)	Directorate Office	694	668	-26	-122	-145	-23	572	523	-49	762	703	(59)	0	(59)	G		
0	Communications & Marketing Team	467	664	197	0	-193	-193	467	471	4	623	626	3	0	3	G		
(4)	Community Engagement and Research Team	425	416	-9	-15	-27	-12	410	389	-21	546	541	(5)	0	(5)	G		
(10)	Performance and Quality	263	269	6	-26	-34	-8	237	235	-2	316	306	(10)	0	(10)	G		
(20)	Policy and External Affairs	259	259	0	-35	-47	-12	224	212	-12	299	279	(20)	0	(20)	G		
0	Partnership Team	143	209	66	-64	-130	-66	79	79	0	106	106	0	0	0	G		
27	Scrutiny & Member Support	1931	2012	81	-50	-106	-56	1,881	1,906	25	2,504	2,542	38	0	38	G		
0	Members Development	24	24	0	0	0	0	24	24	0	32	32	0	0	0	G		
0	Infrastructure & Corp Initiative Bud.	398	398	0	0	0	0	398	398	0	486	486	0	0	0	G		
(36)	Human Resources	882	1,141	259	-52	-330	-278	830	811	-19	1,111	1,078	(33)	0	(33)	G		
50	Legal and Democratic Services	2,569	2,991	422	-954	-1,324	-370	1,615	1,667	52	2,121	2,167	46	0	46	G		
(40)	<b>TOTAL CEX DIRECTORATE</b>	8,055	9,051	996	(1,318)	(2,336)	(1,018)	6,737	6,715	(22)	8,906	8,868	(40)	0	(40)			

**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2010</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Reducing agency costs by setting up an internal Talent Pool</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executives and RBT</b>

## **5. Summary**

This paper seeks to update Cabinet Member on the decision by SLT to introduce an internal Talent Pool in order to reduce the cost of sourcing temporary employees from external agencies. It is hoped that potential savings for the Council and 2010 Rotherham Ltd combined of between £50k to £80k per annum could be achieved in relation to administrative and clerical staff.

Following initial concentration on sourcing administrative and clerical staff, the scope for expanding the operations of the Talent Pool to encompass other occupational categories will be actively explored. If such expansion could be achieved the savings will be increased.

The Talent Pool will also become a focus for deployment of employees around the Council both in response to the outcomes of service restructuring and changing service priorities which challenge the Council to more effectively allocate employees with appropriate skills and experience to areas of demand.

The VFM calculation shown later in the report demonstrates that the cost per hour for admin and clerical staff will be reduced from £11.66 to £9.80, an average saving of £1.86 per hour as well as improving the quality of the staff available.

## **6. Recommendations**

**Cabinet Member is asked to:**

- 1. Support the proposal to set up a Talent Pool**
- 2. Agree that Service Managers should first attempt to source temporary administrative and clerical employees via the Talent Pool.**
- 3. Agree that future consideration be given to extending the scope of the Talent Pool to include other employment categories.**
- 4. Endorse the concept of using the Talent Pool as a focus for effective deployment of existing staff within the Council.**

**5. Agree that the initial set up costs of the Talent Pool (£9,859) and annual systems support charge (£305pa) to be met from charges levied for redeployment of staff.**

**6. That service standards for operation of the talent pool be agreed between Strategic HR and the HRP Service.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

### 7.1 Background

Strategic HR requested RBT (CR1263) to design a new service that would provide temporary placement of employees in order to reduce spending on external agencies and improve the scope for redeploying existing staff within the Council.

RBT have provided a formal response to the request which is available if required. A summary of the response re the set up and management of a Talent Pool is given below.

### 7.2 “Talent Pool” proposal

RBT propose that temporary staff be provided from a “Talent Pool” that will be sourced from:

- External recruitment
- Internal placements and secondments
- Part time workers
- Public Sector partners

This will provide a regular service to managers in RMBC by providing temporary employees from external workers, temporary internal placements and secondments, and will enhance the role currently provided in respect the redeployment of internal employees.

The Talent Pool will be a vehicle which can utilise activities currently underway to map the skills of the workforce to better deploy employees to meet changing demands and critical gaps in service. Ultimately the Talent Pool could use skills mapping data to identify employees with consultancy skills which could lead to a decline in the use of more costly external consultants.

The set up costs have been kept to a minimum (£9,859), there would also be an annual systems support charge of £305.

The on-going cost of operating the service is fee based and it is recommended those who use the service pay for it.

As part of this proposal RBT will:

- Attract external candidates to the talent pool
- Place workers as requested
- Ensure a social dimension to recruitment to the talent pool
- Utilise skills within the existing workforce in the talent pool
- Develop a register of part-time workers
- Develop links with public sector partners
- Interface with the qualification and skills database

Details are provided at Appendix 1 but it perhaps worth noting that the social dimension to the talent pool would involve targeting communities of interest to

encourage diversity in the cohort of available workers and to encourage the use of apprenticeships and positive action placements (cadetships) to meet demands for supply of labour. In respect of linkages with external partners, a longer term piece of work would be to explore the potential to both source expertise from partners to meet demands in Rotherham Council and to circulate details of surplus staff to partners to widen the scope for redeployment.

### 7.3 RBT fees for the Talent Pool service

Placement fees	Price
Placement of external workers (casual engagement of up to 12 weeks)	12.5% on hourly/daily rate with on-costs
Placement of external workers in temporary contracts (extending beyond 12 weeks)	6% of monthly salary for up to 12 months (no fee thereafter)
Placement of internal part time employees	12.5% on hourly/daily rate with on-costs
Placement of internal part time employees in temporary contracts (extending beyond 12 weeks)	6% of monthly salary for up to 12 months (no fee thereafter)
Placement of redeployees	6% of monthly salary for up to 12 months (no fee thereafter)*
Placement of secondees	6% of monthly salary for up to 12 months (no fee thereafter)**

The % fees will be reviewed annually at the start of each financial year from 2010/11. Basic hourly rates will be increased on an annual basis in line with any nationally agreed pay award. There are no additional fees on top of those set out in the above table, for instance 'introduction fees' are not payable. Holiday pay and any statutory sick pay entitlements are covered by the % fee. After 12 weeks in an assignment any continuing employment will be on the basis of substantive RMBC terms and conditions i.e. assimilation to a temporary appointment. Workers do not receive any pay when not on assignment.

