

CABINET

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

Date: Wednesday, 28 April 2010

Time: 10.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. Questions from Members of the Public
2. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
3. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th April, 2010 (copy supplied separately)
5. Update on "A Day in the Life of a Councillor" DVD (Pages 1 - 4)
 - Chief Executive to report.
6. Scrutiny Review - Breastfeeding for Rotherham - A Healthy Future (Pages 5 - 57)
 - Chief Executive to report.
7. Scrutiny Review - Corporate Parenting (Pages 58 - 89)
 - Chief Executive to report.
8. Supporting the Local Economy (Pages 90 - 97)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.
9. Local Government Reform – Duty to Respond to Petitions - Commencement and Council Scheme (Pages 98 - 113)
 - Chief Executive to report.
10. DCSF Progress Report (Pages 114 - 133)
 - Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services to report.

11. Children and Young People's Services Notice to Improve - Progress Update (Pages 134 - 147)
 - Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services to report.
12. Economic Downturn: One Year Later (Pages 148 - 171)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.
13. Proposed Revisions to the LDF Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference (Pages 172 - 179)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.
14. Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group (Pages 180 - 185)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.
15. Members' Training and Development Panel (Pages 186 - 190)
 - Chief Executive to report.
16. Exclusion of the Press and Public
The following items are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006) (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular individual (including the Council)):-
17. Discretionary Rate Relief Review (Pages 191 - 195)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.
18. Discretionary Rate Relief Review (Pages 196 - 201)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.
19. New Discretionary Rate Relief Top Up Applications (Pages 202 - 210)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.
20. Community Amateur Sports Clubs (Pages 211 - 213)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.
21. Discretionary Village Shop Rate Relief (Pages 214 - 216)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.
22. Section 49 Discretionary Hardship Rate Relief (Pages 217 - 220)
 - Strategic Director of Finance to report.

23. Land between 270 and 276 Wath Road, Brampton Bierlow (Pages 221 - 225)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

24. Land adjacent to 34 Munsbrough Lane, Munsbrough (Pages 226 - 231)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

25. Guest & Chrimes and Rotherham United Football Club (Pages 232 - 241)
 - Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services to report.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28 th April 2010
3.	Title:	Update on “A Day in the Life of a Councillor” DVD
4.	Programme Area:	Scrutiny Team (Chief Executive’s Office.)

5. Summary

Cabinet Members are asked to note the progress of a DVD which will be designed to promote greater understanding of the democratic process in Rotherham.

6. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- **Note the progress of the project.**
- **Agree the proposed project timescales.**

7. Proposals and Details

Councillors are dedicated people who devote a great deal of time serving their local community. Many councillors are involved in a wide range of activities; from local surgeries to meetings with key partners in the town hall. At a national level, and certainly within Rotherham, many members of the public do not appreciate the day to day responsibilities of being a local councillor. In the 2008 Place Survey only 25% of people from Rotherham felt that they could influence local decisions (compared to 29% nationally). It reported that many people in Rotherham did not understand how to get involved, with only 28% saying they are well informed about this subject. Young people are often particularly disengaged from the political process. Research for the Local Government Association by Ipsos MORI shows that just a quarter of 11-16 year olds believe that their local councillor is the best person to approach in order to change something in their community.

The idea of producing a DVD to be used as a borough wide resource to inform citizens of the work of elected members originated from the Rotherham South Area Assembly and was then agreed by the Member Development Panel. A small subgroup of the Panel has been leading the project. The timescales outlined in the original report (Member Development Panel, December 17th) have changed in order to avoid the pre-election/election period. The DVD will now be completed and made public in late May/early June 2010 subject to approval by Cabinet. Members of the steering group support the notion that this could be the first in a series of Day in the Life DVDs – others could include “A Day in the Life of a Mayor,” “A Day in the Life of Parish Councillor” etc.

The DVD will run for approximately 20 - 25 minutes. It will begin with Mags Evers, Chief Elections and Registration Officer, who outlines the role of the councillor. She explains that councillors are elected to serve everyone in their ward and that it is this willingness to serve which is key to the position. She also explains that more information about becoming a councillor is available in another section of the DVD.

This will be followed by Cllrs Gosling & Fenoughty discussing the changing role of the locally elected Member. There will then be three, 6 – 8 minute, “Day in the Life” films about local councillors. Councillors Fenoughty, Falvey and Hussain have been identified as the three members to provide this, but a host of elected members, officers and residents will also feature in the DVD as part of the various meetings and activities that the three main members will attend. The DVD would be a valuable resource, alongside existing materials such as the leaflet “So you want to be a Councillor,” in supporting the council’s duty to promote democracy

Content: The DVD will begin with a “Vox Pop” introduction, filmed in All Saints square, where residents voice some of the questions that the DVD will aim to answer: “I don’t know what a Councillor does,” “I don’t know how to become a Councillor” etc. This would be followed by the Mags Evers piece giving advice about becoming a councillor.

During preliminary meetings with the members involved a broad outline of the Day in the Life scenes has emerged. Across the three days an attempt has been made to cover most aspects of Council business.

- Councillor Falvey's Day in the Life will feature a mock up of the Licensing Board, a Community Safety Action Group walkabout, her work at Safe@Last, an Area Assembly Meeting, and a School Governors meeting.
- Councillor Hussain's film would show his day to be structured around work, a delegated powers meeting, a meeting with local businesses a street surgery and an event with Clifton Community Partnership.
- Councillor Fenoughty's Day in the Life would feature his workplace, a PSHE Scrutiny Review meeting, a community leadership event and a meal out with friends.

Each Day in the Life would *not* be filmed on one actual day. At the start of the film a sentence would say something like "Each day in the life is representative and some of the events have been recreated." The Members involved have agreed to provide a voice over which is a crucial aspect of the film.

Timescales: The initial timescales for the project have altered to avoid the pre-election/election period so the DVD will be finally completed after the local elections on May 6th. Filming each member's day will begin once approved by Cabinet. Three young people from Youth Cabinet have agreed to take part in the filming. The young people involved would benefit from shadowing a local councillor and also from the media training and production experience provided by Plum Pie Media.

Kay Denton, PSHE Co-ordinator, has agreed that the DVD would prove valuable in the Personal Social and Health Education/Citizenship Curriculum. The Leadership Centre for Local Government has expressed an interest to include it on their national website: www.beacouncillor.org. The IDeA would also like to feature the DVD as an example of public information. The DVD could be put on youtube and facebook. This would need to be accompanied by a press launch in print media and newspapers. The *Rotherham Advertiser* has already contacted Cllr Austen to express an interest in covering the DVD. The DVD (or individual films) could be played at community meetings with a high proportion of under represented groups.

8. Finance

Plum Pie Media have been contracted to create a high quality DVD .Meetings have taken place between the Members Involved, Scrutiny Officers and the production team. The maximum cost of the DVD will be £2,400. The production team will be paid in three instalments (preproduction, filming and editing). The Member Development Panel has agreed to fund this out of the Member Development budget.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Introduction to the DVD has to make it clear that the DVD is not about individuals nor about party politics but rather the role of being a councillor. Agreement would have to be sought in advance to film public meetings. When

working with young people consent forms would need to be completed. The DVD would need to be completed after the forthcoming local election.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The DVD would form an important part of the Council's response to the duty to promote democracy outlined in the 2009 *Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act*. The DVD could also fit into the empowerment agenda outlined in the 2008 White Paper *Communities in Control*. Not only would the DVD clearly show members of the public what it's like being a councillor but also the routes for them to get involved in their local community groups and the bodies which they can use to influence council policies and decisions. *Communities in Control* argues that individuals derive various benefits from community empowerment: people who participate in community activities have been shown to gain from a sense of achievement, increased confidence, and enhanced skills and self-esteem. Similarly, when citizens feel that they can have an influence over decisions and that their voice will be heard and respected, this can improve their sense of well-being and happiness.

In addition to arguments around personal growth that support community empowerment, there are also practical arguments demonstrating the wider impact that empowerment can have upon society:

- More interaction on shared concerns between people of different backgrounds can support more cohesive communities;
- As more people become more directly involved in decision making, this can help to revive civic society;
- It can help bring about improvements in service provision through greater accountability;
- It can bring about solutions to difficult problems faced by society in a way that builds consensus and support.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

"A Day in the Life of a Councillor DVD," Member Development Panel (17th December 2009)

Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act (2009)

Councillor's Commission *Representing the Future* (2007)

Communities in Control (2008)

Place Survey Actions (October 2009) Report to R.M.B.C Cabinet

LGIU "Duty to Promote Democracy and its Potential Impact on Equalities" (16/10/2009)

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28th April 2010
3.	Title:	Scrutiny Review: Breastfeeding for Rotherham: A Healthy Future
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's All wards

5. Summary

The report sets out the findings and recommendations of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel review into the social and community aspects of breastfeeding in Rotherham. The report is attached as Appendix 1.

6. Recommendations

- a. **That Cabinet receives the report and recommendations**
- b. **That the Cabinet's response to the recommendations be fed back to PSOC within two months of its submission.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Breastfeeding is a vitally important public health issue, with proven short, medium and long term benefits for both mother and child. However, despite a great deal of effort from the healthcare community and children’s centres, Rotherham’s breastfeeding rates are still not high enough – particularly in less advantaged areas. Furthermore, the majority of women who stopped breastfeeding wished that they had continued for longer. Through this review, Members therefore wanted to identify what measures could be put in place in order to encourage more women to initiate and sustain breastfeeding.

7.2 Specifically the review looked at:

- what is currently available in Rotherham to support women to breastfeed
- the views and experiences of mothers in Rotherham
- examples of good practice locally and elsewhere
- how existing resources can be best utilised
- how the Council and the wider Rotherham Partnership can play its part in making Rotherham more breastfeeding friendly

7.3 The recommendations from the review are detailed in Section 8 of the review and include:

- Pilot breastfeeding friendly council buildings at all libraries – ideally with a launch during National Breastfeeding week, 21 to 27 June 2010. Evaluate the lessons learned from the pilot by October 2010.
- Develop a phased programme to apply for accreditation to NHS Rotherham’s ‘Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham Award’ for all buildings that are open to the public, to be completed by May 2012.
- Draft simple guidance for staff to ensure a consistent approach to breastfeeding women – both employees and visitors to council buildings.
- Develop a Rotherham Breastfeeding Manifesto (to make the Borough of Rotherham breastfeeding-friendly) by bringing together all relevant agencies with the shared aim of boosting breastfeeding rates.
- Promote Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham via the Rotherham Show in September 2010.
- Encourage closer working between health professionals and peer supporters.

7.4 The indicative timetable for the onward consideration of the review and its recommendations is as follows:

16/4/10	Submit report to PSOC
28/4/10	Submit report to Cabinet
End June	Cabinet to respond to report recommendations

7.5 Progress on the review's recommendations will be monitored on a six monthly basis by the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel.

8. Finance

A number of the review recommendations may have financial implications if adopted. This would require further exploration by the Corporate Management Team on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Breastfeeding data is collected by and reported on by NHS Rotherham. At the beginning of this review, it appeared that breastfeeding initiation and continuation were both increasing steadily. Whilst the review was being undertaken, a new electronic method of obtaining data direct from GP systems was introduced. Although this method is more robust, there are still some issues to be resolved regarding data completeness. However, so far, the figures show that breastfeeding rates are lower than initially thought. There is therefore a real risk that Rotherham will not meet its breastfeeding targets, which were based on baseline figures from the manual system,

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Both the Rotherham Community Strategy and the Women's Strategy contain objectives to encourage more women to breastfeed. A joint breastfeeding policy (covering NHS Rotherham, the Rotherham Foundation Trust and Children's Centres) has now been developed, but work now needs to be done to ensure that the policy is put into practice and the Rotherham community and infrastructure supports breastfeeding.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The report has been circulated to all organisations/individuals that participated in the review for their comments and to check for factual accuracy.

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Breastfeeding for Rotherham: A Healthy Future

Joint Report of the Adult Services and
Health Scrutiny Panel and the
Children and Young People's
Services Scrutiny Panel

March 2010

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INTRODUCTION

The reasons behind this review are really very simple: Breastfeeding matters and mothers need to be supported to choose to feed their babies this way.

It is the single most important public health intervention, which improves the short, medium and long term health of both babies and mothers.

Furthermore, most mothers want to breastfeed, but then stop in the first two weeks due to experiencing problems and receiving insufficient help with them. Of those who continue to breastfeed until 6 weeks, many find society's attitudes and the practicalities of continuing to feed whilst going about their lives, too challenging and give up long before the recommended minimum of six months¹.

This review has gathered a great deal of evidence and expert opinion upon which to base its recommendations. Our recommendations are aimed at the Council, NHS Rotherham and the Rotherham Partnership, as it is only by working together that we can make Rotherham a truly breastfeeding-friendly Borough.

Councillor Jo Burton
Breastfeeding Review Group Chair

¹ World Health Organisation

1. ORIGINAL CONCERNS – WHY MEMBERS WANTED TO LOOK AT THIS ISSUE

Breastfeeding is the single most important public health intervention, resulting in proven short, medium and long term health benefits to both child and mother.

The World Health Organisation recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months, yet less than 2% of British babies are exclusively breastfed for this length of time. It has been demonstrated that breastfeeding has a major role to play in public health and in addressing inequalities in health in the UK². Despite the overwhelming health benefits and cost savings associated with breastfeeding, UK rates remain unacceptably low. Rotherham's breastfeeding rates are below the national average and Members were concerned about the contribution this makes to the health inequalities already experienced by many Rotherham residents.

Women's ability to breastfeed is constrained by barriers at a range of levels and far from being a matter of choice, breastfeeding is a behaviour that is simply not accessible for many mothers and babies, especially in lower socio-economic groups.

Nationally, more than three quarters of women who stop breastfeeding in the first six months would have liked to breastfeed for longer³. At a Rotherham level, this figure is even greater, at 85%⁴. As the benefits increase with the length of time a baby is breastfed, it became apparent that the review should focus on the factors that influenced mothers to either not breastfeed at all, or to give up in the early days or weeks.

Members were also very conscious of how important it is for mothers to be able to breastfeed whilst going about their daily lives. If attitudes and infrastructure are not conducive to breastfeeding, many women will decide that it's simply not worth the effort to continue and will opt for formula feeding as an 'easier' option.

The review group was keen to ensure it added value to the work being undertaken by health professionals – particularly in recent times, rather than duplicating it. It therefore decided to concentrate on two specific aspects:

² Source: Public Health Collaborating Centre on Maternal and Child Nutrition

³ *Bolling K, Grant C, Hamlyn B et al. Infant Feeding Survey 2005. London: The Information Centre for Health and Social Care; 2007.*

⁴ Annual Rotherham PCT Audit of a questionnaire sent to all women who delivered in January 2007

Help and support for breastfeeding women and making Rotherham a more breastfeeding-friendly place.

Throughout the review, Members stressed that they did not want this review to cast negative aspersions on any mother who had opted for formula feeding. Instead, they wished to highlight the evidence-based facts about breastfeeding, to help women make an informed choice and also to make recommendations to help reduce or remove some of the barriers that contribute to Rotherham's relatively low breastfeeding rates.

2. HOW THE REVIEW WAS UNDERTAKEN

2.1 Terms of Reference

The following terms of reference were agreed:

To look at the community and social aspects of breastfeeding, focusing particularly on barriers that may discourage mothers from starting and continuing to breastfeed.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The review was jointly undertaken by members of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny and Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panels.

The members of the review group were as follows:

Cllr Jo Burton (Chair)	Irene Samuels
Cllr Hilda Jack	Vicky Wilkinson (co-opted)
Cllr John Doyle ⁵	Hazel Woodcock (co-opted)
Tracy Guest	

2.2.2 Co-option of Healthcare Representatives

Early on in the review, it became apparent that there needed to be closer working between the review group and healthcare services, which were leading on breastfeeding within the borough. It was agreed that the best way to do this was to co-opt Vicky Wilkinson, Infant Feeding Co-ordinator, NHS Rotherham and Hazel Woodcock, Infant Feeding Co-ordinator, The Rotherham Foundation Trust. This ensured that the review kept up-to-date with developments and that the recommendations it made would be complementary to other organisations' work in this area.

⁵ Until May 2009

2.2.3 Approach taken

The review group first received presentations from local health colleagues from NHS Rotherham, in order to gauge the current situation in Rotherham and to understand the various breastfeeding-related initiatives that were being undertaken. It then invited a leading academic in this field to give her views and present a summary of recent research on the subject.

In order to give the residents of Rotherham the opportunity to contribute to the review, the Review Chair invited comments via a press release and subsequent letters in the local press. The excellent response to this reflected the substantial public interest in the subject. Face-to-face discussions took place with groups of mothers who both did and did not breastfeed, with additional views being obtained from a group of younger mothers. These informal discussions were extremely useful in providing the review with real life experiences of Rotherham women and their attitudes to breastfeeding.

It became apparent that several areas that had increased breastfeeding rates, had invested heavily in peer support. A meeting was therefore held with local peer support group, and a representative from the country's leading provider of breastfeeding support was also invited to speak to the group.

The review was supported by Delia Watts, Scrutiny Adviser.

3. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 National Level

3.1.1 World Health Organisation (WHO)

The World Health Organisation's infant feeding recommendation⁶ is:

Breastfeeding is an unequalled way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants; it is also an integral part of the reproductive process with important implications for the health of mothers.

⁶ As stated in the Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding (WHA55 A55/15, paragraph 10):

As a global public health recommendation, infants should be exclusively breastfed⁷ for the first six months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health⁸. Thereafter... infants should receive... complementary foods while breastfeeding continues for up to two years of age or beyond. Exclusive breastfeeding from birth is possible except for a few medical conditions, and unrestricted exclusive breastfeeding results in ample milk production.

3.1.2 UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI)

The UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative was launched in the UK in 1994 to encourage maternity hospitals to implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding (see Appendix 1) and to practise in accordance with the International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes. In 1998 its principles were extended to cover the work of community health-care services in the Seven Point Plan for the Promotion, Protection and Support of Breastfeeding in Community Health Care Settings, given at Appendix 2.

The Baby Friendly Initiative works with the health-care system to ensure a high standard of care for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers and babies. It provides support for health-care facilities that are seeking to implement best practice, and offers an assessment and accreditation process that recognises those that have achieved the required standard. The stages of accreditation are given below:

- A Certificate of Commitment is the first step towards the full award and is assessed by post and via an action planning visit
- Stage 1 assesses policies and procedures
- Stage 2 assesses the staff education programme
- Stage 3 assesses the care provided to pregnant women and new mothers.

3.1.3 National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

NICE guidance⁹ recommends implementing a structured programme that encourages breastfeeding using the Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) as a

⁷ "Exclusive breastfeeding" is defined as no other food or drink, not even water, except breast milk for at least 4 and if possible 6 months of life, but allows the infant to receive drops and syrups (vitamins, minerals and medicines). "Predominant breastfeeding" means that the infant's predominant source of nourishment has been breast milk. However, the infant may also have received water and water-based drinks (sweetened and flavoured water, teas, infusions, etc), fruit juice, or ORS solution.

⁸ As formulated in the conclusions and recommendations of the expert consultation (Geneva, 28-30 March 2001) that completed the systematic review of the optimal duration of exclusive breastfeeding (see document A54/INF.DOC./4). See also resolution WHA54.2.

⁹ Commissioning a peer-support programme for women who breastfeed - NICE, September 2008

minimum standard that should be subject to external evaluation. It also recommends the adoption of a multifaceted approach or a coordinated programme of interventions across different settings to increase breastfeeding rates, including:

- activities to raise awareness of the benefits of – and how to overcome the barriers to – breastfeeding
- training for health professionals
- breastfeeding peer-support programmes
- joint working between health professionals and peer supporters
- education and information for pregnant women on how to breastfeed, followed by proactive support during the postnatal period.

It also explains how inequalities can be reduced by improving access to breastfeeding support for women in low-income groups and highlights the need to ensure that 'women least likely to start and continue breastfeeding are actively engaged and that all pregnant women and new mothers are offered support for breastfeeding'.

3.1.4 Department of Health Guidelines

The Department of Health guidelines on feeding infants state that the best nutrition for infants is exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months (26 weeks), after which breastfeeding (and/or breast milk substitutes, if used) should continue, along with appropriate types and amounts of solid foods.