\* It is important to note that fees in respect of the first 50 instances of redeployment will not be retained by RBT but will instead be used to offer a limited number of apprenticeships and/or positive action placements (cadetships). This is based on the fact that historically RBT HRP have been resourced to manage 50 redeployments per year (based on previous activity levels). A fee for redeployment is necessary to cover the costs of additional HR staff required to deal with the anticipated higher number of redeployees resulting from further drives for service efficiencies in the face of budget pressures. It is proposed that the initial set up costs of the Talent Pool and annual service charge be met from these funds.

\*\* There is no activity allowance in terms of secondees because the baseline for this area is 0 as HRP are not currently undertaking this activity.

## 7.4 Value for money

### Fees – Duttons v RBT Talent Pool approach

The majority of clerical and admin agency staff are employed on Duttons Grade 3 and are used to fill basic Band C clerical roles. The rates of pay quoted below are based on 08/09 rates as at the time of writing an increase in the Duttons rates is pending but not yet known. These figures therefore provide the best like for like comparison.

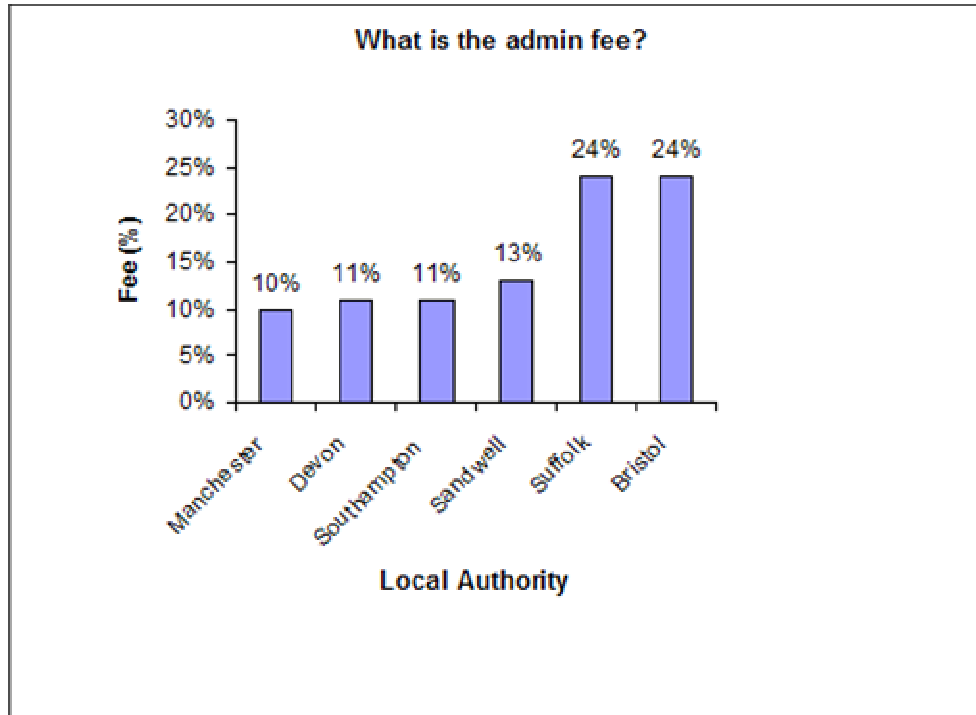
Supplier	Cost per hour
<b>Agency clerical staff from Duttons</b> (including the cost of procurement savings)	<b>£11.66</b>
<b>Clerical staff from RBT's Talent Pool</b>	<b>£9.80</b>
<b>Saving</b>	<b>£1.86 (16%)*</b>

**\*An element of the procurement savings currently accrued by RBT in respect of the Duttons contract are returned to the Council as part of profit sharing arrangements. Therefore this saving could be argued to be reduced by 33% to £1.25**

Further details are attached at Appendix 2

### Benchmarked fees

Comparisons with other Councils demonstrate the proposed level of admin fee for the new service are upper quarter in that elsewhere placement fees range from 10% to 24% for externally recruited temporary employees. Detailed benchmark data is presented in the table below:



### **Agency Workers Directive**

RMBC currently recruit agency resource through a master vendor contract with Duttons International. The rates of pay used by Duttons are not in line with RMBC's pay and grading policies, this is a practice that will be unlawful following the implementation of the EU Agency Workers Directive in the UK (possibly in 2010/2011). RMBC will be under pressure to implement policies that accord with the regulations before they enter statute.

The charges for the proposed Talent Pool service represent a significant saving against agency fees and this saving will increase once the new Regulations are implemented.

### **Quality assurance**

Value for money would also be enhanced because staff placed via the new service will be provided as quality assured, inducted and have relevant RMBC awareness training. Candidates into the talent pool will be interviewed and tested and will work through the Council's e-induction and core e-learning packages at Millside which should allow the Council and 2010 Rotherham to see an improvement in the calibre of workers supplied.

## **8. Finance**

### **The cost of temporary Admin & Clerical staff**

Assuming all clerical staff currently supplied by Duttons had/will come through the Talent Pool the following savings would accrue:



Year	Annual Spend (Existing Arrangements)	Savings through Talent
2008/09 actual	£643k	£69k
2009/10 forecast	£500k	£53.6k
2010/11 forecast	£300K	£32.2k

- Figures above assume a Grade 3/Band C comparison provides an average saving
- Savings have been reduced by 33% to take account of procurement saving element that would no longer be passed back to the Council.

It should be noted that the above figures include agency supply to 2010 Rotherham Ltd, the split between the Council and 2010 being approximately 50/50.

### All agency spend

A medium term objective would be to seek to expand the scope of the Talent Pool by seeking to source other occupational categories beyond administrative and clerical workers. In the long term we could seek to source all agency workers from the Talent Pool.

Applying the same percentage savings demonstrated by the admin and clerical staff shows a potential saving of £512k across both the Council and 2010. This is based on the full Council and 2010 spend for 2008/09 including off master contract spend which equated to £3.2 million. To achieve this level of saving all temporary staff would have to be sourced through the talent pool which is unrealistic. There are always likely to be instances where specialist staff will have to be sourced from outside of the Talent Pool. The following table shows savings that would accrue by percentage. (These figures do not take account of the lost share of procurement savings previously referred to):

Percentage employees placed via the Talent Pool	10%	25%	30%	50%	60%	75%	80%	100%
Saving	£51k	£128k	£153k	£256K	£307K	£384K	£409k	£512k

## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

The capacity of Talent Pool will be built up over a six month implementation period to ensure consistency and quality of supply. During this time external agencies will continue to be used to ensure there is no loss of service to RMBC customers.

After implementation external agencies will continue to be used to source technical and expert staff and to cope with excess demand.

Continued use of non compliant/unauthorised agencies both increases the cost to RMBC and the very significant risk of not complying with the Asylum & Immigration Act and employment law.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda**

The ability to source effective temporary staff is a vital component of successful workforce planning in order to satisfy short needs and meet fluctuations in customer demand cost efficiently.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

RBT response to CR1263

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No.	RMBC key requirements	RBT provision	RBT service
1.	<b>Attract external candidates to the talent pool</b>	<p>RBT will attract and maintain a register of external candidates to cover a wide range of functions to supply alternative resources to those services which commonly make use of additional agency resources.</p> <p>Details of the candidates selected will be held on the register and be available to be employed by RMBC.</p>	<p>Candidates will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sifted with reference to core competences</li> <li>• Invited to a generic Assessment Centre</li> <li>• Asked for references when successful</li> <li>• Invited to an induction session</li> <li>• Provided with access to internal online e-learning resources, ensuring that they are able to perform to a high standard</li> <li>• Maintained in Talent Pool when successful, including contact and briefing</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Placement of workers</b>	<p>RBT will seek initial placements for Clerical and Admin posts.</p> <p>Demand in other areas will be reviewed and the remit of the service expanded over the six months implementation phase</p>	<p>To place candidates the HR &amp; Payroll Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with departments/services to raise awareness of the new service</li> <li>• Receive requests from user departments and make a match</li> <li>• Offer candidate for immediate employment with RMBC (or as required)</li> <li>• Charge a placement fee</li> <li>• Gather post-assignment references</li> <li>• Update individual details re strengths and weaknesses</li> </ul>
3.	<b>Ensure a social dimension to recruitment to the talent pool</b>	<p>RBT will help provide opportunities for under represented groups such as Black and Minority Ethnic people and people with disabilities</p> <p>This element of the CR would be implemented in phase 2, commencing after approval in January 2010 in conjunction with Strategic HR.</p>	<p>Introduce cadetship opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link in with existing schemes and initiatives to offer support in placing individuals</li> <li>• Work with Strategic HR and partner agencies to identify appropriate needs and opportunities</li> <li>• Integrate individuals on, or successfully completing, placements within the appropriate talent pools</li> <li>• Consider a reduced, deferred, or sponsored initial placement fee</li> </ul>

4.	<b>Utilise skills within the existing workforce in the talent pool</b>	<p>RBT will develop a talent pool to utilise skills within the existing workforce to achieve deployment of staff across the Council to cover peaks in work demands and/or specific projects.</p> <p>This element of the CR will be implemented in phase 2, from approval in January 2010, allowing time for the client to consider and identify the type of opportunities that it would wish to make available and the areas of RMBC from which it would seek to attract secondees.</p>	<p>RBT will create a “Secondment Opportunities” section of the website to be operated as required by the client/Directorates</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to how to widen the skills-base of employees from areas of RMBC that are considered lower priority and from where redeployment is considered beneficial.</p>
5.	<b>Develop a register of part-time workers</b>	<p>RBT will develop and maintain a register of part-time workers willing to be considered for deployment to work additional hours (at plain time rates) in areas matched with their skills and requirements.</p> <p>This is considered a priority element by the client and will be implemented within phase 1</p>	<p>RBT will advertise opportunities for part time staff on an internal jobs bulletin distributed via the Intranet and by line managers.</p> <p>In addition and subject to further discussion with Strategic HR mailings can be sent directly to part time employees in identified occupations/locations</p>
6.	<b>Develop links with public sector partners</b>	<p>RBT will help to develop links with public sector partners to increase the scope for drawing experience from partner agencies to cover peaks in work demands and/or specific projects.</p> <p>This element of the CR will be implemented in phase 2, from approval in January 2010, allowing time for the client to work with the Resourcing Team to identify the range of circumstances, opportunities and organisations that it would wish to be covered.</p>	<p>Work with Strategic HR to develop appropriate contacts/ networks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach in principle and agree secondment mechanisms</li> <li>• Develop e-mail mailing lists of contacts</li> <li>• Send secondment opportunity details by e-mail, for cascade in partner organisations, with link to details on our RMS Website</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Interface with the qualification and skills database</b>	<p>RBT will interface this work with the project to develop a qualification and skills database.</p> <p>This element refers to work currently being undertaken</p>	<p>Need to monitor the development of functionality in respect of qualification and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May need to respond and implement in phases as functionality becomes available</li> <li>• Update records as fields are implemented</li> </ul>

## Duttons v RBT Talent Pool

Duttons Agency				Talent Pool					
Duttons Grade equivalent	Duttons rate per hour	Procurement savings per hour	Current charge per hour	RMBC Grade	RMBC rate per hour	Holiday/SA supplement	NI Contribution	RBT Fee	Talent Pool charge per hour
					Min	12.7%	12.8%	12.5%	
Admin & Clerical – Grade 1	£8.39	£1.59	£9.98						
Admin & Clerical – Grade 2	£9.47	£1.59	£11.06	Band B	6.54	0.83	0.84	0.82	9.03
Admin & Clerical – Grade 3	£10.07	£1.59	£11.66	Band C	7.1	0.90	0.91	0.89	9.80
Above Grade 3	£14.66	£1.59	£16.25	Band D	8.07	1.02	1.03	1.01	11.14

Note

Agency clerical are employed on Duttons Grade 3 to undertake basic Band C clerical jobs  
2008/09 rates used

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Resources</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2010</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB)</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young Peoples Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

On 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009 the Apprenticeships, Children, Skills and Learning Bill received Royal Assent. This formally established the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) as a statutory body. The SSSNB will agree a pay and conditions framework for Support Staff in the maintained School sector. Subject to ratification by the Secretary of State, agreements will apply to all maintained schools in England.

The role and remit of the SSSNB will have significant implications for School Support Staff.

### **6. Recommendations**

**6.1 That Cabinet Member note the changes which will arise from the remit of the new School Support Staff Negotiating Body.**

**6.2 That consultation with Schools and Directorates containing affected staff groups continue on an ongoing basis with regards to the implementation of the new Body.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

### 7.1 Background

The new Schools Support Staff Negotiating Body has been established as a Statutory Body by legislation.

The SSSNB will agree a pay and conditions framework for Support Staff in the maintained School sector. Subject to ratification by the Secretary of State, agreements will apply to all maintained schools in England.