In May 2009 a new set of growth charts for newborn babies and children up to four years old were released by the Department of Health. The new charts are based on the growth of breastfed babies and replace current measures which are based predominately on babies fed with formula milk.

The new charts developed by the World Health Organisation and produced for the UK by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health will play an important role in establishing breastfeeding as the norm and will be included in the Personal Child Health Records, which parents of every newborn are given. They will help parents and health-care professionals to identify children at early risk of obesity and provide important reassurance for parents of breast-fed babies, who are likely to gain weight more slowly.

The new charts include parent-friendly instructions and a chart specifically for premature babies. As babies can lose and gain weight at different rates during birth and two weeks, it is recommended that they are not measured during this time.

Government promotion of breastfeeding is further shown in 'Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices easier'¹⁰ which reiterates the targets for higher breastfeeding rates and calls for collaboration between primary care trusts and local authorities to increase the uptake of breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is also integral to the Change4Life campaign¹¹ to help make people make healthier choices, as part of the Start4Life strand.

The importance of breastfeeding has been recognised by the Department of Health which issued a target for all Primary Care Trusts to increase the initiation of breastfeeding by 2% per annum from April 2003¹², particularly amongst women from less advantaged groups.

3.1.5 British Medical Association (BMA)

The BMA describes breastfeeding as an ideal 'supply and demand' regulation system. The feeding behaviour of the baby and the quality of the breast milk change with time in a way that may prevent overfeeding, teach the infant how to recognise satiety signals, and regulate energy intake differently from formula-fed infants.

The role of leptin in breast milk may be of particular importance in the early development of both adipose tissue and appetite regulatory systems in the infant, and ultimately on propensity to obesity in later life. Observational studies have shown that breastfeeding is associated with lower rates of childhood obesity. Bearing in mind the absence of leptin in formula milk, this may have important implications for the prevention of obesity in children and in adults.

3.1.6 Breastfeeding Manifesto Coalition

The Breastfeeding Manifesto Coalition¹³ was produced in consultation with over twenty UK organisations working to improve awareness of the health benefits of breastfeeding and its role in reducing health inequalities. The Manifesto draws attention to the gaps in UK breastfeeding policy and outlines seven key objectives:

- Implement the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding
- Implement best practice into the health service across the UK
- Improve training for health professionals
- Work with employers to create a supportive environment for breastfeeding mothers
- Develop policy and practice to support breastfeeding in public places

¹⁰ Department of Health, November 2004

¹¹ a government-sponsored social marketing initiative launched in Autumn 2008

¹² Improvement, Expansion and Reform: NHS Priorities and Planning Framework 2003-2006

¹³ Launched May 2007

- Include breastfeeding education in the curriculum
- Adopt the World Health Organization International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes and subsequent relevant Resolutions

It is currently is developing a national scheme to support mothers to exercise their right to breastfeed when out and about.

3.1.7 Breastfeeding in Public

Discriminating against a woman breastfeeding in public has been unlawful since the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. However, the Equality Bill¹⁴ makes it explicit that mothers can breastfeed in public places such as cafes, shops and public transport and places a duty on the public sector to help mothers to feel confident enough to breastfeed.

Concerns that wording of the clause on breastfeeding would inadvertently undermine the right of a woman to breastfeed a child over six months in public led have now been addressed so that the legislation will protect the right of women to breastfeed regardless of the age of their child.

3.1.8 Breastfeeding in the Workplace

Existing UK law provides women workers with some protection whilst breastfeeding through the following pieces of legislation:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and
- European Union Pregnant Workers Directive
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975

This legislation is mostly about facilities for expressing and storing breast milk, rather than the needs of the breastfeeding mother as an employee, which includes the provision of appropriate information about support for breastfeeding; breaks and facilities for breastfeeding or expressing milk; and flexible working hours.¹⁵

Supporting employees who want to combine work and breastfeeding not only complies with law but also makes business sense through the following benefits¹⁶:

¹⁴ At House of Lords Committee Stage, February 2010. The Act will apply to England and Wales. Scotland already has legislation to protect the right of women to breastfeed in public.

¹⁵ Birmingham City Council Children's Nutrition – Mothers Who Wish to Breastfeed, February 2003.

¹⁶ Maternity Alliance Breastfeeding and Work: The employer's guide to law and good practice June 2003.

- Lower Absenteeism – Most mothers of young babies have to take time off work to look after babies when they fall ill. One study found that mothers of formula fed babies took three times more one-day absences to care for a sick baby than breastfeeding mothers¹⁷
- Improved Staff Retention – A breastfeeding employee is more likely to return to her job after maternity leave if she knows she will come back to a supportive environment, thus avoiding loss of skills and incurring recruitment costs.
- Increased morale and loyalty – Many women experience feelings of guilt when leaving a young baby to return to work. Continuing to breastfeed helps to overcome these feelings and is a simple way to increase morale, job satisfaction and loyalty to the organisation.
- Family Friendly Reputation – Being known as a family friendly employer is good for corporate relations and recruitment. Support for breastfeeding is crucial to enable women to combine work and family and is therefore a key part of an Equal Opportunities Strategy.

3.1.9 Healthy Start Scheme

The Healthy Start Scheme provides weekly vouchers to pregnant women and mothers of children under four who are eligible for benefits. Pregnant women under the age of 18 may also claim the vouchers, which can be spent on milk, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables and infant formula milk.

It supports breastfeeding much better than its predecessor, the Welfare Food Scheme¹⁸ as it allows mothers to exchange the vouchers for fresh fruit and vegetables as well as liquid milk, through general retail outlets. The previous scheme only gave the option of liquid milk or infant formula.

However 15% of those eligible do not use these vouchers.

3.2 Local Level

3.2.1 Public Service Agreement (PSA) Targets

Local authorities and primary care trusts share responsibility for improving health and well-being, part of which is to increase breastfeeding rates¹⁹. PSA 12 - Improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people²⁰ –

¹⁷ Cohen R et al Comparison of Maternal Absenteeism and Infant Illness Rates among Breastfeeding and Formula Feeding Women in Two Corporations American Journal of Health Promotion 10: 148 -153 (1995).

¹⁸ 1940 to 2004

¹⁹ The delivery plans for the 2004 White Paper 'Choosing Health: making healthy choices easier', November 2004

²⁰ HM Government, 2008

includes the specific delivery priorities of increasing breastfeeding at six to eight weeks and the more general aim of “making breastfeeding the norm”.

The delivery strategy for this PSA focuses on prevention, early intervention and effective support from practitioners.

3.2.2 The Rotherham Breastfeeding Policy

This was jointly developed by The Rotherham Foundation Trust and Rotherham PCT²¹ in 2008. It is based on the Unique UK Baby Friendly Initiative Best Practice Standard, in accordance with NICE²². It also covers RMBC Children’s Centres (see Appendix 3).

3.2.3 Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

The Rotherham Community Strategy²³ – has ‘improving infant health and reducing infant mortality’ as a key aim, with Local Area Agreement improvement targets to increase the prevalence of breastfeeding rates at 6-8 weeks (to 30% in 2010/11 and the recording thereof (to 90% in 2010/11).

This filters down to Area Assembly level through local action plans, for example the Wentworth Valley Action Plan for ‘Being Healthy’ includes such actions as ‘Ensure there is a Breastfeeding friendly space available in the Maltby Leisure and service Centre’, as well as contributing to BFI accreditation.

3.2.4 Women’s Strategy

The Rotherham Women’s Strategy²⁴ contains two actions relating to breastfeeding:

- All new-build and refurbished premises be women-friendly²⁵ (part of the definition of which is to be baby/child friendly, providing suitable facilities for feeding/changing). This is linked to objective 4 – achieving – which is to increase women’s involvement in planning.
- Increase the number of women who initiate and sustain breastfeeding.

²¹ Now NHS Rotherham

²² NICE Clinical Guidance 037 Routine Postnatal Care for Women and their Babies, National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence ,July 2006

²³ Rotherham Community Strategy 2005-2011, updated September 2008

²⁴ Rotherham – Working together for Women 2007-2010

²⁵ Objective 2 - Alive

3.2.5 Employment Policies

3.2.5.1 Rotherham MBC

Guidance for women returning to work after long break, such as maternity leave²⁶ encourages them to 'consider...flexible working options on returning to work'. Managers are asked to 'raise awareness of flexible working options including staged hours during first few weeks of return'.

In addition, following a query to WIN, the worker representative group for women employees, negotiation took place between HR and managers to make a rest room available in Bailey House which is lockable from the inside which can be used by breastfeeding employees to nurse or express milk.

Upon returning to work, breastfeeding mothers must notify their manager, who is required to do a risk assessment²⁷ as some hazards in the workplace may affect health and safety of new mothers and their babies. If any identified risks cannot be avoided by other means, 'changes have to be made to working conditions or hours'.²⁸

Women who intend to express milk whilst at work, are told that 'arrangements can be made with your Manager for a suitable, secure room to be made available for use as there are no designated [rooms] allocated specifically for this purpose'²⁹.

The Council's guidance³⁰ reminds managers to ensure that workers who are breastfeeding are not exposed to risks that could damage health or safety for as long as they continue to breastfeed and points out that 'the Regulations do not put a time limit on breastfeeding.....and it is for women themselves to decide for how long they wish to breastfeed, depending on individual circumstances'. It also states that the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require suitable facilities to be provided for workers who are pregnant or breastfeeding to rest.

3.2.5.2 South Yorkshire Police

SYP offers a wide range of flexible work options to officers and staff to provide flexible solutions to individual needs within the constraints of the organisation's needs.

²⁶ Hints for a Comfortable Return to Work, WIN (the worker representative group for women employees) Steering Group, Rotherham MBC, 2009

²⁷ Employee Maternity Checklist, Rotherham MBC

²⁸ Employee Handbook, Rotherham MBC

²⁹ Guide to Maternity Provisions, Human Resources, Rotherham MBC, April 2007

³⁰ Guidance on Protecting the Health and Safety of New or Expectant Mothers at Work, RMBC Economic and Development Services, Health and Safety Section, EDSHS 46 Issue 2 February 2004

Its Maternity Provisions refer only to breastfeeding in relation to the need for risk assessments to be carried out and makes no reference to how the needs of a breastfeeding mother may be accommodated.

However, officers and staff are assisted to integrate back into the workplace by local arrangements not reflected in the Force policies but which are overseen by the local Personnel Department in Rotherham. This includes the affording of 'extra flexibility to help them balance their homelife/separation from child and work' for the 12 weeks after returning from maternity leave.

Nonetheless, Rotherham district does not have many officers or staff still breastfeeding after their return from maternity leave, but those that do are asked specifically and would complete a separate risk assessment so that suitable arrangements can be considered.

4. BACKGROUND

The Department of Health has acknowledged that increases in breastfeeding rates would make a major contribution to the health of the nation.

4.1 National Breastfeeding Rates

Breastfeeding rates in the UK are much lower than in many European countries.

The national Infant feeding survey (IFS) is conducted every five years; the latest data are from 2005. These reports provide information about variations in feeding practice, factors that influence the type of milk and duration of milk feeding. They also detail trends in feeding over time.

The 2005 survey showed:

- Initial breastfeeding rates in 2005 had increased since 2000 (78% in England, 70% in Scotland, 67% in Wales, and 63% in Northern Ireland);
- Only 48% of mothers were breastfeeding at six weeks and 25% at six months;
- 45% were breastfeeding exclusively at one week, 21% at six weeks, 7% at four months and less than 1% at six months.
- Three-quarters of mothers had given their baby milk other than breast milk by six weeks, and 92 per cent by six months.
- Just under half of all mothers who had prepared powdered infant formula in the last seven days had not followed the instructions properly, for example by not using cooled boiled water.

The survey showed that there are strong relationships between the mother's socio-economic status and educational attainment and breastfeeding prevalence – these factors are associated with both initiation rates and

breastfeeding duration. At 7 weeks, nearly twice as many mothers from higher socio-economic groups were breastfeeding, compared with those from lower socio-economic groups³¹.

Research also shows that mothers most likely to initiate breastfeeding are those who have breastfed a previous child and are over the age of 30.

4.2 Local Statistics

4.2.1 Data

Primary care trusts need to obtain several pieces of data for each mother and child, some of which are required by the Department of Health for monitoring purposes. The key pieces are:

- Breastfeeding initiation – first breastfeed within 48 hours (or if the baby is given any of the mothers' milk)³²
- Data completeness/coverage – the percentage of infants for whom feeding status is recorded
- Breastfeeding continuation – a 6-8 week target, which is set locally.
- Feeding method at 6 months.

NHS Rotherham's most up-to-date data on Breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks is given at Appendix 4. The main trends are summarised below:

4.2.2 Breastfeeding Initiation

This is currently at 58.6% in Rotherham³³, with a target of increasing by 2% each year. While the initiation rate has increased from 54.62% in 07/08 to 58.6% in Q3 09/10, exceeding the 2% year on year level, there is a risk that the 60% target for the end of 09/10 will not be achieved.

4.2.3 Data Completeness/Coverage

Until the first quarter of 09/10, feeding status was collected manually, but since then, the information has been obtained directly from GPs' electronic records systems. This means that the data is more accurate and robust, although the current figure of 77%³⁴ is a substantial way below the 09/10 target of 90%.

³¹ Prevalence of breastfeeding by mother's socio-economic classification, Hamlyn et al, 2002

³² Department of Health 2005

³³ January 2010

³⁴ January 2010

4.2.4 Breastfeeding Continuation

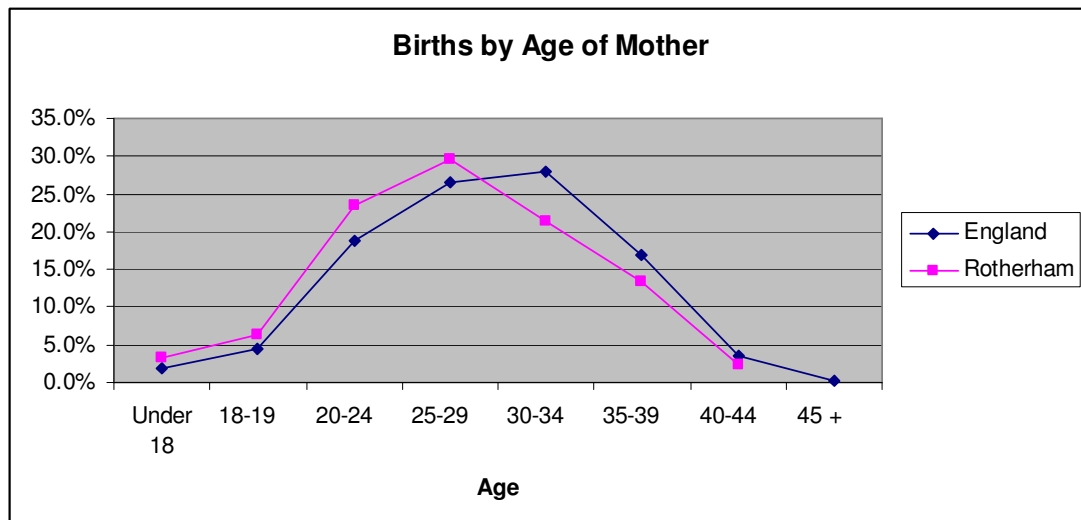
It is reasonable to expect 60% of those initiating breastfeeding to still be doing so after 6-8 weeks. This indicator includes babies recorded as mixed feeding (breast milk and formula milk).

Rotherham has challenging targets of 28% in 2009/10 and 30% in 2010/11. It appeared that the 09/10 target was met in June 2009, but this was when data was still being collected manually. Since then, the data has been drawn from GP Quest system and is more accurate. Unfortunately, this has shown that the prevalence is much lower than expected, with the figures for January 2010 showing that only 24% of babies were being breastfed at 6-8 weeks. However, as the feeding status of only 77% of babies is known (see above section), it is acknowledged that the full picture is not represented by this figure.

4.2.4.1 The World Health Organisation recommends exclusive breastfeeding up to the age of 6 months. However, it is difficult to accurately estimate the numbers of mothers in Rotherham who are continuing to breastfeed at this time as NHS Rotherham is not planning to record and collect this data until breastfeeding has increased substantially. There may be some scope for collecting this data at the baby's routine 6-9 month check up.

4.2.5 Maternal Age

Research shows that younger mothers are less likely to breastfeed than older ones. The prevalence of younger mothers in Rotherham compared with the England average is shown in the graph below and may be a contributing factor in the Borough's low breastfeeding rates.



Source: Office of National Statistics, 2007

4.2.6 Health Equity Audit: Breastfeeding in Rotherham³⁵

This audit was undertaken four years ago and its results were used to inform the breastfeeding strategy and support the Borough's intention to gain UNICEF Baby Friendly status.

Its aim was to identify specific geographical areas with high/low rates of breastfeeding and thus identify where services need to be targeted. It showed that breastfeeding percentages at 10-14 days and 6-8 weeks were higher in the more affluent wards such as Sitwell and Wales and lower in more deprived wards such as Maltby, Rotherham East and Valley. By 6-8 weeks, the percentage of mothers breastfeeding had dropped to 10-20% throughout Rotherham wards.

5. CURRENT DEBATE

5.1 Identifying effective Interventions

A study funded by the Health Development Agency/NICE, published 2007 undertook a systematic review of formal evidence base. In addition it also incorporated the views of people who know the problems, thus moving from 'what works in research' to 'what really works in practice'³⁶. This report informed the NICE postnatal care and maternal and child nutrition guidance³⁷. It made two key recommendations:

- Each locality should consider the best package of interventions to address the diverse needs of their local population group(s)
- The decision should be informed by the views of practitioners and service users.

Furthermore, it suggested that health sector changes are not enough. In order to create an environment where breastfeeding is the norm, there are key policy and cultural issues that need to be addressed, including:

- Promoting employment practices that support breastfeeding
- Education for schoolchildren
- Facilitating breastfeeding in public.

³⁵ Jessica Wilson and Rebecca Atchinson, NHS Rotherham, January 2006

³⁶ http://www.nice.org.uk/niceMedia/pdf/EAB_Breastfeeding_final_version.pdf

³⁷ www.nice.org.uk www.nice.org.uk/PH011.

5.2 Health Inequalities

A recent review³⁸ highlighted the fact that younger mothers, mothers from lower socio-economic groups and mothers with lower educational levels appear least likely to initiate and continue breastfeeding. This was borne out by the evidence gathered for the health equity audit³⁹ which showed that over a two year period, breastfeeding rates at 10-14 days and 6-8 weeks in the individual Neighbourhood Renewal Areas were almost always lower than the Rotherham average⁴⁰.

5.2.1 Education

Breastfeeding promotion is hampered by the language used, for example 'the woman's right to choose to breastfeed', as if it is one of two equal options and that the decision is an informed one. Many women do not understand that it is the only natural way to feed a baby and that feeding with infant formula is inferior. Nonetheless, health professionals do not want to make bottle-feeding mothers feel guilty.

Key messages that need to be conveyed are:

- Breast milk is tailored to the baby's needs
- Formula feeding is riskier – bottle-fed babies are 5 times more likely to be admitted to hospital with gastroenteritis than breastfed ones
- Infant formula cannot be tolerated by the most vulnerable babies – neonatal babies need breast milk, which comes from one of the 17 breast milk banks in the UK, if the baby's own mother is unable to provide it.

5.2.2 To help address this issue, a copy of the 'From Bump to Breastfeeding' DVD⁴¹ is given to every expectant mother in Rotherham. In addition, NHS Rotherham is able to provide a DVD entitled 'So she wants to Breastfeed', which explains the father's role in supporting breastfeeding.

The Children's Centres also produce a range of leaflets around supporting breastfeeding mothers, under the banner 'Babies to Breast'.

³⁸ Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

³⁹ Health Equity Audit: Breastfeeding in Rotherham, Rotherham PCT, January 2006

⁴⁰ With the exception of Rawmarsh, which had a higher than average rate at 6-8 weeks

⁴¹ Best Beginnings, 2008

6. FINDINGS

6.1 UNICEF Baby Friendly Accreditation: Rotherham

NHS Rotherham, the Rotherham Foundation Trust (RFT) and Rotherham Community Health Services are working in partnership to achieve UNICEF Baby Friendly Accreditation in hospital and community settings by 2012.

In 2009/10, NHS Rotherham allocated £20,000 Plan to this initiative and the Rotherham Foundation trust provided £8,000 funding to support development and capacity building for UNICEF BFI within the hospital. In March 2010, a further Department of Health grant of £100,000 was provided to support breastfeeding in Rotherham. £20,000 of this is being used to improve training, audit and implementing best practice across the RFT and Community Services.

To date, Rotherham has had its staff education programme assessed and has reached Stage 2.

6.2 Health Benefits of Breastfeeding

6.2.1 Breastfed babies are less likely to:

- develop juvenile-onset insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus
- develop eczema
- develop infections of the ear, chest and gut. Exclusive breastfeeding could prevent 27% of hospitalisations for lower respiratory tract infections and 53% for diarrhoea⁴².
- be constipated
- be fussy about new foods
- become obese children, thus lowering their risks of developing coronary heart disease and diabetes in later life.

6.2.2 Mothers have:

- a lower risk of developing breast cancer
- a lower risk of ovarian cancer

“I breastfed for four months, mainly because I’d been told it would help me stay slim.”

Becky, Rotherham

⁴² Quigley MA, Kelly YJ, Sacker A. Breastfeeding and hospitalization for diarrheal and respiratory infection in the United Kingdom millennium cohort study. *Paediatrics* 2007;119(4):e837-e842.

- increased likelihood of returning to their pre-pregnancy weight (breastfeeding burns up to 500 extra calories a day)
- delayed resumption of menstrual cycle (and so are less likely to conceive at a time when the infant is still placing huge physical demands on the mother). This also helps mothers to maintain their iron stores.⁴³

6.3 Financial Benefits

- 6.3.1 Breastfeeding costs the mother nothing, compared with formula feeding that costs over £400 per year⁴⁴.
- 6.3.2 The protection offered to babies through breastfeeding can lead to significant cost savings in the treatment of some illnesses, as well as reducing the indirect human costs to families which result from anxiety, stress and the disruption caused by hospitalisation.
- 6.3.3 It was estimated in 1995 that the NHS spends £35million per year in England and Wales in treating gastro-enteritis in bottle-fed infants. For each 1% increase in breastfeeding at 13 weeks, the NHS could save £500,000. A 5% increase in breastfeeding rates could save British hospitals at least £2.5 million every year.⁴⁵ Increasing breastfeeding rates would also reduce NHS expenditure on infant formula and teats.
- 6.3.4 Baby Friendly hospitals report lower incidence of sore and cracked nipples, engorgement and mastitis. This would logically have the effect of reduced GP consultations and prescription costs.
- 6.3.5 A study carried out in Glasgow which found that breastfed babies have 15% fewer GP consultations during their first 6 months of life than babies fed on artificial formula⁴⁶, thus reducing the call on primary care budgets.

6.4 Current Facilities in Rotherham

6.4.1 Retail and Transport

Breastfeeding facilities do exist within the Borough, but provision is, at best, patchy. Within the town centre, dedicated mother and baby rooms are only available at Boots, Tesco

*“Tesco is good – especially in Wath.”
Clare, Rotherham*

⁴³ NHS Start4Life

⁴⁴ Based on one 900g tin of infant formula per week (not including bottles, teats and sterilizer)

⁴⁵ National Breastfeeding Working Group. Breastfeeding: good practice guidance to the NHS. Prepared in consultation with the National Breastfeeding Working Group. London: Department of Health; 1995.

⁴⁶ McConnachie A et al. Modelling consultation rates in infancy: influence of maternal and infant characteristics, feeding type and consultation history. Br J Gen Pract 2004; 54: 598-603

and at Rotherham Interchange. However, during the review, at least one mother expressed her dissatisfaction with the latter two.⁴⁷

A number of businesses in Rotherham particularly encourage of breastfeeding mothers – one such example being Costa Coffee at Parkgate, which has worked in partnership with NHS Rotherham on a number of Breastfeeding Awareness Week activities. Others, such as the Pantry Green café in Rotherham town centre are happy to accommodate breastfeeding mothers upon request.

“I was feeding [my baby] in a café, no breast visible and being told to go and do that in the toilet.”
DP, RMBC Employee

“I breastfed all three of my kids, but not in public. I planned my day around the feeds as I did not feel comfortable breastfeeding out and about in Rotherham.”
Sue, Rotherham

As at February 2010, all businesses at Retail World at Parkgate have been provided with information on Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham initiative and have been asked to sign up to the scheme.

6.4.2 Daycare Nurseries

Most daycare providers who look after children under the age of two⁴⁸ offer refrigeration facilities, so that breastfeeding women may bring in expressed milk to be fed to their babies. One nursery also added that should mothers work close by, they are welcome to come to the nursery during the day to feed their babies.

6.4.3 Council Buildings

The Council has a large number of buildings, many of which have been adapted from other uses. The list below explains what facilities and arrangements for breastfeeding are currently in place, as at February 2010.

Generally there are no dedicated breastfeeding facilities in the majority of council buildings and facilities are limited for the general public (often meeting rooms – where available and on request, or baby changing areas).

“I’m a mum of two.... I go to the town centre most days...and am disgusted at the lack of facilities for breastfeeding mothers. Most times I have to feed my daughter on a cold wet bench which is disgusting.”
CJ, Canklow

A list of current Council buildings and their breastfeeding facilities and arrangements is given at Appendix 5.

⁴⁷ Letter from Claire Jackson, Rotherham Advertiser 19/12/08

⁴⁸ Based on a telephone survey of a random sample of 8 providers, June 2009

All Children's Centres, however, positively promote breastfeeding. Where dedicated rooms are not available, most will have quiet areas where women can feed comfortably.

At the time of writing this report there have been early discussions about the possibility of making breastfeeding mothers feel welcome in libraries.

6.5 Proposed Facilities

6.5.1 Civic Building

The new council offices on the former Guest and Chrimes site are due to open in spring 2012. The plans include a 'parenting room', although its exact use is not yet defined. There is still time to ensure that the room meets the needs of all those who wish to use it i.e. staff and public, for nursing babies and for expressing milk.

6.5.2 Rotherham Renaissance

The redeveloped railway station will have a new facilities building including ticket office, passenger lounge, toilet and retail kiosk. However, it is not clear whether this will include a specific mother and baby room.

"There aren't enough breastfeeding friendly places to go. There's often a choice between the toilet or the changing rooms at Primark".
Young mother, Rotherham

6.6 Why Mothers choose to Breastfeed

6.6.1 There is a strong correlation between attendance at antenatal classes and likelihood of a mother breastfeeding. Currently only 10%(?) of pregnant women in Rotherham attend these classes. In order to increase attendance, some classes are now run at children's centres and at weekends⁴⁹.

"I probably wouldn't have done it if I hadn't gone to parentcraft classes whilst pregnant"
TO, Rotherham

6.6.2 For some babies with specific health needs, breastfeeding is even more important.

6.6.3 Cultural expectations have a part to play in whether or not a mother chooses to breastfeed. In Rotherham, as elsewhere, mothers from BME communities and newly-arrived EU migrants have higher breastfeeding rates than the Rotherham average. However, once settled here, UK attitudes to infant feeding begin to influence and

"I tried my daughter on a night time bottle, but discovered she was intolerant to lactose. I therefore fed her fully myself. It was good for both of us."
AF, Rotherham

⁴⁹ Previously, all were run at Rotherham Hospital, during the week.

breastfeeding reduces.

- 6.6.4 Having experience and support from within the family greatly increases the chance that a woman will begin and continue to breastfeed.

“It helped that my mum supported me to breastfeed.”
CR, Rotherham

6.7 Why Mothers choose not to Breastfeed

There are significant reasons why women in the UK may choose not to breastfeed or why they stop breastfeeding early⁵⁰:

“I was a bottle feeding Mum...[and] do not like to see women feeding in public places.”

6.7.1 Attitude of other people

Some women feel that breastfeeding in public was unacceptable and embarrassing, while bottle-feeding is accepted by everybody and in all places. Britain’s culture also sexualises breasts (through the media, fashion etc.) and therefore discourages society from accepting breastfeeding as their normal function.

“A middle aged couple sat in front of me in a café, one saw I was breastfeeding, gave me a filthy look and got up and left!”
DP, RMBC Employee

Men’s attitudes towards breastfeeding have improved in recent years, with 72% of mothers claiming their partner is happy for them to breastfeed both at home and in public, according to a recent survey⁵¹. The survey showed a significant change in attitude when compared with an earlier survey⁵², which revealed that 50% of men thought women should not breastfeed in a public place. Between the two surveys, the percentage of men who felt uncomfortable about their partners breastfeeding in front of friends and family dropped from 14% to 3%.

“I found women were very supportive, but men gave me funny looks.”
CR, Rotherham

A National Childbirth Trust survey in 2005⁵³ found that 63% of breastfeeding women had been subject to unsupportive comments or behaviour from other people when breastfeeding in public. However, a poll of a representative sample, showed that 84% of adults do not have a problem with

“Having a baby takes away quite a bit of your confidence anyway, so feeding in public where you’re not made welcome is even more stressful.”
Vicky, Rotherham

⁵⁰ McFadden A & Toole G (2006) Exploring women's views of breastfeeding: a focus group study within an area with high levels of socio-economic deprivation. *Maternal & Child Nutrition* 2: 156-68

⁵¹ Survey of 1,859 mothers commissioned by Kamilloosan, 2008

⁵² conducted by Royal College of Midwives (RCM) in 1993

⁵³ A total of 2661 women out of a sample of 4246 women who had breastfed.

women breastfeeding their babies while they are out and about⁵⁴.

6.7.2 Attitudes of family and friends

The views of family and friends are often a stronger influence than that of health practitioners. Also, women who do not see their peers breastfeeding are less likely to perceive it as 'normal'. As breastfeeding rates have been declining for several decades, it is common for new mothers to have been formula fed themselves and therefore not benefit from practical support from their own mothers.

"I got stuck from a friend when she saw I was breastfeeding."
AF, Rotherham

6.7.3 Lack of Knowledge

Although many women know that breastfeeding is supposed to be beneficial, they often could not name any benefits, and were not convinced about them. In many cases, there is little understanding about what is behind the 'Breast is Best' message⁵⁵. This is exacerbated by a lack of familiarity with and exposure to breastfeeding through friends and family. Some women believe that they can formula feed and then go back to breastfeeding.

"As a teenager I thought that formula was best and breastfeeding was something you did in third world countries"
TO, Rotherham

Generally, breastfeeding workshops are only attended by those who would breastfeed anyway.

6.7.4 Lack of Professional Support

6.7.5 Some women experience difficulty in trying to establish breastfeeding but are unwilling 'to bother the midwife'. Sometimes the advice they receive is contradictory.

6.7.6 Experience

Some women experienced problems ranging from getting the baby latched on, sore nipples, and disturbed sleep. Women, especially younger ones, complained of a lack of freedom to travel/socialise/work. Bottle feeding seems easier.

⁵⁴ NOP survey conducted on behalf of the Department of Health between 24-26 January 2003 amongst 990 people

⁵⁵ Promoted by the Department of Health

A recent UK survey⁵⁶ showed that:

- half of all breastfeeding women never tried to breastfeed in public during the first few weeks after the baby was born
- Between 4 – 6 months, only 39% of women breastfed in public compared with 67% of women who bottle fed
- When their babies were 4-6 months old, about half (46%) of breastfeeding mothers said they had had problems finding somewhere to feed their babies in public.

“The café in Meadowhall is ok to feed in, but can be freezing.”
LW, Rotherham

6.7.7 Concerns about the baby’s weight gain

Many women want the reassurance of seeing how much milk a baby has taken.

6.8 Practical Support for Breastfeeding

6.8.1 Breastfeeding Support Staffing

Current staffing comprises:

- Infant Feeding Coordinator 0.6 WTE⁵⁷ (employed until March 2011 using Choosing Health⁵⁸ funding)
- Project Worker 0.6 WTE (employed until March 2011 using Choosing Health funding).
- Antenatal and postnatal (6 WTE) support workers in Sure Start areas (employed until 2011 funded through NHS Rotherham’s Operational Plan).
- Baby Friendly Coordinator, working across Rotherham Hospital (RFT) and Community Services (until September 2011).

All staff from the PCT and Children’s Centres have received breastfeeding training. Policy and awareness training is also being given to front-line staff so that they can better understand their role in supporting breastfeeding. Parents receive a copy of the breastfeeding policy in a choice of formats, including Easy Read and translated into other languages, if required.

6.8.2 Midwives

Midwives provide practical support and encouragement for breastfeeding through antenatal classes, whilst in hospital (where relevant) and for 10 days

⁵⁶ Bolling K, Grant C, Hamlyn B et al. Infant Feeding Survey 2005. London: The Information Centre for Health and Social Care; 2007

⁵⁷ Whole time equivalent

⁵⁸ Department of Health, November 2004

post-delivery. In addition, they staff a 24 hour breastfeeding support helpline.

6.8.3 Health Visitors

There is a national shortage of health visitors, so visiting mothers in the most vulnerable circumstances is prioritised. This can mean that other women miss out on essential support to keep them breastfeeding once the midwife's visits stop at 10 days.

To help fill the gap, since December 2009, Rotherham Community Health Services has employed six antenatal and postnatal support workers. Their remit is to support mothers, encourage smoking cessation and also refer breastfeeding mothers to peer support, as appropriate. The antenatal and postnatal support workers have been trained to deliver breastfeeding support and clinical supervision.

6.8.4 Breast Pump Loan

£14,000 was allocated from NHS Rotherham's Operational Plan to fund a breast pump loan scheme until 2009. This made 50 good quality electric breast pumps available for hire from Children's Centres at the very reasonable rate of £10, plus a £10 refundable deposit. Hygiene kits are also provided with each pump. Each participating centre has two or three, and, to date, there have been enough pumps to meet the demand. However, the funding allocated to this project has now been fully spent, so some children's centres have no pumps available for hire.

Rotherham Hospital also lends breast pumps with no charge, but only for periods of one to two weeks.

6.8.5 Peer Support

It has been demonstrated that individual help with the practicalities of breastfeeding reduces early problems and increases the duration of breastfeeding, particularly for first time mothers⁵⁹.

"I think people need to know how difficult it is going to be, so that if they have a problem they don't feel it's their fault or that it's not working for them."
AB, Rotherham

One definition of peer support is 'support offered by women who have themselves breastfed, are usually from similar socio-economic backgrounds and locality to the women they are

"I think that if people knew that if they can get past the first 3 or 4 weeks it gets much easier."
AB, Rotherham

⁵⁹ Sacker A, Quigley MA, Kelly YJ. Breastfeeding and developmental delay: findings from the millennium cohort study. *Paediatrics* 2006;118(3):e682-e689.

supporting and who have received minimal training to support breastfeeding women. Peer supporters may provide breastfeeding support services voluntarily or receive basic remuneration and/or expenses.⁶⁰

Evidence shows that peer support programmes should be offered to provide information and listening support to women on low before and after a baby's birth to increase initiation and duration rates⁶¹. Furthermore, the establishment of breastfeeding support groups should be fostered and referrals to such groups made on discharge from the hospital or the clinic⁶².

NICE guidance calculates that an effective peer-support programme for an average primary care trust (PCT) with a population of 300,000 would be around 10 whole-time equivalents⁶³.

6.8.5.1 Peer Support in Rotherham

In recent years, NHS Rotherham has funded training for breastfeeding peer supporters which now operate peer support groups across Rotherham⁶⁴. One-to-one support is provided through drop-in sessions at children's centres. These have had a positive effect, resulting in higher breastfeeding rates than before⁶⁵. The supporters work on a voluntary basis, but are able to claim mileage. For some supporters, childcare is an issue, as they are only able to work if free childcare (often from the Children's Centres own crèche) is available.

Rotherham Central Children's Centre Breastfeeding Peer Supporters is a group of mothers who have been trained by a NCT Breastfeeding Counsellor using the 'NCT peer support – an enabling approach' training model. All have breastfed their own babies and have enthusiasm for and commitment to breastfeeding. The women have different interests, skills and experiences in a variety of breastfeeding areas. Their role is to offer support and information - not to give advice.

⁶⁰ Promotion of breastfeeding initiation and duration - Evidence into practice briefing - Lisa Dyson, Mary Renfrew, Alison McFadden, Felicia McCormick, Gill Herbert and James Thomas, July 2006

⁶¹ Promotion of breastfeeding initiation and duration - Evidence into practice briefing - Lisa Dyson, Mary Renfrew, Alison McFadden, Felicia McCormick, Gill Herbert and James Thomas, July 2006

⁶² step 10 of the BFI 'Ten steps to successful breastfeeding',

⁶³ Commissioning a peer-support programme for women who breastfeed - NICE, September 2008

⁶⁴ Rawmarsh Children's Centre, Rotherham Central Sure Start, Rotherham Hospital, Wath Victoria Children's Centre, Rockingham Children's Centre, Thrybergh Rainbow Centre, Mothercare at Parkgate, Kimberworth Community Children's Centre and children's centres at Maltby, Dinnington and Herringthorpe.

⁶⁵ e.g. at Rawmarsh, where 21% of babies are breast fed at 6 weeks, compared with the Rotherham average of 16%

The group's aims are:

- To give expectant parents information about breastfeeding and support them to make an informed choice about how they will feed their baby;
- To be available to parents by telephone, home visits, and in groups;
- To raise the profile of breastfeeding in the Sure Start area;
- To support women who choose to breastfeed to enable them to feed for as long as they want to and support the whole breastfeeding family;
- To work together with health professionals in the Children's Centre and surrounding area to promote and support breastfeeding;
- To support breastfeeding mothers through difficulties they may be experiencing, both physical and emotional, in order to help them find a solution which works for them.

Work undertaken so far includes:

- Bumps and Babies – groups for mums and babies up to 6 months at Ferham Centre
- Weekly drop in at the Children's Centre
- Hospital – B10: antenatal workshops, Meg's Room, off B10 corridor: drop in
- GP Antenatal Clinics
- Home Visits
- Well Baby Clinics
- Developed a resource library
- National Breastfeeding Awareness Week
- Monthly sessions in Mothercare.

NHS Rotherham is committed to increasing peer support, allocating funding over a three year period⁶⁶. A further £20,000 has been allocated to widen peer support across all Children's Centres in Rotherham, working with the voluntary and community sector.

6.8.5.2 Peer Support Elsewhere: Little Angels

Little Angels is a breastfeeding support social enterprise established in 2004 to work alongside midwifery care, health professionals and external agencies, providing dedicated support for breastfeeding women in hospital and in the home or through groups. The company employs local women in local communities, reflecting diversities in the population, ensuring true peer support is provided. Full training is provided through the NCT and La Leche League, and can include an NVQ in Advice and Guidance. Wages are £13-14,000 per annum, pro-rata and therefore above the minimum wage.

⁶⁶ £6,000 in 2008/09, £26,000 in 2009/10 and £26,000 in 2010/11

Mothers are given advice through antenatal groups and practical support from supporters whilst in hospital. Upon discharge, they will be visited within 48 hours and receive a second visit within 10 days. In addition, they receive weekly telephone contact up to six weeks and additional visits if necessary. A 24 hour helpline is also provided.

The service is funded through service level agreements with individual PCTs, contracts and grants. Pilots in new areas run for up to two years, followed by 3 year contracts awarded after a tendering process. Little Angels currently works in Blackburn with Darwen, Essex, East Lancashire, Chesterfield and Wakefield. Those areas where the organisation has been established for several years⁶⁷ have shown a substantial increase in breastfeeding rates⁶⁸.

6.9 'Be a Star' Campaign⁶⁹

The 'Be a Star' campaign aims to increase the number of young mothers⁷⁰ who choose to breastfeed by showcasing local young mothers. They are photographed in glamorous poses, feeding their babies and explain how and why they have chosen to breastfeed.

The campaign will target over half a million people, using a range of tactics including a radio, outdoor marketing in shopping centres, advertising in bus shelters and on buses, posters in Children's Centres, libraries, colleges, GP surgeries as well as a variety of information leaflets and YouTube viral.

NHS Rotherham has allocated £30,000 funding in 2009/10 for rolling out the 'Be a Star' social marketing campaign in Rotherham. Two young women from Rotherham were given a make-over and photo-shoot, before their images were used for the campaign, which was launched in Rotherham in June 2009.

The 'Be a Star' campaign aims to promote the benefits of breastfeeding to young mothers, their friends, partners and families. The campaign incorporates images of breastfeeding mums styled as the stars of today as identifiable by young mums— super models, actresses, singers, pop idols, celebrities etc. The copy in the advertisements is written from the point of view of the key influencers in our young mum's lives - their parents, their partners, their friends and, of course, their baby.