Under the terms of the bill the SSSNB will cover:

Any person employed under a contract of employment:

(a) by the governing body of a school maintained by a local authority in England;

*[this is intended to cover support staff in foundation and voluntary aided schools where the governing body is the employer]*

or

(b) by a local authority in England to work wholly in a school or schools maintained by local authority in England.

*[this is intended to cover all community and voluntary controlled schools, maintained in nursery schools, and pupil referral units (short stay schools)]*

Teachers will not be covered, nor will support staff employed under contracts incorporating the agreements of any of the following: the JNC for Youth and Community Workers, the Soubury Committee and the JNC for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees. Any other employee whose contract of employment provides for them to work wholly in schools, including those employed by the local authority's DSO/DLO, would be included. There will be a facility for the parties locally to refer jointly to the SSSNB any questions or differences of interpretation concerning the inclusion or otherwise of particular employees.

#### Membership of the SSSNB

The Employers's Side comprises representatives from the Local Government Employers, the Foundation and Aided Schools National Association (FASNA), the Church of England Education Division and the Catholic Education Service for England and Wales. The recognised Trade Unions are UNISON, GMB and Unite. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Training and Development Agency (TDA) are non-voting members.

The Secretary of State has appointed Philip Ashmore, who has considerable experience of industrial relations and is a member of the NHS Pay Review Body, as Independent Chair. His role is to receive and manage delivery of the matters referred to the SSSNB by the Secretary of State, chair meetings of the SSSNB, facilitate formal and informal discussions between the parties, act as a conduit to the Secretary of State, and ensure that the SSSNB has regard to government policy and considerations of the wider social partnership.

The SSSNB is required to negotiate and seek to reach agreement on matters referred to it by the Secretary of State though the Employers' and Trade Union Sides are also free to bring other matters to the negotiating table. The Secretary of State's first referral letter was issued on 29<sup>th</sup> July and can be found at <http://www.ome.uk.com/>

The referral letters asks the SSSNB to focus on the following initially:

- The production of a core contract of employment to cover remuneration, duties and working time.
- The design of national job role profiles to cover core school support staff roles.
- The development and production of a method for converting those role profiles into a salary structure.
- A strategy that will effectively implement the national pay and conditions framework in all schools maintained by local authorities in England including a methodology to manage both transition and steady state.

The Secretary of State has asked the SSSNB to submit to him any agreements on these matters that it has reached by 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010. There would then be a period when the Secretary of State would consider the agreements before deciding whether to endorse them or refer them back to the SSSNB for reconsideration. In any event the earliest that any agreement could realistically be required to be implemented at local level (bearing in mind the likely need to give contractual notice of variation of contract) would be 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010, and even this seems ambitious.

Both the SSSNB and the Employers' Side will give local authorities adequate notice of the likely implementation timetable but at this stage, apart from keeping governing bodies, head teachers and support staff aware of developments, there is no specific action required locally in preparation for implementation.

In the light of the Secretary of State's referral letter the following two SSSNB Working Groups have been established and are meeting frequently:

- Core Contract and Working Year Working Group
- Role Profiles and Job Measurement Working Group

The joint circular issued in April included advice to the effect that local authorities should continue to include school support staff in local pay and grading reviews until advised otherwise. That remains the position.

### **7.2 Current Response Within the Council**

Consultations with Support Staff Trade Unions in Rotherham has been ongoing in relation to these issues and a detailed briefing paper, largely comprising of the same detail as this report is being prepared to send out to all Schools. The Human Resources Schools Advice and Guidance Team will be advising and assisting Schools on issues of implementation as they arise.

Staff from Council DSO/DLO operations, specifically the Cleaning and Catering functions will also be within the remit of this new body and the Human Resources Business Partners from the different Directorates involved will liaise to ensure a consistent approach is taken with regard to consultation and implementation of outcomes.



## **8. Finance**

Part of the SSSNB remit will be to consider the conversion of new role profiles into a salary structure; this is likely to include a new Job Evaluation process.

The outcomes of the process may well involve financial implications for Schools but they are not known at this time.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Having recently undertaken detailed restructure work in response to the Workforce Remodelling agenda and the Single Status agenda, Schools are likely to need considerable HR support to implement the outcome of the SSSNB review of the Support Staff roles and pay & grading.

Legal opinion is being taken nationally to determine the scale of any potential risk of challenge under Equal Pay across the rest of the Council workforce.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Responding to changing national terms and conditions for groups of staff forms part of the Council's Workforce Strategy. Ensuring that terms and conditions are consistently applied and interpreted supports a stable employment relations climate and the efficient and effective management of the Council's workforce.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Further detail on the SSSNB can be found in the SSSN section of the Office of Manpower Economics' website at <http://www.ome.uk.com/>

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**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Resources</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2010</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>RBT Performance Report for December 2009</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Financial Services</b>

**5. Summary**

This report summarises RBT's performance against contractual measures and key service delivery issues for December 2009 across the areas of:

- Customer Access
- Human Resources & Payroll
- ICT
- Procurement
- Revenues & Benefits

**6. Recommendations**

The Cabinet Member for Resources is asked to:

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

## 7. Proposals and Details

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

### 7.1 Customer Access

#### 7.1.1 *Overall Performance*

All performance targets were achieved in December 2009.

The average waiting time for face to face customers has significantly improved, with 95.5% of customers being seen within 15 minutes. The year to date position for this annual Strategic Measure now stands at 91.59%

Revenues and Benefits customer contact is improving with a reduction to 15.49% of telephone calls being abandoned. Waiting times for Revenues and Benefits telephone customers achieved 44.10% of calls answered in 21 seconds.

#### 7.1.2 *Revenues & Benefits Business Process Reengineering (BPR)*

Revised performance measures have now been agreed in principle. Subject to RBT concluding any remaining issues with Trade Unions, it is expected that the BPR work will now progress.

#### 7.1.3 *Complaints*

Two complaints were received during December with both closed as upheld. Both complaints related to the cashier service and appropriate actions have been taken to prevent recurrence of the issues.

#### 7.1.4 *Tell Us Once*

The service is receiving a number of requests for site visits which need to be managed to avoid impacting business as usual. Development of an electronic information pack has been proposed to minimise the impact of supporting the national roll-out of the programme.

#### 7.1.5 *Aston Joint Service Centre*

Options for staffing the centre are being developed including the incorporation of cashiers within the wider customer service centre network. Once complete these will be issued to the Customer Access Client for consideration.