⁶⁷ Blackburn with Darwen and Wakefield

⁶⁸ Blackburn with Darwen increased its 6 week rate from 20% to 49% and its 7 month rate from 4% to 27%

⁶⁹ See www.beastar.org.uk

⁷⁰ Aged 18 to 25

The campaign has included posters displayed in doctors' surgeries, hospitals, libraries, Children's centres, leaflets containing breastfeeding tips and local support numbers, a blog, local radio campaign and outdoor advertising.

A second phase of the campaign is 'Create a Star' to which NHS Rotherham has allocated £15,000 in 2010/11.

6.10 Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham⁷¹

The Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham Award has been developed by NHS Rotherham to support, protect and promote parents' choice to breastfeed their infants. It encourages organisations to recognise breastfeeding as the best way to feed babies and therefore support breastfeeding through positive guidance. It is open to any premises to which the general public have access.

"I think we should have something like the 'Breastfeeding Welcome Here' scheme like they have in Barnsley."
LW, Rotherham

Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham consists of two awards, each with its own set of standards.

- The Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham award is open to any premises that are open to the general public.
- The Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham Eateries award is tailored to establishments that serve food on their premises.

No particular amenities are required; more important is a positive attitude and willingness to support breastfeeding mums.

Venues are helped to fulfil the criteria and then assessed using a 'mystery shopper' approach.



Successful facilities are then required to display the Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham window stickers and are encouraged to promote their amenities by being included in a directory of breastfeeding friendly facilities to be given to all new mothers. Accreditation will be for 3 years with a self assessment appraisal completed annually.

"It's all very well having a mother and baby room at the market, but you have to go all the way to the office to get the key!"
CR, Rotherham

⁷¹ Source: NHS Rotherham

6.11 Formula Milk Marketing

Manufacturers of infant milk are prohibited from advertising formula aimed at babies under six months. However, they are permitted to do so for follow-on feeds for older babies and can therefore promote their early infant milk products by association.

Formula manufacturers often get round the legislation by providing free gifts to new mothers, without mentioning infant formula directly. One example of this is the free birth announcement cards given out at registration from Cow & Gate, which enables them to introduce the brand to the home without contravening the legislation.

In Rotherham, the Cow & Gate promotion was not evident. Instead a flyer for a Lloyds Chemist Mum and Baby gift pack is provided to each mother when their baby is registered. The pack contents vary over time, but when checked during the review, were found to be compatible with the Breastfeeding Policy, with no promotion of formula or follow on milks, bottles, dummies or teats.

Each mother also receives a two Bounty Packs – one upon the baby's birth and one six months later, distributed through the healthcare system, containing samples and money off vouchers. This is also compatible with the Breastfeeding Policy.

6.12 Data Collection

Breastfeeding initiation figures are collected by the hospital where babies are born.

Breastfeeding continuation figures should be recorded by GPs at the routine check of mother and baby at 6-8 weeks. However, this information is not always collected and other times not passed on to NHS Rotherham, resulting in problems with data quality and collection.

At Cabinet on 10 March 2010, as part of the Local Area Agreement Annual Review, it was noted that:

'There have been significant issues concerning data collection and data quality in relation to the two 'breastfeeding' indicators, which have impacted on reported performance. Without improvements in the way data is collected it will be difficult to clearly ascertain how we are performing on this indicator. It is a problem which both the Alive Theme Board and NHS Rotherham are keenly aware of.'

Until the first quarter of 09/10, the data was recorded manually. From Q2, this has been done electronically, using a QUEST data search of GP records, which should provide more accurate and robust data. However, the more recent figures have shown a drop in recording rates (from 89% in June 2009 to 77% in January 2010). Some of this gap may be due to incorrect coding by GPs, which prevents the QUEST system from extracting the data.

Data recording by GPs has improved, but there are still some practices with large amounts of missing data – often due to mothers attending for their 6-8 week check-up too late to have their feeding status included in the return (which only includes check-ups that have taken place between 5 and 10 weeks).

All practices with missing data were requested to take part in a retrospective audit of breastfeeding data recorded in the first 3 quarters of 2009/10 in order to find out why there is not extractable data for 23% of babies. The results of this will be used to support practices to develop effective systems that deliver complete breast feeding data recording.

However, 77% (Q3) is still well below the end of year target for 09/10 and it the 90% target is unlikely to be achieved by the end of 09/10 (March).

7. CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE EVIDENCE

7.1 The Costs of not Breastfeeding

7.1.1 Encouraging breastfeeding is the single most important public health intervention. Increased breastfeeding leads to reductions in both acute admissions (such as for gastro-intestinal infection in the baby) and chronic conditions (e.g. childhood diabetes), which currently cost the NHS many millions of pounds each year. Investment in breastfeeding education and support is therefore a small price to pay for the substantial reduction in healthcare bills that result from increasing breastfeeding and continuation rates.

7.2 Attitudes to Breastfeeding

7.2.1 There is general understanding that breastfeeding is best for the health of the baby and child, but not that formula feeding has definite risks associated with it. However, in recent generations, a formula feeding culture has evolved, whereby this is seen as the norm and breastfeeding the 'alternative' choice. There is a strong perception that breastfeeding is 'difficult' and formula feeding, 'easy'.

7.2.2 Many women decide not to breastfeed as they feel embarrassed or uncomfortable about doing so in front of others.

7.2.3 Society's sexualisation of breasts is greatly influenced by media images and, to a certain extent, by fashion. The perception that breasts are somehow 'rude' particularly discourages young women from breastfeeding and also influences the attitudes of those around them. Only by making breastfeeding the norm (as in Scandinavian countries), will this stigma be overcome.

7.2.4 The message that bottle feeding is 'normal' begins very early, with many children's toys and books supporting the idea. Schools currently do little to challenge this view.

7.3 Breastfeeding Initiation

The official measure for this is a breastfeed within the first 48 hours after delivery. However, the trend for women with straightforward deliveries to leave hospital much sooner, makes it not only difficult to obtain accurate data for this measure, but also reduces mothers' access to breastfeeding support at this critical time.

7.4 Support – formal and informal

7.4.1 NHS Rotherham's provision of additional staffing to encourage and support breastfeeding is having positive results. However, many of these staff are employed on fixed term contracts using grant funding and there is a danger that without these posts, it will be difficult to continue to improve and sustain breastfeeding rates across Rotherham.

7.4.2 Although grant funding has been used to purchase breast pumps for loan, the sustainability of this arrangement is at risk as there is no ongoing revenue funding for the hygiene kits that are required for each user. Already there are three new Children's Centres that do not have breast pumps due to shortage of funding.

7.4.3 Despite the availability of peer support, mothers who experience difficulties in the early weeks often choose to abandon breastfeeding rather than seek help. There seems little understanding that, with support to help them over their difficulties, they could go on to successfully breastfeed for as long as they want. Rotherham has good structures for peer support, but they are currently underutilised due to the ways referrals are currently made.

7.4.4 Many mothers in Rotherham are second or third generation formula-feeders, so there is little family support if breastfeeding problems occur.

7.4.5 By choosing to breastfeed, some women feel that they will not be able to fully share the task of looking after their baby with the father – particularly with respect to night feeds. Fathers want to be involved, but do not always understand the benefits of breastfeeding to the baby.

7.5 Making Rotherham Baby Friendly

7.5.1 Historically, the health service has not been particularly supportive of breastfeeding and has given it a low priority. This is changing in Rotherham through the implementation of the Baby Friendly Initiative and good progress is being made towards full accreditation.

"I did feed my daughter everywhere, ...simply because the facilities for breastfeeding were not there."

TO, Rotherham

7.5.2 So far, the healthcare community (through Children's Centres) has led the work to increase breastfeeding rates in Rotherham. Through Rotherham Partnership, other partnership organisations, including the Council, must now play their full part in this important task.

7.6 Places to Breastfeed

- 7.6.1 The shortage of suitable places to breastfeed in the community is one reason why women find it difficult to sustain breastfeeding after the first few weeks.
- 7.6.2 Most women do not require dedicated breastfeeding facilities (although for some this is essential) – just somewhere quiet and comfortable where they feel welcome. *“It’s about attitudes – the McDonalds staff are very good.”*
CR, Rotherham
- 7.6.3 The ‘Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham’ campaign has great potential to address the shortage of places where mothers feel comfortable about breastfeeding. It is vital that the Council plays its substantial part in this by working towards accreditation for its many publicly-accessible buildings. It could also have a role in encouraging private sector business to be accredited.
- 7.6.4 The legislative requirement for employers to undertake a ‘risk assessment’ – implying that breastfeeding is a problem - does little to encourage women to continue breastfeeding after they return to work. Large employers should take the lead by developing a more ‘enabling’ attitude, to positively encourage women to continue.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall aim of this review is to encourage women to recognise their right to breastfeed at any time, in any place and to provide support for breastfeeding. More specifically, it wants to actively welcome breastfeeding mothers and encourage breastfeeding in all public areas of Rotherham.

8.1 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

- 8.1.1 Publicise the Council’s support for breastfeeding on the home page of the Council website and also on web pages and literature relating to libraries, leisure facilities, customer service centres etc.
- 8.1.2 Provide breastfeeding mothers with a private area to breastfeed, if requested. This need not be a dedicated breastfeeding room. Any designated feeding area should NOT be in the toilet area, although baby changing facilities should also be available elsewhere in the building. *“The Council should lead the way by offering discreet areas in its own buildings, where women could breastfeed in comfort.”*
Member of Women’s Network, GROW Rotherham
- 8.1.3 Pilot breastfeeding friendly council buildings at all libraries – ideally with a launch during National Breastfeeding week, 21 to 27 June 2010. Evaluate the lessons learned from the pilot by October 2010.

- 8.1.4 Audit all council buildings that are open to the public against the 'Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham' criteria by October 2010.
- 8.1.5 Develop a phased programme to apply for accreditation to NHS Rotherham's 'Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham Award' for all buildings that are open to the public, to be completed by May 2012.
- 8.1.6 Distribute NHS Rotherham's directory of breastfeeding friendly places⁷² via Children's Centres, libraries, customer service centres, tourist information centre etc. and arrange for it to be downloadable from the Council website.
- 8.1.7 Provide publicity for commercial businesses that hold the Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham Award, via the Council website.
- 8.1.8 Develop a Council breastfeeding policy in line with the existing Joint Breastfeeding Policy⁷³, by December 2010. Base the Council policy on the Children's Centre Breastfeeding Policy Appendix Jan 2010, as given at Appendix 3 of this report.
- 8.1.9 Make existing staff aware of the Breastfeeding policy via a compulsory e-learning module, notified to staff via team briefings, by March 2011.
- 8.1.10 Draft simple guidance for staff to ensure a consistent approach to breastfeeding women – both employees and visitors to council buildings.
- 8.1.11 Provide front line staff should with more in-depth breastfeeding friendly training (covering both policy and guidance) from Children Centres' staff (?⁷⁴) by September 2011.
- 8.1.12 Include Breastfeeding policy in induction training for Members and officers.
- 8.1.13 Review and strengthen the Council's planning policy and guidance so that the needs of breastfeeding mothers are considered.⁷⁵
- 8.1.14 Ensure all refurbished or new-build council buildings incorporate a quiet area for those women who would prefer to breastfeed privately.
- 8.1.15 Design the planned parenting room in the new Civic Offices⁷⁶ so that it meets the needs of nursing mothers and those wishing to express breast milk. Facilities should include comfortable seating, blinds or screens, a lockable door, availability of drinking water and a refrigerator for storing expressed milk. Access should be arranged so that both staff and the public

⁷² In printed form, if produced, or electronically

⁷³ developed by NHS Rotherham, The Rotherham Foundation Trust and Children's Centres in 2008 and currently being revised.

⁷⁴ Check with Yvonne Weakley, Head of C&YP, RCHS

⁷⁵ Helen Sleight – check on existing policy and guidance – emailed 9/10/10

⁷⁶ Due to open in spring 2012

are able to use the room. Ensure that signage incorporates the Rotherham Breastfeeding Friendly logo.

- 8.1.16 Encourage children's centres and all council-run providers of foundation stage education to remove toy feeding bottles from 'home corners' and children's books with a bottle-feeding bias, via a letter from the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Services, asking for a response to the suggestion by September 2010.
- 8.1.17 Raise the issue of how best to promote breastfeeding through schools via the summer meeting of the PSHE Co-ordinators' group. Consider piloting the primary school resource that is currently available. Report the outcome of this on this to the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel by September 2010.

8.2 Rotherham Partnership – Alive Theme

- 8.2.1 Develop a Rotherham Breastfeeding Manifesto (to make the Borough of Rotherham breastfeeding-friendly) by bringing together all relevant agencies with the shared aim of boosting breastfeeding rates. Produce the Manifesto by April 2011.
- 8.2.2 Become a member of the Breastfeeding Friendly Coalition.
- 8.2.3 Publicise the Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham Award through Rotherham News, with a specific focus on successful accreditation of public and private sector facilities and businesses.
- 8.2.4 Encourage public sector employers⁷⁷ to lead by example by:
- providing information to employees on the opportunities to breastfeed or express milk on returning to work - before they go on maternity leave
 - holding post-maternity leave return to work interviews with staff, to allow individual issues to be discussed
 - wherever possible, supporting employees to continue breastfeeding or giving breast milk on return to work (e.g. by allowing expressing/breastfeeding breaks in addition to the lunch break).

Monitor progress on this recommendation by requesting a current position statement from each employer by September 2010 and monitor progress annually via the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel, thereafter.

- 8.2.5 Explore the possibility of sponsorship of breast pump hygiene kits through members of the Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce by
-

⁷⁷ Council, NHS Rotherham, Rotherham Community Health Services, Police, Fire Service, Yorkshire Ambulance Service

December 2010.

- 8.2.6 Consider the development of a breastfeeding awareness campaign aimed at men, as part of the next revision of the parenting strategy⁷⁸.

8.3 NHS Rotherham

- 8.3.1 Report the evaluation of the current peer support pilot and any development plans to the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel by September 2010.

- 8.3.2 Commission from Rotherham Community Health Services, the continuing employment of the six antenatal and postnatal support workers, after existing contracts end in 2011.

- 8.3.3 Promote Breastfeeding Friendly Rotherham via the Rotherham Show in September 2010.

- 8.3.4 Report evaluation of 'Be a Star' campaign to the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel⁷⁹.

- 8.3.5 Encourage midwives to register women with their local children's centre before they have their babies.

- 8.3.6 Encourage closer working between health professionals and peer supporters by asking health professionals to:

- Give mothers and their families information about peer support for breastfeeding;
- Ask women if they would like a peer supporter to contact them to discuss their feeding choices;
- Refer women experiencing difficulties or in need of support
- Involve peer supporters in antenatal groups.

8.4 Monitoring

- 8.4.1 Monitor progress against the review's recommendations on a six-monthly basis, via the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel, inviting members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel to also attend.

⁷⁸ Rotherham Parenting Strategy 2009

⁷⁹ University of York will be undertaking evaluation at between September 2010 and January 2011

9. THANKS

The review group would like to thank all the witnesses for their time, co-operation and willingness to engage in this process. Their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

- Professor Mary Renfrew, Professor of Mother and Infant Health, Department of Health Sciences, University of York
- Michelle Atkin, Marketing, PR and Sales Director, Little Angels (Darwen) Community Interest Company
- Hazel Woodcock, Infant Feeding Co-ordinator, The Rotherham Foundation Trust
- Vicky Wilkinson, Infant Feeding Co-ordinator, NHS Rotherham
- Maggie Whitfield, Breastfeeding Lead, Children's Centres, Rotherham MBC (retired early 2010)
- Wendy Hutchinson, Breastfeeding Peer Support Co-ordinator, Rotherham Children's Centres
- Joanna Jones, Women's Network Coordinator, GROW80 and members of the two women's groups at GROW
- Gail Hallsworth, NCT Breastfeeding Counsellor and Breastfeeding Peer Support Co-ordinator, Rotherham Central Children's Centre and the members of Peer Supporters group.

10. INFORMATION SOURCES/REFERENCES

- Commissioning a peer-support programme for women who breastfeed – National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, September 2008
- Improving the nutrition of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and children in low-income households - National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, March 2008
- Early life nutrition and lifelong health, BMA Board of Science, February 2009
- UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative: Coordinated introduction of best practice for breastfeeding across a local authority area, UNICEF, 2005
- 'So she wants to Breastfeed' DVD - Mark-It TV
- 'From Bump to Baby' DVD, Best Beginnings

⁸⁰ Giving Real Opportunities to Women

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Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all healthcare staff.
2. Train all healthcare staff in the skills necessary to implement the breastfeeding policy.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. Help mothers initiate breastfeeding soon after birth.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if they are separated from their babies.
6. Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk, unless medically indicated.
7. Practice rooming-in, allowing mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no artificial teats or dummies to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.

Source: Unique Baby Friendly Initiative

The Seven Point Plan for Sustaining Breastfeeding in the Community

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health-care staff.
2. Train all staff involved in the care of mothers and babies in the skills necessary to implement the policy.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. Support mothers to initiate and maintain breastfeeding.
5. Encourage exclusive and continued breastfeeding, with appropriately-timed introduction of complementary foods.
6. Provide a welcoming atmosphere for breastfeeding families.
7. Promote co-operation between healthcare staff, breastfeeding support groups and the local community.

Source: Unique Baby Friendly Initiative

Children's Centre Breastfeeding Policy Appendix Jan 2010 (To be read in conjunction with the Rotherham Breastfeeding Policy)

Principles

Rotherham Borough Council recognises breastfeeding as the optimum means of infant feeding and recognises it as our duty and responsibility to support breastfeeding through positive policies, staff training and service provision.

This policy is based on the relevant sections of the Rotherham Breastfeeding Policy adopted by The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Rotherham, Rotherham Community Health Services and Rotherham Borough Council.

The policy is based on the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative Best Practice Standards¹, in accordance with NICE Guidance².

- The Seven Point Plan for the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding in Community Health Care Settings, which include Children's Centres

Department of Health Infant Feeding Recommendations 2004³, in line with those of the World Health Organisation, are that:

- Breast milk is the best form of nutrition for infants
- Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for the first six months (26 weeks) of an infant's life
- Six months is the recommended age for the introduction of solid foods for infants
- Breastfeeding (and/or breast milk substitutes if used) should continue beyond the first six months, along with appropriate types and amounts of solid foods

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that all parents are supported to make an informed decision about breastfeeding based upon accurate, consistent, independent and evidence based information
- To ensure that breastfeeding mothers are supported to initiate and maintain lactation

- To enable all breastfeeding infants to breastfeed successfully in order to achieve adequate nutrition and optimum growth

These are best achieved by multi-agency support and the development of a breastfeeding culture. Good communication between health professionals and other agencies will ensure effective transfer of care from maternity to community services. All personnel have a responsibility to provide support and consistent information, to create a positive environment where more women choose to breastfeed their babies for as long as they wish to.

Benefits

Breastfeeding has a major role to play in promoting health and preventing disease in the short- and long-term for both infant and mother⁴. The longer the period of exclusive breastfeeding, the greater the health benefits to mother and baby. Breastfeeding contributes to several current public health policy strategies and goals:

- Addressing inequalities in health
- Breaking the cycle of deprivation
- Reducing infant mortality
- Reducing preventable infections and unnecessary paediatric admissions
- Halting the rise of obesity in under 11's
- Increasing breastfeeding initiation and duration rates, focussing on women from disadvantaged groups

Communicating the Breastfeeding Policy

- The policy will be communicated to all Children's Centre staff who have contact with pregnant women and new mothers.
- New staff will be orientated to the policy as part of their induction process, within 7 days of starting.
- The Rotherham Breastfeeding Policy and Children Centres Appendix will be available for staff and parents to read.
- The Parents Guide to the Rotherham Breastfeeding Policy will be displayed prominently within all Children's Centres, including any rooms used by pregnant women and new mums.

Staff Training

- All Children's Centre staff who have contact with pregnant women and new mothers and babies will receive breastfeeding awareness training, including information on UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative Standards.

- New starters are required to receive this training within 6 months of starting employment.
- Managers must ensure that all staff are aware of the breastfeeding policy and of the need to provide a breastfeeding friendly environment and avoid the promotion of infant formula.

Information and Support in Pregnancy

- Educational materials for distribution to parents or display within the centre will be approved by the Children's Centre Breastfeeding Lead/ Community Infant Feeding Team.
- Where mothers need further information or support they will be directed to their midwife, health visitor or a breastfeeding peer supporter.
- Children's Centre promotional leaflets and educational resources will promote breastfeeding as the normal way for babies to be fed.
- It is important to address the needs of all parents regardless of their social, religious and cultural background. Information will be available in relevant languages or a medium accessible to the individual.
- Mother-to-mother support groups and breast-feeding peer supporters play an important role in antenatal information and support.
- Staff will inform mothers about/ refer mothers to targeted community interventions to promote breastfeeding as appropriate.

Supporting Exclusive Breastfeeding

- For the first 6 months, mothers should be encouraged to exclusively breastfeed their babies. Babies should not be given, or recommended to have, water or artificial feeds.
- Mothers of babies receiving supplements should be offered support from a health care professional trained in breastfeeding management or referred appropriately.
- Weaning information should include the recommendation not to introduce solids before 6 months of age
- Mothers will be encouraged to continue breastfeeding beyond 6 months for at least the first year of life
- Information on the appropriate introduction of solid foods will comply with The Rotherham Infant Feeding Guidelines⁴.

Maintaining Lactation

- Early initiation has long term benefits for milk production
- Early cessation of breastfeeding may also have adverse consequences for the mother's health
- Management of breastfeeding problems should be in line with TRIFIC Guidelines, NICE Guidance and should include liaison with appropriate colleagues or medical referral when necessary.
- At home, mothers should be encouraged to continue to keep their babies near them, to help recognise their babies' needs and feeding cues
- All mothers will be told and given written information on the benefits, contraindications and potential risks associated with bed sharing, to enable mums to manage night time feeds safely. All information will be in line with current advice from the Foundation for the Study of Infant Death and the Department of Health.
- All breastfeeding mothers returning to work must be given information, in appropriate formats, that will support them to continue breastfeeding.

Baby Led Feeding

- Mothers will be supported to demand feed (baby led feeding) their baby and to feed for as long as the baby wishes to feed.

Use of Artificial Teats, Dummies, Nipple Shields

- Health care staff should not recommend the use of artificial teats or dummies during the establishment of breastfeeding. The appropriate use of dummies for breastfeeding babies later in the postnatal period should also be discussed with parents. Parents who wish to use them should make an informed choice.
- Cup feeding, in preference to bottle, is currently the recommended method for any supplements given to a breastfed baby
- Children's Centre staff will not recommend the use of nipple shields.

Community Support for Breastfeeding

- The Children's Centre Network supports co-operation between health professionals and voluntary support groups whilst recognising that health care facilities have their own responsibility to promote breastfeeding.
- Information on national and local breastfeeding support will be available within Children's Centres.
- Staff will inform mothers of the local breast pump loan scheme and provide details about accessing the service.

- Co-operation between health professionals and voluntary support groups will be encouraged, including involvement in policy development.
- Children's Centres will support the development of the Rotherham Breastfeeding Peer Support Network.

The Promotion of Breast Milk Substitutes

- There will be no advertising of breast milk substitutes, feeding bottles, teats or dummies in Children's Centres. This includes the use of text or logos and prohibits the provision of free samples.
- No promotion of study sessions or educational materials by formula manufacturers is permissible by employees or in facilities covered by this policy
- Staff must not display infant formula logos or such items as calendars, pens, stationery or diaries etc.
- All facilities covered by this policy will be audited annually in line with Baby Friendly Initiative requirements, to ensure compliance with the above points.
- Company representatives will only have direct access to the Obstetrics and Gynaecology Infant Feeding Group, paediatric dieticians, Infant feeding coordinators and other Infant feeding leads. Information or important changes in the constituents of artificial milk will be disseminated, by the above members of staff
- Breast milk substitutes will not be sold on Children's Centre premises.

Facilities for Breastfeeding Mothers

- Breastfeeding will be regarded as the normal way to feed babies and young children and mothers will be supported to breastfeed in all public areas of Children's Centres.
- Comfortable facilities must be available for mothers who prefer privacy to feed or express breast milk. Toilets should not be offered as a place to breastfeed due to issues of hygiene and discomfort.
- Breastfeeding Welcome signs will be displayed in prominent places within all Children's Centres.
- Members of the public who object to a mother breastfeeding will be informed of the policy and advised to move to a different area where they will no longer be in view.

- As employers, Children's Centres will support women to maintain breastfeeding when they return to work.

Monitoring of Policy Compliance

- The policy will be audited annually using UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Audit Tool. Non compliance will be addressed through staff training and via line managers.
- Children's Centres will provide accurate data to NHS Rotherham on breastfeeding promotion activities and service provision across the borough using the E- start system.

References










1. *UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative Audit Tool to monitor breastfeeding support in the maternity services – Appendix 1 Writing and evaluating the breastfeeding policy* www.babyfriendly.org.uk
2. *NICE Clinical Guidance 037 Routine Postnatal Care for Women and their Babies July 2006. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence*
3. *Infant Feeding Recommendations. Department of Health 264898 1p 70k Nov 2004*

The Rotherham Infant Feeding Guidelines 2007. The Rotherham Infant Feeding Initiatives Coordinating Group (TRIFIC Group)

NHS Rotherham

Annual Health Check – Risk Assessment Q3 2009/10

Risk Area:	Breast Feeding 6-8 week prevalence	Date:	February 2009
Programme Lead:	Sarah Whittle	Lead Officer:	Anna Jones

Target:						
	Q1 (June 2009)	Q2 (September 2009)	Q3 (January 2010)	09/10	10/11	Yorkshire & Humber Average
Breast-feeding initiation	59% 	58% 	58.6% 	60	62	N/A
	Q1 (June 2009)	Q2 September 2009	Q3 (January 2010)	09/10	10/11	Yorkshire & Humber Average
Data Completeness / Coverage	89% 	75% 	77% 	90%	95%	78.6% (latest June 2009)
	Q1 (June 2009)	Actual (Q2 Apr-Jul 2009)	Q3 (January 2009)	09/10	10/11	Yorkshire & Humber Average
Breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks	28% 	23% 	24% 	28%	30%	36.54% (latest June 2009)

Source: NHS Rotherham, February 2010

Rotherham Council Buildings: Facilities and Arrangements for Breastfeeding

Source: RMBC Asset Management, February 2010

Main Administrative Buildings

- Town Hall, Moorgate Street - Currently being refurbished – no specific facilities are planned in but general meeting rooms may be available on request and subject to availability.
- Civic Building - no specific room and nothing planned
- Norfolk House - quiet room/first aid room that can be used by staff only
- Crinoline House – no current facilities and none planned as the building is being closed in April 2010
- Bailey House - quiet room/prayer room on 2nd and 3rd floors can be used by staff only
- The Eric Manns Building - general meetings rooms but nothing dedicated for feeding – to be used by staff only
- Doncaster gate offices- none dedicated but quiet rooms/meeting rooms for staff only
- Reresby House - none but meeting rooms may be used by staff only

Leisure Centres and Sports Facilities

- Maltby Leisure Centre (part of Joint Service Centre) – the consulting room is available for breastfeeding
- Millside Centre – no current or planned facilities
- Rotherham Leisure Complex, St Ann's Road - baby changing facilities only, which could be used for breastfeeding
- Grange Park Golf Course – (Call 559497)(note: this facility is not managed by the Council)
- Aston Leisure Centre - no dedicated room but have baby changing facilities that can be used for that purpose
- Herringthorpe Athletics Stadium-meeting room but none specific subject to availability
- Wath Leisure Centre - no dedicated room but have baby changing facilities that can be used for that purpose
- Thrybergh Country Park - none but meeting rooms may be used, subject to availability
- Ulley Country Park - none but meeting rooms may be used, subject to availability
- Rother Valley Country Park – café may be used for breastfeeding, plus upstairs rooms at watersports centre, if available and on request (Note: this facility is not managed by the Council)

Libraries and Cultural Facilities

- Central Library and Arts Centre - no current or planned facilities
- Civic Theatre - no current or planned facilities
- Aston Community Library- no current or planned facilities as the building is due to close April 2010
- Mowbray Gardens Library - none but meeting room may be used, subject to availability

- Swinton District Library-None but large upstairs meeting room/quiet area may be used, subject to availability
- Wath Library - none but large upstairs meeting room /quiet area may be used, subject to availability
- Thorpe Hesley Library - none but quiet space/meeting room in parish hall may be used, subject to availability
- Kimberworth Park Library - none
- Kimberworth library - none
- Greasbrough library - none
- Maltby Library - none
- Dinnington library – none
- Clifton Park Museum - no dedicated room, but baby changing facilities can be used

Customer Service Centres

- Dinnington Customer Service Centre - no rooms for public use
- Maltby Joint Service Centre - no dedicated room, although there are general meeting rooms that could be used. Facilities may be available in PCT part of building (check?)
- Swinton Customer Service Centre – none/staff only
- Wath Office - none/staff only
- Aston Customer Serviced Centre is due to open April 2010 - no dedicated facilities but meeting room may be used by staff only

Children's Centres

(Note: it is understood that all Children's Centres positively encourage breastfeeding, but the exact details of the facilities and arrangements are not known for all centres)

- Aughton Early Years Centre – dedicated feeding room
- Cortonwood Children's Centre
- Kimberworth Children's Centre
- Rawmarsh Children's Centre - no dedicated room but room available on request
- Rotherham Central Children's Centre
- Stepping Stones Children's Centre - no dedicated room but room available on request
- The Brookfield Centre
- The Sue Walker Children's Centre
- Thorpe Hesley Children's Centre
- Valley Children's Centre
- Coleridge Children's Centre
- Dinnington Children's Centre
- Park View Children's Centre
- Rockingham Children's Centre - no dedicated room but room available on request
- Silver Birch Children's Centre
- The Arnold Centre - a family room is available for feeding if needed
- The Meadows Children's Centre
- The Willow Tree Children's Centre
- Thrybergh Rainbow Centre
- Wath Victoria Children's Centre - dedicated room for breastfeeding

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28 April 2010
3.	Title:	Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel Review of Corporate Parenting Arrangements
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's All wards

5. Summary

The report sets out the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review into Corporate Parenting Arrangements, undertaken by the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel. The report was endorsed by Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee at its meeting of 16, April 2010 and is attached as **Appendix 1**.

6. Recommendations

- a. That Cabinet receives the report and recommendations**
- b. That the Cabinet's response to the recommendations be fed back to PSOC within two months of its submission.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 The former Social and Community Support Scrutiny Panel undertook a scrutiny review into the “Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents” in 2005. Despite some improvements, the observations of the 2005 review that outcomes for looked after children are poorer compared with the general population still hold true. As part of its current work programme, the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel agreed to revisit the review as it has not been evaluated in recent years.

The start of the review coincided with the ‘Notice to Improve’ being served on Rotherham MBC by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. In light of this, it is critical that we ensure that our arrangements are robust and we test whether the services we provide for our looked after population is ‘good enough for my child’.

7.2 The purpose of the review, chaired by Cllr Jane Austen, was to examine:

- the current arrangements for corporate parenting in Rotherham and how these measured against the 'Care Matters' agenda;
- if our arrangements were in line with best practice from other local authorities and other national bodies;
- the recommendations of 2005 scrutiny review into the ‘Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents’, to see whether they were relevant and ‘fit for purpose’.

7.3 The report was endorsed by Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee at its meeting of 16, April 2010. The recommendations from the review are detailed in Section 10 of the review and include:

- That the Council’s ‘Pledge’ to Looked After Children is incorporated into the Children and Young People’s Single Plan and informs the Corporate Parenting Strategy
- That a Corporate Parenting Board is established as a sub-group of the Children’s Board; its membership to include the lead member, key members with corporate parenting responsibilities, co-optees and relevant officers and partners as required.
- That the Corporate Parenting Board acts as a governing body to the virtual school
- That a training programme for Members is developed, reflecting different levels of corporate parenting responsibilities.
- That an annual report on all Corporate Parenting Board activity is presented by the Lead Member to full Council

7.4 The review proposes that a Corporate Parenting Board is established. However, the review group is mindful that by setting up another board, there is a potential issue about participation and duplication, particularly accommodating the board within Members' existing commitments. With this in mind, the review group recommends that should a corporate parenting board be established that the LAC Scrutiny Sub-Panel is disbanded and responsibility for scrutiny of corporate parenting issues reverts to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel.

8. Finance

A number of the review recommendations may have financial implications if adopted. This would require further exploration by the Strategic Leadership Team and Partners on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Authority's Corporate Parenting arrangements must contribute to improved and sustainable outcomes for looked after children and their families. These arrangements should bring together the relevant agencies to ensure that timely decisions are made about the care and educations of the Borough's most vulnerable children. Failure to ensure that our arrangements are robust may undermine this and negatively impact on future inspection judgements.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

see Section 4

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The report has been circulated to all agencies/individuals that participated in the review for their comments and to check for factual accuracy.

Draft Minutes Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee 16, April 2010.

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Corporate Parenting Arrangements

Review of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel

March 2010

Scrutiny Review Group:-

Cllr Jane Austen (chair)

Cllr Jo Burton

Cllr Barry Dodson

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The former Social and Community Support Scrutiny Panel undertook a scrutiny review into the “Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents” in 2005. As part of its current work programme, the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel agreed to revisit the review as it has not been evaluated in light of the Care Matters agenda, other Local Authority best practice or increased emphasis on corporate parenting in the inspection regime.

Many Local Authorities have consolidated their corporate parenting activity under the auspices of a “Corporate Parenting Board”. In Rotherham, some of the Corporate Parenting functions are carried out within the LAC Scrutiny Sub-Panel and some within Cabinet Member meetings. There are, however a number of functions which require a decision making body which incorporates a wider membership (for example the Governing Body of the looked after children’s “virtual school”). It is timely therefore, that corporate parenting current activity is reviewed to see if and where, improvements can be made.

The start of the review coincided with the ‘Notice to Improve’ being served on Rotherham MBC by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The Council is required to set in place a robust action plan for delivering improvements across Children and Young People’s Services, in particular looking at the weaknesses highlighted in the previous reviews and assessments, including OFSTED inspections of services to looked after children. It remains critical that we ensure that our arrangements are robust and we test whether the services we provide for our looked after population are ‘good enough for my child’.

The review makes fifteen recommendations (detailed in Section 10 of the report) that focus on the following areas:

- Looked After Children Council and Pledge
- Governance Arrangements
- Training and Guidance to elected members

Key recommendations include:

- That the Council’s ‘Pledge’ to Looked After Children is incorporated into the CYP Single Plan and informs the Corporate Parenting Strategy
- That a Corporate Parenting Board is established as a sub-group of the Children’s Board; its membership to include the lead member, key members with corporate parenting responsibilities, co-optees and relevant officers and partners as required.
- That the Corporate Parenting Board acts as a governing body to the virtual school
- That a training programme for Members is developed, reflecting different levels of corporate parenting responsibilities.
- That an annual report on all Corporate Parenting Board activity is presented by the Lead Member to full Council

2. ORIGINAL CONCERNS – WHY MEMBERS WANTED TO LOOK AT THIS ISSUE

The former Social and Community Support Scrutiny Panel undertook a scrutiny review into the “Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents” in 2005. Since the review, the Care Matters White Paper was published in 2006, initiating an ongoing programme to improve outcomes for children and young people in care. The OFSTED inspection framework has also changed considerably since this point.

The recommendations arising from the scrutiny review and how these relate to the wider governance arrangements for corporate parenting have not been re-examined in recent years. As part of its work programme, the Sub-Panel agreed to revisit the 2005 review to examine whether the recommendations are still fit for purpose and in line with accepted good practice.

Despite some improvements, the observations of the 2005 review that outcomes for looked after children are generally poorer compared with the general population still hold true. As an organisation, we are well aware that we have some considerable challenges ahead.

The Annual Performance Assessment in 2008 stated “management oversight for looked after children has not ensured they have been fully safeguarded”. A critical fostering inspection was published in early 2009 and the latest Children’s Service annual rating concluded that “the continuing gaps in the data are significant, particularly those relating to aspects of social care and services for Looked After Children”. There are also concerns about the standard of services provided in some of our children’s homes.

The start of the review coincided with the ‘Notice to Improve’ being served on Rotherham MBC by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The Council is required to set in place a robust action plan for delivering improvements across Children and Young People’s Services, in particular looking at the weaknesses highlighted in the previous OFSTED inspections, the Children’s First review and Comprehensive Area Assessment. It remains critical that we ensure that our arrangements are robust and we test whether the services we provide for our looked after population are ‘good enough for my child’.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following members were part of the review:

- Cllr Jane Austen (Chair)
- Cllr Jo Burton
- Cllr Barry Dodson

The purpose of the review was to examine:

- the current arrangements for corporate parenting in Rotherham and how these measures against the 'Care Matters' agenda;
- if our arrangements are in line with best practice from other local authorities and other national bodies;
- the recommendations of 2005 scrutiny review into the 'Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents' to see whether they are still relevant and fit for purpose.

As part of its evidence gathering process, key questions were asked to establish:

- Are there sound mechanisms within the Council for hearing and responding to the views of looked after children and care-leavers – and their parents/carers?
- Are we providing the best care possible to our looked after children and care-leavers?
- How do we provide leadership in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of looked after children?
- Do all councillors and officers understand why children need to be looked after and the legal and policy framework that governs this? What do we need to do to improve this?
- Are effective governance arrangements in place to implement any decisions regarding looked after children across the authority and partner agencies? Are these in line with current requirements and inspection guidance?
- What mechanisms are in place to ensure that issues arising from member visits and adoption/fostering panels are fed into processes and systems and acted upon? How do we make sure that the voice of children/young people placed outside of the Borough is heard?
- Have we made sure that the strategic plans of the children's services authority and joint plans with partner agencies meet the needs of looked after children and care-leavers?

The review began its evidence gathering in December 2009. Interviews were organised with the Cabinet Member, Members on the Fostering and Adoption Panels and officers from Children and Young People's Services. In addition, the review group spoke to Chief Executive of NHS Rotherham, the Chair of Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Board and the Chief Executive of RMBC. The review group also had the opportunity of visiting a meeting with members of the Looked after Children Council and were impressed by their enthusiasm and thoughtfulness.

The review coincided with the recent publication of the National Children's Bureau toolkit "Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice". The review used its self-audit to judge the effectiveness of current governance arrangements. Web-based searches and telephone interviews with other Children's Services were also undertaken.

The review group would like to thank all those who contributed to the review for their openness and co-operation.

4. HOW WE MEASURE AGAINST THE CARE MATTERS AGENDA

The corporate parenting responsibility has been emphasised in successive publications and government initiatives, with specific emphasis on improving the life chances and educational attainment for looked after children. The first review referred to the Quality Protects initiative and guidance issued on the role of the Corporate Parent set out in the joint government and LGIU publication "If this were my child ...". Soon after the review was concluded the Government set out its intentions to improve outcomes for looked after children in the Care Matters Green Paper "Transforming the Lives of Children in Care" (2006).

The subsequent White Paper, Care Matters: Time for Change sought to strengthen corporate parenting through a range of proposals, which are now captured in the Children and Young Person's Act. The Children and Young Persons Act, which was granted Royal Assent on 13 November 2008, provides the necessary legislative support to improve the care system for children and young people in England.

Regulations and guidance to support the programme of reform and the Act are being rolled out in a number of stages between 2009 and 2011. The Act reaffirms the statutory role of the local authority as corporate parent.

Care Matters sets out some specific expectations. Including:

- Each local authority to put in place arrangements for a 'Children in Care Council', with direct links to the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member.
- Expecting every local authority to set out its 'Pledge' to children in care. The pledge will cover the services and support children in care should expect to receive;
- Making clear that the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services should be responsible for leading improvements in corporate parenting;
- Introducing a three year programme of proportionate inspection of how local authorities are improving outcomes for children in care.

The latest report to Cabinet Member on the Care Matters agenda (9 Sept, 2009) reported that "on the whole service provision is good and many aspects of the proposed legislation are incorporated within existing practice. Where gaps have been identified, actions plans have been developed to ensure compliance".