#### 7.1.6 *MacMillan Welfare Rights Project*

An official launch event for the project has been scheduled for 29.01.10 at the Innovation Centre with Kevin Barron MP attending. To date, the service has received excellent feedback from both service users and the funding providers.

## 7.2 Human Resources and Payroll (HR+P)

### 7.2.1 *Overall Performance*

All performance targets were achieved in December 2009.

### 7.2.2 *Current Projects*

Testing on the mileage system rewrite commenced in December in preparation for the Version 9 YourSelf release.

The technical development to allow for automating timesheet information to PSE (the HR+P System) is now complete. However, due to the early Christmas payrolls and the forthcoming school recess further roll out of this functionality was put on hold until the New Year.

Refreshed HR+P A-Z intranet pages were launched in December. All guidance notes have been reviewed and updated where applicable with a new look to the document links allowing easier access. Early feedback from Managers and employees is very positive.

Annual leave entitlements were published via YourSelf in December. Those employees who receive an annual leave entitlement based on the year's average hours will have to wait for this information until all hours for December have been processed.

The Service Centre continued with its delivery of training courses for employees using VOIP telephony during December. It is anticipated that these courses will be delivered to 3,000 employees over a period of 2-3 years. The forthcoming accommodation moves are linked to the roll out of VOIP training.

### 7.2.3 *Payroll Activity*

Maltby Academy was set up on PSE as a new organisation in readiness for transfer of employees from Maltby Comprehensive School to the new Academy in January.

The early production of payrolls ahead of the Christmas Holiday closure was successfully completed. Weekly paid employees received two week's estimated pay along with their normal wage on 17 December with the schools monthly pay date brought forward to 18.12.09. All Council employees received their December pay prior to the Christmas holiday. Adjustments to estimated pay will take place during January with adjustments to the weekly payroll being paid over two consecutive pay dates.

Employee details for those connected to the Ringway TUPE transfer were received prior to the holiday closure and 66 employees are due to be transferred from Ringway to the RMBC payroll in January. The payroll team worked hard to achieve this given the short timescale for processing these employee records together with the accommodation move and Christmas pay adjustments.

The Craft pay award new rates and arrears of pay will be paid in January.

#### 7.2.4 *Future Projects*

Version 9 of YourSelf is due to be released in February and will include further organisation chart views as well as the mileage rewrite. Version 10 of YourSelf is due in June 2010 and will include Performance and Development Review recording facilities and a new facility for online reporting

The Orgplus development is progressing with the team working towards a February provision to Managers via Version 9 of YourSelf. This new software will facilitate the automation of establishment changes but also give some basic management information in an easy to understand chart format. Internal processes will continue to be reviewed as this project continues. This review will include direct report lines amendment, the current DSP process and major restructure arrangements.

As part of the transfer of the Millside facility, RBT are to provide a front of house reception service; it is hoped the work on this will be complete by mid January. A formal booking service will operate from January 2010 for all training room allocation at Millside.

### 7.3 ICT

#### 7.3.1 *Overall Performance*

Achievement of performance targets for the ICT Service in December 2009 is currently being reviewed by the ICT Client as there were several instances of downtime affecting critical systems during the period not reflected in the performance reports from RBT.

#### 7.3.2 *Accommodation Changes*

Eric Manns re-opened in December; the old Siemens telephony switch has been removed and the building now has VOIP throughout and a wireless network to enable flexible working.

The ICT decommissioning of the Town Hall and Grove Road is now complete. RBT ICT and EDS have been working with an external company to design the audio-visual infrastructure for the refurbished Town Hall.

Several accommodation moves saw staff moving out of Norfolk in to Civic and Bailey and out of Crinoline and in to Norfolk. VOIP continues to be rolled out in Norfolk, Civic and Bailey to support WorkSmart. In the 6 months to December 2009, 620 laptops were deployed.

A second network link for Doncaster Gate went live in December. The new link is routed via the Innovation Centre and improves the resilience of Doncaster Gate's ICT.

#### 7.3.3 *New Data Centre/New Building*

The ICT specification for the New Civic Building was completed in December and has been passed to the building contractors. The design includes plans for the Council's new Data Centre which will be located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the new building.

#### 7.3.4 *ICT Strategy Mid-point Review*

A report on the mid-point progress of the 2008-2011 RMBC ICT Strategy went to SMT in December and is going to Cabinet and PSOC in January. The report showed that good progress has been made and that the ICT Strategy implementation is being delivered on time and within budget by the Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Team.

#### 7.3.5 *Complaints*

No complaints were received in December.

### 7.4 Procurement

#### 7.4.1 *Overall Performance*

All performance targets were achieved in December 2009 with the exception of PO6 (% of orders placed against electronic catalogue framework agreements) which achieved only 17.85% against a target of 19%. Performance is expected to increase to normal levels during January.

#### 7.4.3 *BVPI8*

Former BVPI8 achieved 95.49% in December 2009 which is an improvement on the December 2008 performance of 94%. Average performance to date stands at 94.38%.

#### 7.4.4 *Savings Performance*

Procurement savings for the month of November 2009 were £216,195.

#### 7.4.5 *Addressable Spend Tracking*

Addressable spend figures for December 2009 are as follows:

<b>Savings in month of November</b>	<b>Savings year to date</b>	<b>Estimated Savings to year end</b>	<b>Addressable Spend in December</b>	<b>Addressable Spend Year to Date</b>
£216,195	£2,341,415	£2,913,000	£312,000	£20,710,000

Work is currently ongoing to look at the procurement model.

### 7.5 Revenues and Benefits

#### 7.5.1 *Council Tax*

At the end of December 2009 the Council Tax Collection rate stood at 83.12%. Technically this is 1.62% down on the same position in 2008/09 but the situation is

distorted by the comparative timing of Direct Debit runs over the Christmas period. Once the impact of this is factored into the calculation, then collection was down by 0.34%. RBT continued to work overtime during December and as a result of this, and the strict recovery timetable which remains in place, it is hoped that any shortfall in collection compared with the previous year will be addressed by the end of March 2010. The target for 2009/10 continues to be 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: -

<b>Council Tax Collection – Recovery Procedures</b>		
<b>Documents Issued</b>	<b>At December 2009</b>	<b>At December 2008</b>
Reminders	34,755	36,021
Summonses	10,572	10,776
Liability Orders	9,140	8,700

The total number of Council Tax Liability Orders that had been referred to the bailiff in the financial year up to the end of December 2009 was 3,079. Currently 21.8% of the total bailiff caseload (i.e. not just those referred in 2009/10) with Council Tax arrears are making regular payments by arrangement whilst a further 8.2% have had their cases put on hold at the request of the council. This may be due to the intervention of third parties such as advice agencies or because the Council has been made aware of additional information which may have a bearing on the case.