The review group did not examine the operational aspects of the Care Matters agenda, focusing more on the governance arrangements and whether these were in keeping with the spirit of the white paper and subsequent guidance

As part of its commitment to the Care Matters agenda, the Government commissioned the National Children's Bureau to develop a toolkit for councils "Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice". The toolkit provides a self-audit

checklist by which the authority can measure how its systems and processes meet its responsibilities as a corporate parent, particularly in light of the requirements of Care Matters.

The toolkit also suggests that there should be a body with clear responsibility for leadership and governance, including:

- clarity about the group's power to deploy resources
- an understanding about decision-making works within the organisation
- an understanding about how the body relates to tiers of management, the overview and scrutiny function and other agencies or boards

New inspection arrangements in place from April 2009 place greater emphasis on outcomes for children in care and the council will need to demonstrate that it is effective in meeting the needs of looked after children. In particular the inspection will examine:

- the effectiveness of corporate parenting approaches
- outcomes for looked after children and follow up specific issues as required.

The Guidance states that “the inspection will always scrutinise the work of the Children’s Trust Board and in particular the Corporate Parenting Board and its impact on improving the outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.”

There is a clear inference in the OFSTED guidance and throughout the NCB toolkit that the most effective way to address corporate parenting issues is through a “corporate parenting panel or board”. Although the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel has been in operation since 2006, it does not involve all the key agencies and decision makers in a systematic way.

4.1 **How are our corporate parenting arrangements currently organised**

The review group undertook the audit outlined in the NCB toolkit with officers and through interviews to establish where perceived gaps lie in our leadership and governance arrangements. The audit is attached as Appendix 1.

Although there were many areas where activity could be evidenced strongly (for example advocacy and complaints), it is the view of the group that the audit highlighted some important gaps. These include:

- Absence of Corporate Parenting Group with multi agency representation
- Lack of definition about the respective roles (for example role of the member on the Fostering Panel)
- Lack of clarity about lines of reporting (how do Members on the Fostering or Adoption Panels formally feed in concerns or issues)
- Absence of a shared protocol for receiving/actioning recommendations arising from the bodies with a corporate parenting remit

- Whether Elected Members have sufficient understanding of their respective roles as Corporate Parents
- How we show the full involvement of looked after children and care leavers in our systems and processes, demonstrating that we take their care seriously, and ensure that services for them are as good as for our own children.
- Lack of clarity about the links between the Local Strategic Partnership, Children's Board and our Corporate Parenting arrangement

Given the concerns about "management oversight" raised in the previous OFSTED report, it is critical that we are confident that our leadership and governance arrangements are fit for purpose.

5. WHAT IS CURRENT GOOD PRACTICE ELSEWHERE

As part of the review Members examined the systems and processes in place in other authorities. As a starting point, we looked at the corporate parenting arrangements of a number of local authorities whose children and young people's services were rated as performing well or excellently or those who had received a 'green flag' in the recent Comprehensive Area Assessment 'round'. We also made a comparison with authorities in our 'benchmarking' group.

We established that a number of other authorities had established a specific corporate parenting panel. Although models varied from authority to authority, there are some broad similarities. Telford and Wrekin Council, Gateshead, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council, London Borough of Camden and Derby City Council have a Corporate Parenting Board that feeds into Trust or Trust Arrangements. The body brings in partners from health and other agencies and Senior Officers (from across the Authority as required), ensuring provision across the five Every Child Matters outcomes and strategic 'buy-in'. Young people either have direct representation or clear routes of participation. All report to overview and scrutiny, although this varies from regular reporting to a dedicated panel to an annual report being presented to scrutiny.

Several of the above examples are chaired by the Lead Member for Children and Young People's Services. Other models included key elected members including those on the Fostering and Adoption Panels and/or involved in Regulation 33 visits (including Middlesbrough Council and Durham Council). Many included co-optees, for example Foster Carers or Designated Governors¹. There was also a suggestion that the corporate parenting panel could act as a governing body to the

¹ Currently LAC Scrutiny Sub-Panel has both foster carers and designated governors as non-voting co-opted members.

virtual school that the authority is required to establish under the Children and Young Person's Act 2008. We do not currently have such an arrangement in Rotherham.

As part of the review, we asked officers from other authorities their views on whether the corporate parenting was 'making a difference'. Anecdotally they suggested that through these structures there is earlier, more informal consultation and scrutiny on corporate parenting matters. This leads to members being better informed and more involved and also provides them with direct contact with officers and service users. This may have the affect of making members more aware of their corporate parenting responsibilities and more able to ask the useful questions of the service. Having elected members involved in corporate parenting events also focuses the minds of officers and ensures that the outcomes for children are explicitly considered.

6. 2005 SCRUTINY REVIEW: ROLE OF COUNCILLOR AS CORPORATE PARENT

The original review was well-received and was featured as a case study on the Improvement and Development Agency website as an example of good practice. Even though there have been major changes to the legislative framework, many of the conclusions of the 2005 Scrutiny Review are still largely relevant. The recommendations from the review are attached as Appendix 2.

The recommendations fell into seven broad categories

- executive arrangements
- training and guidance
- information and advice
- future scrutiny arrangements for looked after children and young people
- designated governors
- celebration events
- voice and influence

In this section, we comment largely on executive arrangements, training and guidance and information to members.

The review was presented to Cabinet in September 2005. A major recommendation of the review was that a corporate parenting strategy was developed. This was done in early 2006 although it is unclear whether it has been since updated in line with the Care Matters agenda and accompanying legislative changes. The Strategy was also developed prior to the establishment of the LAC Council and development of the 'pledge'. Efforts should be made to ensure that the strategy reflects the issues raised in the pledge.

The review made a recommendation that the Executive arrangements should explicitly reflect the corporate parenting responsibilities of the Lead Member. However, there is no evidence that these have been revisited since the

introduction of Care Matters. It is suggested that the portfolio of the Lead member is amended accordingly. Although we acknowledge that the Lead Member has a special and distinct role, we believe that the corporate parenting role is of such significance that the portfolio of each executive member should reflect their shared responsibility as corporate parents and its importance to the Council.

The review focused on the training and development available to support members in their corporate parenting role. Although this has been part of the member development induction programme, relatively few members have received up-to-date training. Given the changes in legislation and continued need to improve outcomes for looked after children, it is important that training is provided which is proportionate for the level of responsibility. For the lead member this would equate to such programmes as the IDeA leadership academy. The NCB toolkit defines three levels of responsibility:

- Universal responsibility (level 1) applicable to all councillors:
- Targeted responsibility (level 2) for councillors who undertake visits to children's homes (Regulation 33 visits), members on the Fostering and Adoption Panels or who are members of a corporate parenting group.
- Specialist responsibility (level 3) for Lead Member for Children's Services and the chairs of corporate parenting groups

It also recommended that regular bulletins be issued to all members updating them of service developments and key messages. Although this was a recommendation from the 2005 Review, a bulletin has not been circulated for some time now. However, we consider that it is timely to reinstate the bulletin to remind all Members of their corporate parenting responsibilities. Drawing on good practice elsewhere the review group recommends that an annual report is also presented to Council by the Lead Member outlining corporate parenting activity. This could also incorporate presentations by the Looked After Children's Council on their experiences of services and suggestions for improvement.

7. ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE INTERVIEWS

There was a broad consensus emerging from the discussion with officers and the Cabinet Member. They agreed that an operational body with responsibility for co-ordinating different agencies, with a direct link to the Looked After Children's Council, would provide leadership. That is not to say that the activity does not take place already; there is evidence of good joint working between the various partners and different parts the Council (for example the work of the LAC nurse and the focus on health checks and the work of Neighbourhoods and Adult services in transition planning and housing services). However, the point was made that we need to be confident that we can "...focus attention and make corporate parenting a priority. A board would have more teeth and clearer lines of accountability – we can evidence joined up working and be confident that we are involving the right partners".

With this in mind, the review group was unclear whether clear links existed between the Children's Board, Safeguarding Board and the Local Strategic

Partnership, particularly in respect of how they discharged their corporate parenting responsibilities.

The review group was concerned that there were no formal routes for members on the Fostering and Adoption Panels to feed concerns to the Lead Member. Whilst there is much to be said for arrangements which 'cut through bureaucracy', there should be a way of officially gathering comments and feedback from such a vital function to ensure that "management oversight" is there. This also applies to feedback from member visits to children's homes.

Both members on the Fostering and Adoption Panels commented on the volume of information that was presented and the need to read the papers in detail to understand the complexity of the cases. Both remarked that it required a great deal of time and energy to give this role the attention it deserved. This is in addition to their other roles as Councillors in their communities, on scrutiny panels or on other bodies such as planning or licensing. At present only one Member sits on each respective body. Although training is provided on an ongoing basis, there was a view that members are 'pushed in at the deep end'. A suggestion was made, that additional members could be recruited to the role with the less experienced being mentored by the established member. This would help with succession planning and continuity. It may also speed the decision making process if additional members are available to attend panels.

The review group spoke to the Manager of the Get Real Team and the Assistant Director from the School Effectiveness Service. Most schools had arrangements for Designated Governors and teachers in line with legislative requirements, although we currently have not decided what arrangements should be in place for the development of a governing or management body to the 'virtual school'.

The current pressure on foster placements within the borough has meant that it is necessary to seek a number of placements in the independent sector. These are often outside the area. Many witnesses suggested that a corporate parenting board would bring the relevant agencies together to ensure that timely decisions were made about the care and education needs of 'out-of-authority' children, many of whom will have complex needs. The review coincided with the publication of the Department of Health National Framework for Children and Young People's Continuing Care. This Framework sets out a process for agreeing packages of continuing care for those children and young people under the age of 18. It describes how local organisations, including PCTs and local authorities, should work together to assess need and put in place packages of continuing care. The likelihood is that many of the children who fall into this category will be looked after. The Chief Executive of NHS Rotherham suggested that the process for arriving at decisions for joint funding of placements could be improved. It is important therefore that action is taken to ensure local compliance with the National Framework for Children and Young People's Continuing Care.

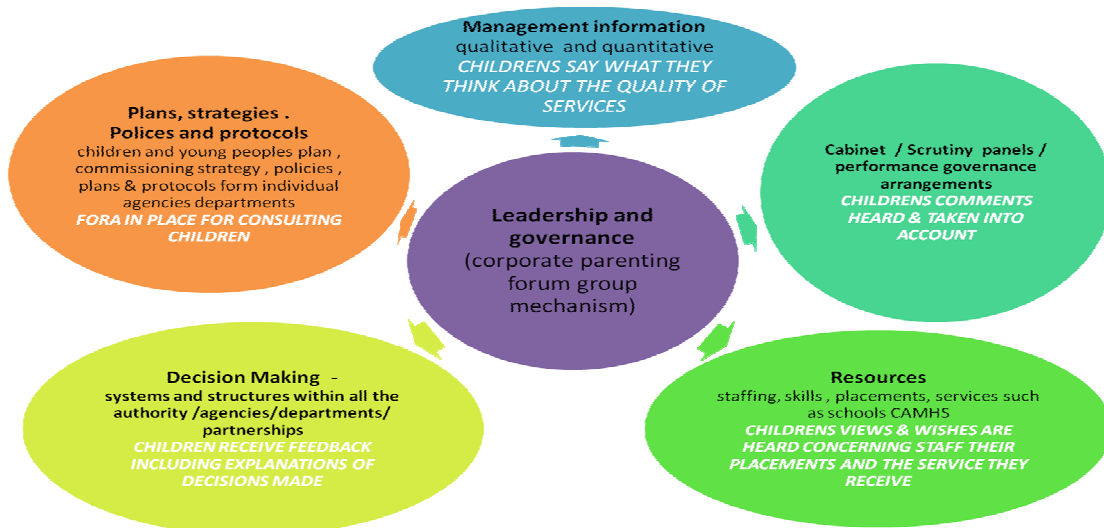
Most witnesses spoke of the need to develop early intervention strategies and fully utilise the common assessment framework, providing appropriate services at the appropriate time to ensure that children do not 'slip through the net'. There was a suggestion that the corporate parenting role should be redefined to ensure that the

focus is not only on those who are already in the care system but also on the more vulnerable children who are at greater risk of becoming looked after. This should be supported. The Lead Member has proposed member safeguarding champions in each of the localities. The role of the champion is yet to be defined, however there are potential links between this role and the proposed corporate parenting board.

8. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN COUNCIL AND PLEDGE

A key plank of the Care Matters agenda is the setting up of a Children in Care Council. The aim of the council is to ensure that the views and aspirations of looked after children are collected and passed to the director of children's services, having an impact on services.

The model below is taken from London Borough of Tower Hamlets and demonstrates how looked after children's views influence and shape service delivery.



The 2005 review recommended that a leaflet be delivered explaining the role of councillors as corporate parents. The 'Rights2Rights' group developed this and a looked after children's 'promise' outlining the expectation that looked after children could have of their corporate parents. This was signed by the Lead Member, Director and Chair of Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel. Since then, work has been undertaken by the LAC Council to develop a 'pledge' in line with the expectations of Care Matters, although this is widely acknowledged to be work in progress. It is unclear how the 'pledge' and 'promise' are used to influence service design or delivery. The refresh of the Children and Young People's Single Plan is an ideal opportunity to incorporate these views. It is also vital that our partner agencies 'sign-up' to the principles in the pledge to ensure that there is a consistent approach to our work.

The review group met with members of the LAC Council. Some key issues emerged during the lively discussions and interactive session:

- Time to see and speak to social worker
- Need to improve aspirations and expectations for LAC.
- Access to activities
- How we make sure that the voice of all looked after children and young people is heard.

Young people made clear that they understood their responsibilities as representatives of the wider LAC cohort. However, it is evident that we need to consider more innovative ways of connecting with our looked after population to make sure we hear the voice of the wider population, including those who are placed out of the borough. Social networking offers new opportunities to communicate and harness views and opinions about how services are delivered. Consideration should be given to how we tap into new technologies in a safe and appropriate way.

The first review suggested that one way that the Council could mark the achievements of looked after children and care leavers, was to hold regular 'celebration' events for them and their carers. We appreciate that resources are extremely pressured, however, would want to reiterate their value and importance.

Examples from other authorities have demonstrated how the issues arising from the 'pledge' have been used to influence the corporate parenting strategy and work of the Board. Whilst members of the LAC Council meet with the Lead Member, Chair of LAC Scrutiny and the Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Services we consider that we should be doing more to demonstrate that the views and aspirations of looked after children and young people and care leavers are at the heart of our service design and delivery.

9. CONCLUSION

In light of the guidance and change to the inspection framework, there is a strong argument to ensure that there should be clear lines of communication and co-ordination between Members with corporate parenting responsibilities and officers and partners.

An option could be to leave our current arrangements substantially unchanged. To do so, however, would be unlikely to ensure the joined-up, strategic drive that is necessary to improve outcomes for Looked-After Children. We are therefore recommending that a Corporate Parenting Board is established as a working group of the Council, with decision-making powers, responsible for championing the interests of looked after children and involving them in the discussion of corporate parenting issues.

However, we are mindful that by setting up another board, there is a potential issue about participation and duplication. It is important that the relevant officers attend at the relevant time rather than a blanket requirement on their attendance.

Similarly, consideration should be given to accommodating the board within Members' existing commitments, rather than creating additional meetings. With this in mind, the review group recommend that should a corporate parenting board be established that the LAC Scrutiny Sub-Panel is disbanded and responsibility for scrutiny of corporate parenting issues reverts to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel.

We have not prescribed the membership of the proposed board, other than it is chaired by the Lead Member, mindful that we are proposing a working group rather than a large cumbersome committee. We do however suggest that consideration be given to maintaining the link to scrutiny through the membership of either the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel. It is also essential that the members on the Adoption and Fostering Panels are able to feed into the Board. If additional members are to be included, these could be drawn from Safeguarding Champions, members who attend visits to Children's Homes or Cabinet Advisers. The Scrutiny Sub-Panel has benefited greatly from the contribution of co-optees, who have shared their experiences and perspectives on service delivery and where improvements can be made. It is important that this expertise is not lost and it is recommended that any future body should incorporate co-optees in its membership.

Making sure the 'right people' are involved is one aspect of our corporate parenting responsibilities. It is critical that we ensure that members are confident in the respective roles and given the right information at the right time to provide effective challenge and oversight. At the time of writing, proposals are being considered to enhance member development in both safeguarding and corporate parenting, prompted in part by this scrutiny review.

It is also important that the LAC Council is an integral part of local decision-making about the services and support available to looked after children and young people and care leavers. However in doing this, as corporate parents, we need to ensure that resources are available and more importantly, that they have the necessary influence and status to make change happen.

10. RECOMMENDATION

Looked After Children Council and Pledge

1. Ensure sign up to the Looked After Children Pledge by all Council services and supporting its adoption by partner agencies
2. That the Council's 'Pledge' to Looked After Children is incorporated into the CYP Single Plan and informs the Corporate Parenting Strategy
3. That support is given to regular celebration events for Looked After Children, Care Leavers and their Carers

Governance Arrangements

4. That a Corporate Parenting Board is established as a sub-group of the Children's Board; its membership to include the lead member, key members

with corporate parenting responsibilities, co-optees and relevant officers and partners as required.

5. That the portfolios of the Lead Member and other Cabinet Members are amended to explicitly reflect their corporate parenting responsibilities
6. That the work programme of the Corporate Parenting Board be based on the issues raised in the pledge to ensure that the participation of looked after children is at the heart of its work
7. That the Corporate Parenting Board acts as a governing body to the virtual school
8. That the Corporate Parenting Board has formal links to the work of the Looked After Children's Council
9. That terms of reference be developed for the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure clear lines of communication and reporting between this body and the relevant Scrutiny Panel
10. On the creation of a Corporate Parenting Board, to minimise duplication between respective bodies, that the LAC Scrutiny Sub-Panel is disbanded
11. That action is taken to ensure local compliance with the National Framework for Children and Young People's Continuing Care

Training and Guidance

12. That a training programme for Members is developed, reflecting different levels of corporate parenting responsibilities.
13. That role definitions are developed for Members on the Adoption and Fostering Panels
14. That an annual report on all Corporate Parenting Board activity is presented by the Lead Member to full Council
15. That quarterly bulletins are issued to all Members with updates on corporate parenting performance and activity
16. That work is undertaken to establish the role of Safeguarding Member Champions in localities with appropriate training and support

11. THANKS

- Cllr Shaun Wright, Lead Member, Children and Young People's Services
- Cllr Jane Havenhand, Adoption Panel
- Andy Buck, Chief Executive NHS Rotherham
- Alan Hazell, Chair, Rotherham Children's Safeguarding Board
- Martin Kimber, Chief Executive RMBC
- Joyce Thacker, Strategic Director, Children and Young People's Services
- Lyn Burns, Interim Director, Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding, Children and Young People's Services
- Sue May, Service Manager Provider Services, Children and Young People's Services
- Bob Horrocks, Corporate Children's Officer, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
- Ann Turner, Assistant Director and Tim Aldridge, Principal Officer, LAC Social Work, London Borough of Camden
- John Evans, Scrutiny Officer

12. REFERENCES

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13. APPENDIX 1



A checklist for corporate parents

Reproduced from *Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice – A toolkit for Councils*
(page 54-60)

Governance and leadership

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do you have a multi-agency corporate parenting group?			x	
Are the right agencies represented? (That is to say, all those who have a role in improving the outcomes for looked after children and care-leavers.)			x	
Does it have clear terms of reference?			x	
Is it clear what decisions it can make?			x	
Does it have a workplan?			x	
Is it clear what recommendations are referred to other committees/agencies for decision?			x	
Are there clear links with other relevant committees/groups across all agencies?			x	
Action(s) needed				
<p><u>Corporate Parenting Group</u> Develop Corporate Parenting Group with multi agency representation Develop Terms of Reference Define decision making responsibilities for group in line with portfolio responsibilities of Cabinet Member etc Establish lines of reporting and protocols for receiving/actioning recommendations Define relationships between Children's Board/LSP and bodies/agencies with Corporate Parenting responsibilities</p> <p><u>Wider Corporate Parenting</u> Brief all Members on Corporate Parenting and their role Ensure Induction materials are up-to-date regarding corporate parenting</p>				

	Yes	Partly	No	• Comments
Do you have an elected member/s who acts as a champion for looked after children and care-leavers?	x			Lead Member acts as Champion. Also Lead Member has recommended that Member Safeguarding Champions be introduced in Localities. However, no clear definition for respective role and responsibilities.
Is this person different from the Lead Member of Children's Services established under Section 19 of the Children Act 2004?	N/A			
Name of champion: Position:			Name of lead member: Position:	
Action(s) needed				
To consider whether there needs to be a separate member champion for LAC and if so, to clarify the role. To clarify the roles and responsibilities of Member safeguarding champions				
	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Have you defined elected members' roles and responsibilities for looked after children and care-leavers?				.
Executive/cabinet members?		x		Needs refreshing. Lead Member for Children and Young People's Services has specific role but portfolio does not reflect this. Does each of the Executive Members' portfolios need to reflect the wider Corporate Parenting Responsibility attached to their leadership role?