The average number of days taken to action a Council Tax Change of Circumstance was 14.83 days at the end of December 2009. This is slightly above the target of 14 days (smaller is better) and down on the position at the end of November when the average was 12.45 days. RBT are continuing to work overtime and it is hoped that this will start to be reflected in the performance figure in due course.

#### 7.1.1 NNDR

NNDR collection performance stood at 88.79% at the end of December 2009, which is, technically, 0.87% down on the same point in 2008/09. However, as with Council Tax, the situation is distorted by the comparative timing of Direct Debit runs over the Christmas period and, in reality, performance is comparable with the corresponding point in 2008/09. As previously the NNDR collection figure has been adjusted to incorporate the affect of the NNDR Deferral Scheme.

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

<b>NNDR Collection – Recovery Procedures</b>		
<b>Documents Issued</b>	<b>At December 2009</b>	<b>At December 2008</b>
Reminders	3,878	3,679
Summons	1,040	1,135
Liability Orders	705	644

The total number of Business Rates Liability Orders that had been referred to the bailiff in the financial year up to the end of December 2009 was 368. Currently 12.7% of the total bailiff caseload (i.e. not just those referred in 2009/10) with NNDR arrears are making regular payments by arrangement whilst a further 6.6% have had their cases put on hold at the request of the Council.

With reference to the NNDR Deferral Scheme, the number of new applications is now starting to diminish. At the end of December 2009 there were 340 live cases, allowing deferral of £467,291, whereas at the end of November 2009 there were 329 live cases covering a deferred total of £465,299.

### *7.2.3 Other Service Measures*

Performance against the remaining Strategic and Operational Measures continues to be satisfactory although the average time taken to process HB/CTB New Claims and Change Events remains the subject of closer scrutiny. The year to date figure, as at 2 January 2010, was 12.90 days against the target of 15%. Whilst this is only a fractional increase from the 12.51 days reported in respect of the period up to 22 November 2009 and is within target the direction of travel on this measure is being closely monitored. RBT are continuing to work overtime and it is hoped that this will start to be reflected in the performance figure in due course.

Performance in respect of the number of changes in HB/CTB entitlements within the year also continues to be an area of concern although, once again, it is hoped that the overtime and additional hours that have been made available will improve the situation.

## **8. Finance**

The contract with RBT includes a service credit arrangement. The effect of this 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.

HRO2 failed in November resulting in potential penalties of £109.45; this measure achieved target in December giving RBT the opportunity to claw back the penalty by over-performing on this measure.



PO6 failed in December resulting in potential penalties of £102.67; however RBT have the opportunity to claw back the penalty by over-performing on this measure

**9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The Transformation and Strategic Partnerships 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 significant role in the delivery of key national and local performance indicators. The partnership also supports Council directorates in their service delivery.

**11. Background Papers and Consultation**

RBT performance reports for December 2009.

**Contact Name:**

Mark Gannon  
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Customer Access Measure	Ref	Target	Oct	Nov	Dec	Status	Comments
Customer Access Overall Performance							
Cost per Transaction (F2F)	CAO1				15.33		Quarterly measure; target to be used from next month.
Cost per Transaction (Telephony)	CAO1				4.62		Quarterly measure; information for monitoring only.
Versatility Measure	CAO2		92.73	94.09	94.85		New measure; target to be used from next month.
First Contact Resolution by Channel (F2F)	CAO3	97.5	100	100	100		
First Contact Resolution by Channel (Telephony)	CAO3	95	95.71	100	98.57		
Average Call Quality Assessment	CAO4	95	97.39	97.01	97		
% of Contact not Abandoned (F2F)	CAO5	85	99.74	99.82	99.94		
% of Contact not Abandoned (Telephony)	CAO5	90	96.26	96.08	95.04		
Complaints Handling	CAO7	90	100	100	100		Reported quarterly with additional information for tracking.
Provision of Management 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	Oct	Nov	Dec	Status	Comments
Accuracy of Contracts	HRO1	95	100	100	100	★	
Accuracy of Payment	HRO2	99.5	99.85	98.43	99.92	★	
% of Enquiries Resolved at First Point of Contact	HRO3	80	94.42	96.76	91.13	★	
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 Management 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	Oct	Nov	Dec	Status	Comments
% Availability of Website	ICTO1	99	99.96	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	97.35	98.09	97.11	★	
% ICT Change Requests Completed in Agreed Timescales	ICTO5		99.58	96.86	100	★	Target being finalised.
% Complex Change Requests Completed to Agreed Specification	ICTO6	85				⚠	Measure dependant on resolution of Cross Cutting Measure CCS1 which is currently being negotiated.
% Calls Fully Closed at First Point of Contact	ICTO7	25	37.75	38.37	93.94		
% Print Jobs Completed as Agreed	ICTO8	95	100	100	100	★	
Average Time Taken to Answer Calls	ICTO10	85	93.7	93.32	93.94	★	