Scrutiny members?	x			Terms of reference developed for LAC Scrutiny Sub-Panel
Non-executive members/backbenchers?		x		Covered in induction but requires refreshing. Briefings to Elected Members
Members of district councils?	N/A			
Lead member?		x		
Members of corporate parenting group?			x	
Other?		x		Co-optees on LAC Scrutiny have attended some training on Panel
Action(s) needed				
Members induction Revisit members role Member development Amendment to portfolio (constitution)				

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Does the corporate parenting group have clear links with the following:				
Children's strategic partnership?			x	
Strategic board of the children's trust?			x	
Local safeguarding children's board?			x	
Council executive?			x	
Full council?			x	
Scrutiny committee/s?			x	
Other?			x	
Action(s) needed				
Review links and structures				

Policies

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do you have the following policies for looked after children and care-leavers?				
Kinship care policy?		x		A large piece of on going work around Fostering and Kinship care.
Permanency?	x			Needs refreshing.
Out-of-authority looked after children and care-leavers?			x	Priority for Children and Young People's Services.
Behaviour management, including physical intervention?	x			

Physical contact?		x		RMBC Touch Guidance developed by LAAC team. Needs refreshing.
Sex and relationships?	x			
Smoking and substance use?	x			
Meeting the needs of black and other minority ethnic children?	x			Recently refreshed. Recognised a good by Ofsted.
Whistle-blowing?	x			
Other?	x			Ofsted provides its own list of Policies for self assessment.
Action(s) needed				
Develop policy for working with out-of-authority placements				

Participation

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do you have fora or other mechanisms for consulting:				
Looked after children across the age groups?	x			LAC Council Right to Rights
Care-leavers?	x			Leaving Care Team Recently appointed Participation Worker
Their parents?		x		Do consult with LAC parents during foster care review. How do we ensure capture the overall views of parents?

Action(s) needed

LAC Council is in an early stage of development however, need to ensure that the issues arising from the 'Pledge' and the Council are reflected in service improvement. Also need to consider how to we reach the 'seldom heard', particularly those in out-of-authority placements.

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do all agencies and providers have ways of consulting looked after children, care-leavers and their parents?		x		Foster parents group Right-to-rights LAC Council

Action(s) needed

See above

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do you hold celebration events for looked after children and care-leavers?	x			Education awards/Young Champions/work with Inspire Rotherham
Do you hold other events for looked after children and care-leavers?	x			Happy Mondays Adopted/Children Support Group

Action(s) needed

Continue support for celebration events

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do all looked after children and care-leavers have access to advocacy services?	x			Voice and Influence Team Right to Rights Group
Do all looked after children and care-leavers have clear information about how to make complaints?	x			All LAC receive a back pack with relevant information for young people including complaints + voice and influence etc.
Does the information about complaints get collated and acted upon?	x			Annual reports of complaints to Scrutiny
Action(s) needed				

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do you have information (in a range of media for all ages/levels of ability) explaining what it means to be looked after for the following?				
Looked after children?	x			Ongoing review process
Care-leavers?	x			
Their parents?			x	
Action(s) needed				
Develop systems to improve the way we involve birth parents and families.				

Reports

	Yes	Partly	No	Evidence/Comments
Do you receive regular reports from officers on the following outcomes for looked after children and care-leavers?				
• Being healthy?		x		Reports go to LAC Scrutiny – uncertain whether similar reports go to executive
• Staying safe?		x		As above
• Enjoying and achieving?		x		As above
• Making a positive contribution?		x		As above
• Achieving economic well-being?		x		As above
• If so, do the reports include qualitative as well as quantitative information?		x		Only sporadically
• Do you use the information to inform your planning?		x		Unclear how information is used to inform planning
Action(s) needed				
Establish reporting mechanisms and clear lines of communication/accountability				

What needs do you think you are meeting well/not well?

Not well

Governance and leadership – arrangements

Define roles of members, reflecting the differing tiers of responsibility

Reporting mechanisms – are we confident that actions recommended by one body is actioned by the relevant agency

Need to consolidate the 'voice' of looked after children and young people to ensure that they are able to influence the direction and delivery of services

Levels of awareness, particularly amongst members

Well

Policy arrangements

Advocacy arrangements

Complaints

14. **APPENDIX 2**

RECOMMENDATIONS – Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents

Agreed at Social and Community Support Scrutiny Panel 6th May 2005

Submitted to Cabinet 6th July 2005

Action Plan approved by Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services 27th Sept 05

Executive

- Ensure that the new Executive arrangements for children and young people's services maintain an overview of services to address the needs of LACYP and care leavers. This should include health, education, employment and training, leisure, housing and social care.
- That the Lead Member for Children's Services ensures that the Children and Young People's Board addresses the needs of LACYP and care leavers through its partnership arrangements.
- That work is undertaken to develop a corporate parenting policy and strategy in the Council and work be undertaken to ensure that relevant protocols are developed and adopted by partners.

Training and Guidance

- That appropriate training be undertaken with new members to introduce them to the corporate parenting role as part of their induction.
- That all relevant members undertake training on their corporate parenting role (at both executive and scrutiny level).
- That regular bulletins should be issued to all members updating them of service developments and key messages.
- That guidance should be developed and issued to all members on their corporate parenting role. This should also include protocols for visits to residential units.
- That briefing/seminars on the corporate parenting role should be scheduled into the Member Development Programme.

Information to Looked-After Children and Young People and Care leavers

- That a leaflet is developed and distributed to all LACYP and care leavers explaining the role of councillors as their 'corporate parents'.

Future Scrutiny Arrangements

- That a Looked-After-Children Scrutiny sub-panel be set up to monitor outcomes and scrutinise services for LACYP and care leavers. The panel's membership should be drawn from all scrutiny panels. This should be done initially for a twelve month period to commence early in the 2005/06 municipal year.

- That the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services co-ordinates regular meetings with LACYP and care leavers (at least twice yearly) to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet with relevant members.

Designated Governors

- That members who are school governors be encourage to take-up the role of designated governor for LACYP

Celebration Events

- That funding is identified and secured for celebration events for LACYP and foster carers.

Voice and Influence

- That the Youth Cabinet is encouraged to explore strengthening the representation of looked after children in their structures.
- That further work be undertaken through 'Voice and Influence' to develop links with LACYP and care leavers and existing Children's Rights Group and care leaver's organisations.
- That consideration be given to developing a 'buddying' or shadowing arrangement to enable LACYP and/or care leavers to be linked to executive or scrutiny members

For further information about this report please contact:

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28th April 2010
3.	Title:	Supporting the Local Economy
4.	Directorate:	Financial Services

5. Summary

The Council is committed to supporting business growth in Rotherham through engaging with the local provider market to make doing business with the Council as easy as possible. The Council also provides support to local businesses to give them the capability to compete for business. Our commitment was recognised by the award of Beacon Status for Supporting New Businesses. The Council's Procurement Strategy 2009 – 2012 also demonstrates this commitment and highlights the actions we are currently taking to further increase support for the local economy.

This report sets out how the Council is currently supporting the local economy through its procurement function and outlines actions being planned in order to strengthen this support including a proposal to take a town-wide and public sector-wide approach to supporting the local economy in Rotherham.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- **Endorse the ongoing actions being taken to support the local economy as set out in Section 7.2.**
- **Approve the additional actions proposed in order to strengthen this support as set out in Section 7.4.**
- **Approve the proposal in Section 7.5 to work more proactively with other public sector agencies in the town to improve support to the local economy through the Local Strategic Partnership.**

Proposals and Details

7.1 Introduction

Supporting the Local Economy is one of the 9 themes within the refreshed Procurement Strategy 2009 – 2012 as approved by Cabinet.

The Council seeks to achieve community benefits through procurement by actively engaging with a diverse range of suppliers, recognising that long term benefits for Rotherham can be achieved through a mixture of provision by:

- Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
- Black and minority ethnic (BME), women and disabled people owned and run organisations, which are also often SMEs;
- Voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations; and
- Local companies.

Small and local organisations may offer the following benefits to the Council:

- They can often respond quickly and flexibly to customer needs;
- They can be a source of innovation, ideas and new products;
- They can offer cash savings, improved quality, service and effectiveness;
- They may have a better understanding and better access to diverse groups and communities, including hard to reach groups; and
- They may provide added value in supporting other services delivered to local people.

Whilst procurement legislation means that all companies, including small or local businesses, have to compete for business against potentially large, national and even multi-national companies, there are actions that the Council is taking, and can take, to help those small or local businesses be in a better position to compete whilst still maintaining proper procurement processes. We are already doing some of these, as set out in section 7.2 of the report. A recent report published by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) with support from the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) – “More Bang for the Public Buck” – highlighted a number of additional areas where local public sector organisations are supporting local economies. These have been reviewed and, whilst we are already following some of this good practice, there are further suggestions which we will be taking forward.

7.2 How is our procurement approach currently supporting the local economy?

By addressing barriers to trading with us, the Council is able to stimulate markets and create a more sustainable supplier base. Many of the actions we have taken are helping local suppliers, VCS and SME suppliers. This is because the same barriers are often an issue for all 3 supplier bases. Support is currently being provided as follows:

Council Website

Work has been undertaken to ensure that the procurement pages of the recently refreshed Council website contain relevant information to help suppliers trade with us. By providing appropriate information to our suppliers, we are able to stimulate the market and also influence suppliers to consider such issues as the environment and

equality and diversity, which contribute to both supplier sustainability and environmental sustainability. Information recently added to the procurement pages includes:

- Equality and diversity advice for suppliers;
- Environmental advice and signposting;
- “How To Do Business” Guide; and
- Procurement Forward Plan.

The Procurement Forward Plan

The Procurement Forward Plan is available through the procurement pages on the Council’s website and brings together all contract opportunities for up to 3 years in advance, enabling suppliers to ‘gear up’ to tendering, both stimulating the market and ensuring a sustainable supplier base. The Procurement Forward Plan is updated on a monthly basis and provides high level information on contract opportunities together with contact details for further information. The Plan also contains a link to the supplier contract management system (SCMS) where all contracts shown on the plan are advertised.

Supplier Contract Management System (SCMS)

SCMS has been rolled out to all areas of procurement within the Council. Training has been provided to the VCS via Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) to ensure that SCMS is beneficial to the sector and therefore stimulates the market. The Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce is working with local businesses to promote the use of SCMS. SCMS is now used by 22 Local Authorities and is free for suppliers to use. Suppliers are able to enter parameters around the type of contract opportunities they are interested in and receive automated updates when suitable contracts are advertised.

Meet the Buyer

Following on from the successful Meet the Buyer Event in March 2009, the Council hosted a second event on 26th January 2010. These events give local suppliers an opportunity to speak to Council officers about potential and actual contract opportunities, ask questions about how to trade with the Council and attend useful workshops as well as training sessions on SCMS and e-procurement. There are also networking opportunities and opportunities to speak to buyers from other public sector organisations, as well as information on help that is available to small and local businesses. Over 250 delegates attended the 2009 event and over 320 attended the 2010 event. The 2009 event saw the successful introduction of the Council’s Supplier Awards where excellent suppliers to the Council were recognised and presented with awards by the Mayor of Rotherham. Feedback on the event has been very positive.

Standardised Contract Clauses

Where possible, standardised contract clauses and standardised pre-tender questionnaires (PTQs) are used to simplify processes for suppliers, this includes standard clauses for equality and diversity and environmental considerations. A list of standards which Rotherham Council requires suppliers to have has been produced and published on the Council procurement website pages so that potential suppliers know what will be expected of them when tendering for contracts.

Assessing the Impact on the Local Economy

As part of the refreshed RBT Performance Management Framework, an additional performance measure was added to the suite. This ensures that contracts currently let to a local supplier, and nearing the end of the contract period, are risk assessed for impact on the local economy if the contract is not won again by the local supplier. If a supplier is deemed to be at risk following the assessment, RBT will work with the supplier to improve their chances of winning the contract again through dialogue with them to remind the provider when the contract is due for renewal and to discuss any:

- Performance matters which require consideration;
- Extra demands the new contract may make;
- Changes to the contract; and
- Help the provider may need to be in a position to complete a successful tender.

Supporting SMEs

Work is also continuing to support SMEs, many of whom are local suppliers, and information has been collated from all areas of the authority to benchmark against Central Government's document 'Accelerating the SME Engine'. One piece of work to follow this benchmarking is to compile a standard contracts register that can be published on our website. We are working with the other sub-regional authorities to develop a standard template for this so that local suppliers can become familiar with the layout.

SME Friendly Concordat

The Council has signed up to the SME Friendly Concordat which sets out what small firms and others supplying Local Government can expect when tendering for Local Authority contracts. It sets out standards in order to ensure that suppliers of all kinds are treated equally. The Concordat also sets out the standards that public sector buyers should expect from their suppliers. The principles and associated guidelines of the Concordat have been incorporated into our procurement processes.

Prompt Payment

The Council has signed up to the Government's Prompt Payment Code to demonstrate to suppliers that they can have confidence that the Council will promptly pay invoices. Our improved performance in paying undisputed invoices within 30 days in 2009-10 demonstrates this commitment, as does the Council's ongoing focus on improving prompt payment performance. Performance has increased from 92% in 2008/09 to 94.9% in 2009/10. Based on available benchmarking information, this is above the average for other Metropolitan Boroughs of 91.1%. In 2009/10, Rotherham Council paid 82% of all undisputed invoices within 20 days and 53% within 10 days.

Local Consortia Building

The Council has also worked with local suppliers on consortium building. For example we have worked with VAR in developing the Adult Services Consortium which brings together approximately 30 VCS providers of Adult Social Care and provides assistance to help with tender readiness and capacity building. All providers in the consortium are based in Rotherham and deliver services in the town, although some are either affiliated to or are part of a national or regional organisation. The Adult Services Consortium won the Supplier Award for Best Supplier Collaboration in the Council's Supplier Awards 2010.

7.3 Monitoring performance

In order to track how we are supporting the local economy through our procurement activity, the Council has a Local Performance Indicator (LPI) which is monitored on an annual basis. Due to the time needed to collate data, this measure reports annually for the previous financial year, i.e. figures reported in 2009/10 relate to spend in 2008/09. For this indicator 'local' is defined as within the borough of Rotherham only. Performance in 2009/10 achieved 25.41% so for every £4 of spend by the Council, at least £1 was spent with local suppliers. This is below the performance achieved in 2008/09 which was 32.9%.

There are a number of reasons why performance against this indicator has decreased. One way of making procurement savings is to combine smaller contracts into larger contracts. Whilst these contracts can help achieve economies of scale they can also prove harder for local and smaller businesses to compete for. Similarly collaborative procurement with other Local Authorities can achieve savings and increase value for money, but again collaboration increases the sizes of contracts.

This indicator is calculated using the Spikes Cavell Observatory, which is used by 313 different public sector organisations and allows us to benchmark our performance against them. There are 21 other Metropolitan Borough Councils currently using this tool to monitor their performance. The Metropolitan Borough Council average for local spend in 2009/10 was 23.98% and the average performance for all Local Authorities was 20.16%. Whilst Rotherham Council's performance is, therefore, above average compared to other metropolitan boroughs and all local authorities, it is important that we seek to build on this performance to further drive up support for the local economy.

One point to note is that the data for this indicator is calculated on the address given on the invoice from the supplier. This is the same for all 313 organisations who use this performance indicator. A manual approach would not be possible, without significant staff resources, given the huge numbers of invoices processed by the Council each year. This means that some local spend will not be captured within the indicator. Additionally, contracts issued by the Council to national companies will often involve sub-contracting to local suppliers. This supply chain spend would not be included in the reported performance either although this spend is having a positive impact on the local economy.

The performance on this indicator therefore means that **at least** 25.41% of the Council's spend goes to local businesses. Adding in spend where the billing company's address is outside of Rotherham and sub-contracted spend in Rotherham means that the actual impact we are having on the local economy would be much higher. Although it is difficult to give an accurate position on what this might be, we are currently looking at how we strengthen reporting against this measure by investigating how contracted local spend which is not currently captured can be captured and how to capture local spend in the supply chain. This may require investment in more sophisticated software tools.

7.4 Improving Performance

It is proposed that, in addition to the existing work to support the local economy, the following further work is taken forward. Some of this work is already underway and builds on advice from the recent APSE report "More Bang for the Public Buck":

- **Meet the Buyer:** The Council has made a commitment in the Procurement Strategy to deliver further Meet the Buyer Events in 2011 and 2012 to continue to engage with and support local businesses. A survey of attendees from the 2010 event who provided contact details will be undertaken in June 2010 to establish the impact attending the event made to local businesses.
- **YorBuild:** Work on the YorBuild framework for construction works is going forwards and is led sub-regionally by Rotherham. The framework will deliver sub-contracting opportunities for smaller, local businesses. Creating sub-contracting opportunities is a useful tool to help smaller businesses compete for work.
- **Encouraging Local Consortium Bids:** We will be looking to strengthen our approach to working with consortiums and where appropriate will explicitly state that larger contract opportunities are open to bids from consortiums of suppliers. This will help smaller suppliers bid for larger contracts where they may have the skills and capacity to deliver a specific element of the contract but not all of it.
- **Improving Performance Measurement Tools:** We are looking to learn from others' performance in this area and are discussing how to improve performance on a sub-regional basis, although it should be noted that the other Authorities in South Yorkshire who measure local spend use a different measurement to RMBC and therefore information is not directly comparable.
- **Working with Neighbouring Local Authorities:** We are in the early stages of work sub-regionally to explore the possibility of extending the Buy4Sheffield portal to a Buy4South Yorkshire portal. This would give a central starting point where public sector contract opportunities across South Yorkshire could be found. It is proposed that each local authority and public sector body within the sub-region would have a website linked from the main portal. This would benefit local suppliers by providing easy access not just to Rotherham's public sector contracts but those for the whole of the sub-region. In addition Sheffield's current system also has the ability for suppliers to register their businesses by type; Sheffield Council is then able to use this list of suppliers for quotes under £20k.
- **Reviewing Procurement Rules:** Work to investigate whether additional standard contract clauses can be developed to further increase local spend is to be undertaken, including the potential to weight elements of contracts and links to Corporate priorities. Work will be undertaken with Procurement and Legal colleagues in order to ensure our procurement continues to be both legal and provide value for money whilst also increasing support to the local economy.
- **Performance Clinic:** Following discussion at Procurement Panel on 12th April 2010, a Member-led Performance Clinic is to be scheduled for late May to look at how local spend can be increased, including suggested activity with first tier suppliers. The Clinic will be led by Councillor Wyatt and Members from PSOC will be invited to attend, together with procurement and legal colleagues and representatives from VAR and the Chamber of Commerce.
- **Encouraging Local Sub-Contracting:** A report was presented to Procurement Panel on 12th April 2010 setting out how principle suppliers could help to support the local economy. A list of suppliers who are willing to subcontract with local businesses being developed. The list will provide contact details and will be promoted via the procurement pages of our website so that local businesses can make contact with relevant first tier suppliers to seek out subcontracting opportunities. The report also set out a request for contract managers to include reporting mechanisms for local spend in future contracts and contract clauses around supporting the local economy where appropriate. These options are to be considered further at the proposed Performance Clinic.
- **Targeting Spend to Encourage Business Growth:** Whilst Rotherham has a lower number of businesses than either the regional or national average, 251 per

10,000 population compared to 336 and 397 respectively, Achieving Board are looking to affect positively local spend through improving the number and types of businesses in the Borough. To facilitate this a breakdown of local spend by category of business will be presented with the next procurement update so that the Board can look at how to influence positively in categories where we have less spend by encouraging new businesses of that type into the Borough.