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



Procurement Measure	Ref	Target	Oct	Nov	Dec	Status	Comments
% Catalogued Goods or Services Delivered within Lead Times	PO1	88.72	93.08	90.31	88.95		
% Cheque Requests Processed on Next Available Payment Run	PO2	98.46	99.74	99.69	99.84		
% Undisputed Invoices Input within 25 calendar days	PO3	99.22	99.71	99.36	99.6		
% non-eRFQ Open Requisitions Consolidated into Purchase Orders	PO4	75	84.67	91.93	91.5		
% Framework Agreements Risk Assessed for Impact on Local Economy	PO5	96			100		Quarterly measure.
% Orders Placed Against Electronic Catalogue	PO6	19	21.99	21.33	17.85		Impact is thought to be due to Christmas closedown with performance expected to improve in January.
% eRFQ Open Requisitions	PO7						Turnaround now agreed as 85% within 4 working days; nil return for October, November & December as there were no open requisitions.
% Framework Agreements Developed with consideration given to Sustainability	PO8	98	100	100	100		Quarterly measure.
Provision of Management 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	Oct	Nov	Dec	Status	Comments
Revs & Bens Overall Performance						?	
% Council Tax Collected	RBO1	97	65.14	78.34	83.12	?	Annual measure
% NNDR Collected	RBO2	98.50	69.58	78.76	88.79	?	Annual measure
Time Taken to Process HB/CTB New Claims and Change Events	RBO3	15	12.08	12.51	12.9	?	Annual measure
Number of Fraud Prosecutions & Sanctions per 1000 caseload	RBO4	4.25	3.84	4.52	4.98	?	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	0.19	0.23	0.26	?	Annual measure
Number of Changes in HB/CTB Entitlements within the year per 1000	RBO7		727.5	727.5	727.5	?	Annual measure
Level of LA Overpayments not to exceed LA Error Local Subsidy Threshold	RBO8	0.48	0.33	0.34	0.32	?	Annual measure
Total Amount of HB Overpayments recovered in period as % of HB Overpayments outstanding	RBO9	41	39.92	42.22	43.99	?	Annual measure
% New Benefit Claims Decided within 14 days of Receipt	RBO10	90.5			91.3	●	Quarterly measure based on cumulative performance over the three months.
Total Amount of HB Overpayments written off during the period as % of Total Amount of HB Overpayments	RBO11	6.99	1.91	1.91	2.29	?	Annual measure
% Applications for HB/CTB Reconsideration / Revision Actioned & Notified within 4 weeks	RBO12	75	87.71	86.14	88.28	?	Annual measure
% HB/CTB Appeals Submitted to the Tribunal Service in 4 weeks	RBO13	85	100	100	100	?	Annual measure
Provision of Management 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, 11th January, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Zoe Burke, Emma Hill, Rachel O'Neil, Mark Leese, Andrea Pearson, Stuart Purcell and Lisa Sadler.

**56. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9TH NOVEMBER, 2009**

**Agreed:-** (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2009, be agreed as a true record.

Arising from Minute No. 50 (Customer Satisfaction Questionnaires), Emma Hill reported that she had rung the 3 complainants that had had their complaints upheld or partially upheld. 1 had been straight forward and had been quite happy with how the process had taken place. The second complainant had taken the opportunity to discuss her other problems not related to her complaint and the third had already completed a survey.

Stuart Purcell, who had not been present at the last meeting, reported that NAS's return survey rate was very good. 1 of the survey questions specifically asked if they felt the issues had been resolved.

(2) That Stuart supply Rachel O'Neil with more detailed information on NAS's return rate to gain a clearer understanding of how effective the surveys were.

**57. DRAFT SIEBEL REGISTRY GUIDE FOR NEW USERS**

Further to Minute No. 54, Mark Leese circulated the above Guide which had been compiled to aide new users of Siebel.

He asked that any comments be fed to him as well as any omissions.

**58. COMPLAINT CATEGORY DEFINITIONS**

In accordance with Minute No. 53(2), Mark Leese submitted a copy of the complaint categories as follows:-

**Action of Staff**

- Staff attitude in delivering a service
- Staff error (i.e. data entry error)
- The refusal to deliver a service that the customer was entitled
- The failure of an employee to take action
- A failure to provide a service to which a customer is entitled

**Cost of Service**

- A complaint about the cost of a particular Service and for which a fee is charged

#### Delay in Service

- A delay in delivering a service within a reasonable amount of time or within any advertised Service standard

#### Lack of Information

- For instances where there has been a failure to provide information. If this is down to the omission of a member of staff then it should be categorised as actions of staff

#### Lack of Service

- The failure to provide a customer with a Service to which they were entitled (missed bin collections are initially classed as Service requests unless contact has already been made and not action)

#### Other

- Other types of complaints that do not fall into the above categories

#### Quality of Service

- Any issue with the level of Service provided, or lack of, by the Council as part of providing a Service to a customer
- Any issue with the working procedures of a Service which directly impacts on the Service provision to the customer
- Any issue over a Service, as opposed to individual, interpretation of a Council Policy
- This should not be used if other categories are deemed more appropriate

Mark reported that was he due to complete audits within Siebel which would include looking at how complaints had been categorised.

Discussion ensued with the following points raised:-

- It was suggested that it would be useful for the categories to be included in the Siebel guide.
- That another category be added to Siebel of “complaint outcome”

**Agreed:-** That the complaint categories circulated be used as the corporate categories for any complaints received.

## 59. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (1) Discussion took place on the number of complaints received with regard to gritting and missed bin collections due to the recent weather conditions.
- (2) It was noted that Q1 and 2 Corporate Complaints report would be



submitted to the next meeting.

- (3) Adam Hurst had been seconded to the NAS Policy Team. Stuart was covering all NAS complaints for the present time.
- (4) Business objects reports are currently not generic across Directorates and work is underway to agree corporate requirements. It was noted that a report would be submitted to the next meeting.

**Agreed:- That business object reports be included on the agenda for the next meeting.**

**60. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Agreed:-** That a further meeting be held on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, at 1.00 p.m. in Bailey 2, Bailey House.

**CUSTOMER ACCESS GROUP  
Monday, 18th January, 2010**

**Present:-**

Councillor Wyatt  
Zoe Burke  
Richard Garrad  
Rachel O'Neil  
Jasmine Speight

**In the Chair**

Children and Young People's Services  
Environment and Development Services  
Customer Access Client Manager  
Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

**51. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23RD NOVEMBER, 2009**

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd November, 2009, be approved as a correct record.

**52. CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE – CORPORATE REPORT & ONGOING ACCREDITATION**

Rachel O'Neil submitted the Ongoing Certification Strategy (A) and Strategic Review (B) report by EMQC.

**Strategic Review**

This report pulled together the 19 individual assessments across all the Services with the respective key findings and recommendations. The Council would be formally awarded with Customer Service Excellence the following week.

The report also highlighted corporately the 4 areas that were partially compliant and suggestions on areas for further development.

Although there were no surprises in the report and each Directorate had their own action plan to help resolve some of the issues raised, it contained a recommendation that there should be a corporate overview of customer satisfaction and how the Council implement customer satisfaction questionnaires.

Although there were no compliances + identified, some specific areas were highlighted that could act as exemplars.

The report would be submitted to the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet with proposals as to how move some of the issues forward.

Discussion ensued on the report:-

**Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

- There was a recommendation from the assessor that the surveys go through the CCI team to facilitate a corporate overview.
- Would this slow things down?
- The Council did not measure corporately how well it was doing with the surveys and no mechanism for pulling them altogether.

## Customer Care Training Programme

- Should the training be mandatory?
- Was there benchmarking as an Authority?
- Should it be lead corporately or by individual Services/Directorates?
- There were a number of different areas that potentially needed to be bench marked including the Corporate Charter Standards, performance across those areas which ought to be driven corporately as well as individual Services bench marking with other Councils.

## Ongoing Certification Strategy

The report set out 3 options:-

Option 1	Ongoing Certification Total over 3 years = £26,700	Basic Package
Option 2	Annual Review Total over 3 years £22,500	
Option 3	Internal Capacity Building £8,850 in year 1 and £5,100 in years 2 and 3	

Discussion ensued on the options:-

- Option 3 looked to be the cheapest but did not incorporate any costings for the staff time involved
- It would be the most intensive, costly and onerous as not only would staff be producing the documentation but would then conduct the reviews

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

(2) That the reports be submitted to the SLT and Cabinet together with a headline summary.

(3) That customer satisfaction surveys for new or renewed customers be submitted to the CCI team for consideration.

(4) That consideration be given to generic questions for inclusion in customer satisfaction surveys.

(5) That Cabinet be informed that the Group supported Option 1 Ongoing Certification.

### 53. CUSTOMER CHARTER

Further to Minute No. 47(2) of the previous meeting, Rachel O'Neil submitted a revised Customer Charter.

Discussion ensued on the feedback received from NAS and EDS:-

“We will not tolerate aggressive behaviour, bad language or racist, sexist and discriminatory comments”

- Suggest inclusion under the section headed “You can help us by”

“We will attend to you promptly when you are visiting any Council premises”

- Suggested inclusion of “with an appointment” not agreed as a customer would be dealt with anyway

“You can help us by”

- Delete the last bullet point regarding providing information in other formats and languages upon request

Agreed:- (1) That the Charter be revised in light of the above comments and submitted to the Communications and Marketing Panel.

(2) That the Council website be amended accordingly.

#### **54. VFM REVIEW OF LOCALITY SERVICES**

The Chairman reported that a working group, of which Rachel O’Neil, was a member, was looking at the value for money of all services delivered at localities.

A mapping exercise at Area Assembly level had been carried out but there was no real grasp as yet of what buildings were out there and how much it cost to run them. It had also become apparent that there was no single vision for locality based services; each Directorate had its own vision.

The group had decided to do focus on the 3 areas (the town centre and 2 Assemblies yet to be determined and agreed). It would be resourced by 3 members of staff (NAS, EDS and Financial Services) with experience of mapping. They would be given a 3 months timescale to understand the 3 areas and pull together recommendations for each.

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

#### **55. CORPORATE WEBSITE – SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

Rachel O’Neil requested that service level performance be fed through to Jon Ashton for inclusion on the website.

#### **56. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Customer Service Excellence

Richard Garrad asked if there was to be any acknowledgement of the

work staff had done within the Directorates?

Agreed:- That the matter be discussed about the Communications meeting to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> February.

**57. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, commencing at 1.00 p.m. to be held in Eric Manns Building.

**WEBSITE STRATEGY GROUP**  
**Monday, 18th January, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Jon Ashton, Pete Hayes, Tracy Holmes, Pete Lawrenson and Rachel O'Neil.

Apologies for absence were received from Myrian Berrada, Jane Evans and Jenny Vaughan.

**48. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16TH NOVEMBER, 2009**

Agreed:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2009, be agreed as a true record.

**49. WEBSITE IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

Jon Ashton gave a brief update on the implementation of the new website including:-

- The actual switch over had been delayed a couple of hours due to the adverse weather conditions and the website required for school closures etc.
- Issue with a small number of post codes on the search facility. Jadu was looking into it

Agreed:- That website update be included as a standing agenda item.

**50. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION (JANUARY TO DATE)**

Rachel O'Neil suggested that, now the new site was up and running, it would be worthwhile to compare current performance with the old site to ensure there was no deterioration in the number of people using it. The website now gave greater flexibility and the ability to pull management information off.

Early indications were very good with users being able to find what they wanted immediately. There was a link for users to notify if the search engine was not working; this was being used.

The ability to complete and submit forms had been used well and an increase in requests for benefit applications. It was still early days but it did indicate that users were finding the forms easily.

A paper was circulated with a number of statistics with the following highlighted:-

- This time last year there were £28,000 transactions carried out over the web; this currently stood at £48,000
- 50% of the users were using the Search facility as it was something

they were used to on Google

- Probably due to the adverse weather, the top search had been school closures
- As at 13<sup>th</sup> January there had been 66,783 page views compared to 31,443 in 2009

It was noted that an article was to be included in the February edition of Rotherham News which would include some of the usage statistics.

A satisfaction survey was to be included so it was more than just comments being collated.

Agreed:- That a wider press release be now launched.

## **51. FEEDBACK ON NEW SITE**

Rachel O'Neil reported that there had been very few comments on the new website which was a positive. What feedback there had been was really good.

There had been some comment on Key Choices who apparently split their properties into houses, flats and bungalows. This now synchronises with how they operate in the office and it was at the request of Keychoices. The possibility had also been raised with Jadu of viewing properties in their different categories or by area. Jadu was to come back with costs and the feasibility.

## **52. INTERACT FEATURES**

There would be constant tweaks to the website and Google search with customer feedback taken into account and applied.

There would not be a "frequently asked questions" section as on the old website; as a question came in to the website it would be updated to incorporate the query.

Currently, the website included a feature on the Imagination Library. In the week the website had been live, there had been 16 applicants. It was proposed to have a forward plan to promote events/initiatives etc. within Directorates e.g. half term activities.

It was also proposed that there would be a link to the member of staff featured on the home page telling their story and experience of working for the Council.

The Chairman suggested that Speak Up be included in any discussions.

Jon Ashton reported that some Galaxy sites had been identified and work was ongoing.

**53. NAS PERSONALISATION REQUIREMENTS**

Rachel O'Neil reported that herself and Jon Ashton had had discussions with NAS with regard to requirements there had to be on the website by October, 2010, to comply with the Personalisation agenda that Central Government had lead on. There had to be a website which contained a list of all Personalisation Services that people could apply for and also include customer comments and ratings around those Services.

It would be a significant piece of work and the website was not currently designed for that. NAS had been told to finalise their requirements but, because it was potentially on horizon, other Directorates were being asked to consider if there was anything they wanted to feed into the Personalisation agenda.

When there was more detail from NAS, it would be submitted to this Group to give it some steer.

**54. DIRECTORATE EDITORS**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2010, were noted.

**55. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to report.

**56. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2010, at 10.00 a.m. in Bailey House.