- **Further Capability Building:** The Government has recently developed a free online learning package with Learn Direct to help businesses understand how to bid for public sector contracts; this has been promoted through the procurement pages of our website to ensure local businesses are aware of this learning opportunity.
- **Increasing Promotion of Opportunities:** In order that local suppliers are aware of the information on our website, including the Procurement Forward Plan, it is proposed that an article, or series of articles, is included in Rotherham News highlighting the information that is available and contract opportunities. Additionally, we will proactively market opportunities to local companies via a regular email bulletin to local businesses which will link through to the relevant information on the Council website.

7.5 A Total Place Approach

Whilst the Council is currently doing a number of things to support the local economy, and is planning to further strengthen this, support can be developed even further if a Total Place approach is taken.

Total Place pulls together all delivery partners (led by the local authority) to take a joint, collaborative, look at how best to improve public service delivery and increase value for money for communities. It forms part of Sir Michael Bichard's work on the Operational Efficiency Programme, which looks at the scope for efficiency savings in the public sector. Thirteen pilots across England have looked in depth at how greater coordination between partners and local leadership could help contribute to tackling major policy issues by looking at the whole public resource spent in a geographical area. A Total Place approach to understanding public sector spend within Rotherham could look at how the public sector might support the local economy by better co-ordination and utilisation of our collective resources, whilst still achieving public sector cost savings.

A project has been initiated through the Local Strategic Partnership to use the Total Place framework to understand services delivered to the borough's most deprived families, ideally building on research carried out as part of the Central Rotherham Needs Assessment, and focusing primarily on worklessness issues. The aim will be to look at people's experience of accessing services provided by the full range of partners, across all sectors. As part of the exercise it could also be possible to develop better understanding of how the public sector in Rotherham could collectively work together to strengthen support to the local economy in our approach to commissioning and delivering services. Taking a partnership wide approach on this issue is more likely to achieve greater benefits and it is suggested that it may be helpful to have a wider debate about how the partnership could collectively aim to strengthen support to the local economy. Member support is sought to take this suggestion forward to the Local Strategic Partnership.

8. Finance

All costs for implementing the Corporate Procurement Strategy, including the 'Supporting the Local Economy' theme, are currently being absorbed within existing budgets.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Performance against this LPI will reflect how the Corporate Procurement Strategy is being implemented and embedded across the Council which could impact on the Council's ability to evidence value for money and CAA scores. CAA and Total Place take account of public spend in the Borough. Failure to support local businesses could adversely impact on the local economy

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- CAA
- Total Place
- Delivery of the Corporate Procurement Strategy
- SME Friendly Concordat

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- "Corporate Procurement Strategy 2009 – 2012", July 2009, Rotherham Council.
- "National Procurement Strategy", April 2008, Department for Communities and Local Government.
- "More Bang for the Public Buck: A Guide to Using Procurement to Achieve Community Benefits", February 2010, APSE.
- "Total Place: Spend Counting Analysis and Customer Insight Status", March 2010, Department for Communities and Local Government and Tribal Consulting Ltd.

12. Contact Name:

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28th April 2010
3.	Title:	Local Government Reform – Duty to Respond to Petitions - Commencement and Council Scheme
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's

5. Summary

Sections 10 to 22 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (c. 20) provide a statutory duty for principal local authorities to handle and respond to petitions. This includes making provision for the submission of e-petitions and adopting a “scheme for handling petitions”. The Council is now required adopt a Petitions Scheme, taking account of provisions set out in an Order and statutory guidance. This report makes recommendations for the adoption of a Petitions Scheme and determination of associated issues.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet recommends to the Council:-

- a) **That the scheme attached as Appendix A be adopted as the Council's “Scheme for handling petitions”**
- b) **That the commencement dates for the provisions of the scheme be as follows:-**
 - (i) **Paragraphs 1 to 3; 5 to 21; and 29 to 31 – 15th June 2010**
 - (ii) **Paragraphs 4 and 22 to 28 – 15th December 2010**
- c) **That the Council's constitution and standing orders be amended as follows:-**
 - (i) **After section (1) of Article 6 of the constitution insert “(1A) Any citizen may organise, sign and present a petition to the Council in accordance with the Council's Scheme for handling petitions”**
 - (ii) **In Standing Order 4 insert “Presentation of petitions” and “Debate on petitions”**
 - (iii) **After Standing Order 8 insert “8A Presentation of petitions”**
 - (iv) **After Standing Order 8A insert “8B Debate on petitions”**
 - (v) **That the sub-paragraphs set out in Appendix B to this report apply to Standing Orders 8A and 8B**
 - (vi) **That amendments to Article 8 of the Constitution and Part III of the Overview and Scrutiny Rules be presented to the annual meeting of the Council.**
- d) **That the list of officers, by position, who may be called to give evidence as set out Appendix C be approved.**

7. Proposals and Details

Sections 10 to 22 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (c. 20) (the Act) provide a statutory duty for principal local authorities to handle petitions made to the authority including the making of a scheme for the handling of petitions. The scheme will be required to set out how the Council handles petitions in accordance with the details of the duty. The scheme will require the approval of the full Council and to be published on the Council's web site.

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (Commencement No. 3) Order 2010 brings the new duty into force. It provides that the duty with the exception of e-petitions comes into effect on 15th June 2010; and for e-petitions 15th December 2010.

Section 19 of the Act provides that the Secretary of State may issue guidance and a model petition scheme. Statutory guidance has been published "Listening to communities: Statutory guidance on the duty to respond to petitions" which does include a model scheme.

The requirements of the duty set out that the Council will have flexibility to determine the details of the scheme subject to meeting the following minimum requirements:-

- Anyone who lives, works or studies in Rotherham, including under 18's, can sign or organise a petition and trigger a response;
- A facility for making electronic petitions is provided by the Council;
- Petitions must be acknowledged within a time period specified by the Council;
- Among the many possible steps that the Council may choose to take in response to a petition, the following steps must be included in the scheme:-
 - Taking the action requested in the petition;
 - Considering the petition at a meeting of the Council;
 - Holding an inquiry;
 - Holding a public meeting;
 - Commissioning research;
 - A written response to the petition organiser setting out the Council's views on the request in the petition; and
 - Referring the petition to scrutiny.
- Petitions with a significant level of support trigger a debate of the full Council. The Council will determine this threshold locally but it must be no higher than 5 per cent of the local population;
- Petitions with a requisite level of support, set by the Council, trigger a senior local government officer to give evidence at a meeting of the authority's overview and scrutiny committee. The committee may also require the relevant Cabinet Member, or other member as appropriate to attend; and
- Petition organisers can prompt a review of the Council's response if the response is felt to be inadequate.

The Council may also include other information in the scheme including how petitions will be handled which do not qualify for consideration under the scheme.

E-petitions

The Act requires the same requirements for electronic petitions as for paper petitions, except for the following:-

- The Council will only be required to respond to e-petitions made through the Council's e-petition facility;
- The Council will need to decide, when a request to host an e-petition is received, whether the petition is appropriate for publishing on the web site;
- The Council will decide what equates to a signature on an e-petition; and
- The Council will be required to provide a facility for people to submit petitions to the authority electronically. In addition to this, the Council will be able to choose to respond to e-petitions submitted by other means and should indicate in the petition scheme how these types of petitions will be dealt with.

Should the Council decide not to host an e-petition, an explanation of the reasons will be required.

Responding to petitions

As a minimum, a petition scheme must apply if a petition:-

- Calls for the authority to take action;
- Is signed by the requisite number of people who live, work or study in the local area;
- Is made under another enactment but does not qualify under that enactment;
- If made electronically, is made through the authority's e-petition facility;

The Council will be able to require information to verify signatures, but may also choose to take account of signatures that give no address or association with the area. To verify signatures of e-petitions, the provision of an e-mail address or post code may be required.

Extent and exclusions

Petitions will need to cover relevant matters, which are described as relating to the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area. These may cover the functions of partner authorities as well as those functions delivered directly by the Council. "Partner Authorities" are those bodies with a duty to co-operate under Chapter 1 of Part 5 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (c. 28).

Should a petition call for an action that is contrary to Council policy, then it will be sufficient to refuse the request providing that an explanation is given.

Vexatious petitions may be refused under the scheme. It is recommended that the same criteria be used as that in guidance for dealing with freedom of information requests.

The consideration of petitions may also be refused if the issue is the subject of legal proceedings; relates to individual members of the community or are excluded matters. Excluded matters are set out in The Local Authorities (Petitions) (England) Order 2010 as:-

- Any matter relating to a planning decision;
- Any matter relating to a licensing decision;
- Any other matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment.

Petitions relating to systemic failure in planning and licensing matters would not be excluded.

However, the Council may continue to receive petitions in relation to planning and licensing and set out how these will be dealt with outside of the requirements of the new duty.

Petitions that are specifically covered in other legislation are also excluded from the duty and the Council's scheme. Such petitions will continue to be dealt with under the provisions of the appropriate legislation.

In responding to petitions, the Council will be required to be proportionate to the seriousness of the issue raised.

Petition debates

The Act requires that petitions which receive a significant level of support should be debated at a meeting of the full council. The Council is required to set out in the petition scheme the number of signatures needed to trigger a debate as part of the authority's response. This debate may be added to the agenda of a normal meeting of the full council.

The scheme will need to provide for the petitioners to present their petition or ask a member to present it for them and could provide for members to ask questions of the petitioners as part of the debate. It is expected that such a debate would result in a decision of the full council or a recommendation to Cabinet, whichever is appropriate to the issue.

It will be for the Council to set the threshold of the number of signatures required to trigger a debate, but this must not be more than 5% of the local population. Petitions calling for a debate must fall within the provisions of the scheme, not including any excluded matter for debate, or call for any officer to give evidence.

Petitions calling officers to account

The Council's petition scheme must allow for petitions to trigger a senior member of council staff to attend a meeting of the Council's overview and scrutiny committee and answer questions about their work. The guidance to be followed in the questioning of officers is that already applied under the Local Government Act 2000 (c. 22). The Council will need to set a threshold for the minimum number of signatures required to trigger this action. The model scheme suggests a minimum of 750 signatures as a threshold.

The Council must determine which senior officers the provisions apply to. The head of paid service and the most senior officers responsible for the delivery of services are suggested. When asked to give evidence, this will be restricted to issues related to the job and no other matters personal detail. A proposed list of officers, by position, is attached at **Appendix C**.

The Council will be required to give notice to petitioners detailing when an officer is to give evidence at scrutiny. Petitioners should also be provided with a report of any findings and recommendations made by scrutiny.

Petition reviews

Section 17 of the Act provides for appeal. If a petition organiser is not satisfied with the way the Council has dealt with a petition, this section gives the organiser the power to ask the overview and scrutiny committee to review the Council's response to the petition. The overview and scrutiny committee will decide whether the steps taken by the executive in response to the petition were adequate.

The overview and scrutiny committee will be required to bear in mind the list of potential steps which could be used to respond to the petition set out in the Act. An adequate response is likely to be proportionate to the issue set out in the petition and the level of support the petition has received.

If the committee has reason to be concerned about the adequacy of the authority's response it may decide to carry out a full review of the issues raised in the petition. If the committee thinks that the authority is seriously neglecting its responsibility to listen to local people, the committee can arrange for the full council to carry out the review function.

The Council will be required to inform the petitioners of the outcome of a review and post the results on the Council's web site.

Standing Orders and Rules

Procedurally, the Council will need to make a number of changes to the Constitution and Standing Orders to comply with the duty. **Appendix B** to the report sets out changes in relation to presentation of and debate on petitions. Amendments will also be required to Article 8 of the constitution and Part III of the Overview and Scrutiny Rules in relation to officers called to give evidence and appeals. It is proposed that these will be presented to the annual meeting of the Council alongside other amendments.

8. Finance

There are no direct financial implications identified at this stage. It is unlikely that there will be significant costs associated with the introduction of e-petitioning as the current Council web-site is capable of hosting this facility. Costs may arise from administration of the scheme, but this will be dependant on the volume of new administration generated by the duty and scheme.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The key risk is the unknown additional demand that may be brought about by the duty. Additionally, to ensure compliance with the duty, it will be necessary to not only record the receipt of petitions, but also to create an audit trail for the dealing with petitions once received.

Traditionally, petitions have been presented to the Council through various means, not just formally at meetings. If, as expected, this were to continue, the Council will need to ensure that the receipt of such petitions is recorded and reported for due consideration in accordance with the provisions of the duty.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Council has a long history of handling and responding to petitions. The new duty builds on the Council's approach, with the "scheme" providing greater clarity to the community.

Whilst the duty and scheme are statutory requirements, locally they need to be seen in the context of the broader policy agenda around community engagement, "calls for action" and partnership working. This would result in further reports covering communicating the provisions of the new duty as part of the "Community Engagement Framework", and practical steps for engaging partner authorities. Cabinet has previously agreed this course of action.

The outcomes arising from the new duty are likely to impact on performance against National Indicator No. 4 (% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality).

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Ahead of commencement of the new duty, the Government consulted on draft guidance, Order and model scheme. The Council responded to this consultation following a report to Cabinet on 24th February 2010.

Background papers

Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 (c. 20)
The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009
(Commencement No. 3) Order 2010
The Local Authorities (Petitions) (England) Order 2010
Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (c. 28)
Listening to communities: Statutory guidance on the duty to respond to petitions
Minute C193, Cabinet, 24th February 2010

Contact Names:

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APPENDIX A

Scheme for Handling Petitions

1. The council welcomes petitions and recognises that petitions are one way in which people can let us know their concerns. All petitions sent or presented to the council will receive an acknowledgement from the council within 10 working days of receipt.
2. This acknowledgement will set out what we plan to do with the petition. We will treat something as a petition if it is identified as being a petition, or if it seems to us that it is intended to be a petition.
3. Paper petitions can be sent to:-

**The Chief Executive
Council Offices
Doncaster Gate
Doncaster Road
Rotherham
S65 1DJ**

4. Or be created, signed and submitted online by following this link [\[link\]](#)
5. Petitions can also be presented to a meeting of the council. These meetings take place on a **6 weekly basis**, dates and times can be found here [\[link\]](#). If you would like to present your petition to the Council, or would like your councillor or someone else to present it on your behalf, please contact **Lewis South, Democratic Services Manager** on **(01709) 822050** at least 10 working days before the meeting and they will talk you through the process. If your petition has received signatures **equivalent to 5% or more of the population of the Borough** it will also be scheduled for a council debate [\[link to section on Full Council Debates\]](#) and if this is the case we will let you know whether this will happen at the same meeting or a later meeting of the council.

What are the guidelines for submitting a petition?

6. Petitions submitted to the Council must include:
 - a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the council to take
 - the name and address and signature of any person supporting the petition.
7. Petitions should be accompanied by contact details, including an address, for the petition organiser. This is the person we will contact to explain how we will respond to the petition.

8. The contact details of the petition organiser will not be placed on the website. If the petition does not identify a petition organiser, we will contact signatories to the petition to agree who should act as the petition organiser.
9. Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted. In the period immediately before an election or referendum we may need to deal with your petition differently – if this is the case we will explain the reasons and discuss the revised timescale which will apply. If a petition does not follow the guidelines set out above, the council may decide not to do anything further with it. In that case, we will write to you to explain the reasons.

What will the Council do when it receives my petition?

10. An acknowledgement will be sent to the petition organiser within 10 working days of receiving the petition. It will let them know what we plan to do with the petition and when they can expect to hear from us again. It will also be published on our website.
11. If we can do what your petition asks for, the acknowledgement may confirm that we have taken the action requested and the petition will be closed. If the petition has enough signatures to trigger a council debate, or a senior officer giving evidence, then the acknowledgment will confirm this and tell you when and where the meeting will take place. If the petition needs more investigation, we will tell you the steps we plan to take.
12. If the petition applies to a planning or licensing application, is a statutory petition (for example requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor), or on a matter where there is already an existing right of appeal, such as council tax banding and non-domestic rates, other procedures apply. Further information on all these procedures and how you can express your views is available here **[insert links]**
13. We will not take action on any petition which we consider to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate and will explain the reasons for this in our acknowledgement of the petition.
14. To ensure that people know what we are doing in response to the petitions we receive the details of all the petitions submitted to us will be published on our website, except in cases where this would be inappropriate. Whenever possible we will also publish all correspondence relating to the petition (all personal details will be removed). When you sign an e-petition you can elect to receive this information by email. We will not send you anything which is not relevant to the e-petition you have signed, unless you choose to receive other emails from us. **[link to account settings]**

How will the Council respond to petitions?

15. Our response to a petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it, but may include one or more of the following:-

- taking the action requested in the petition
- considering the petition at a council meeting
- holding an inquiry into the matter
- undertaking research into the matter
- holding a public meeting
- holding a consultation
- holding a meeting with petitioners
- referring the petition for consideration by the council’s overview and scrutiny committee*
- calling a referendum
- writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition

*Overview and scrutiny committees are committees of councillors who are responsible for scrutinising the work of the council – in other words, the overview and scrutiny committee has the power to hold the council’s decision makers to account.

16. In addition to these steps, the council will consider all the specific actions it can potentially take on the issues highlighted in a petition. The table below gives some examples.

Petition subject	Appropriate steps
Alcohol related crime and disorder	If your petition is about crime or disorder linked to alcohol consumption, the council will, among other measures, consider the case for placing restrictions on public drinking in the area by establishing a designated public place order or, as a last resort, imposing an alcohol disorder zone. When an alcohol disorder zone is established the licensed premises in the area where alcohol related trouble is being caused are required to contribute to the costs of extra policing in that area. The council’s response to your petition will set out the steps we intend to take and the reasons for taking this approach.
Anti-social behaviour (ASB)	As the elected representatives of your local area, as social landlord and licensing authority, the council plays a significant role to play in tackling anti-social behaviour. The council, in conjunction with our partners in the local crime and disorder partnership have set out how we deal

	<p>with issues of anti-social behaviour; you can find more details here.</p> <p>When responding to petitions on ASB, we will consider in consultation with our local partners, all the options available to us including the wide range of powers and mechanisms we have to intervene as part of our role as social landlord and licensing authority. For example, we will work with the neighbourhood policing team in the affected area to identify what action might be taken including what role CCTV might play, consider identifying a dedicated contact within the council to liaise with the community and neighbourhood partners on issues of ASB in the area in question and, where appropriate, we will alert the crime and disorder reduction partnership and crime and disorder overview and scrutiny committee to the issues highlighted in the petition.</p>
Under-performing schools	<p>We will consider, in consultation with local partners, all the options available to us when working with schools to secure their improvement. For example, on our behalf, the school improvement partner will play a pivotal role, challenging and brokering support for poorly performing schools. Where a school is under performing we will consider whether it is appropriate in the circumstances to issue a warning notice outlining expectations and a timeframe for the school to improve its performance standards. Other measures available to us, where schools fail to comply with a warning notice or are in an Ofsted category of notice to improve (requiring significant improvement) or special measures including; appointing additional governors, establishing an interim executive board, removal of the school's delegated budgets, requiring the school to enter into a formal contract or partnership or, only if the school is in special measures, closure.</p>
Under-performing health services	<p>We will work with local health partners to consider the matter raised in the petition including, where appropriate, exploring what role the Local Involvement Network (LINK) might have in reviewing and feeding back on the issue (the LINK is run by local individuals and community groups and independently supported – their role to find out what people want in terms of local health services, monitor those services and to use their powers to hold them to account). The Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee will also be alerted to the petition and where the matter is sufficiently or</p>

	potentially serious, the issue will be referred to them to consider for review.
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17. If your petition is about something over which the council has no direct control (for example the local railway or hospital) we will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body. The council works with a large number of local partners [**link to list of LAA partners**] and where possible will work with these partners to respond to your petition. If we are not able to do this for any reason (for example if what the petition calls for conflicts with council policy), then we will set out the reasons for this to you. You can find more information on the services for which the council is responsible here [**link**].
18. If your petition is about something that a different council is responsible for we will give consideration to what the best method is for responding to it. This might consist of simply forwarding the petition to the other council, but could involve other steps. In any event we will always notify you of the action we have taken.

Full council debates

19. If a petition contains signatures **equivalent to 5% or more of the population of the Borough** it will be debated by the full council unless it is a petition asking for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting. This means that the issue raised in the petition will be discussed at a meeting which all councillors can attend. The council will endeavour to consider the petition at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will then take place at the following meeting. The petition organiser will be given **five minutes** to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by councillors for a maximum of **15 minutes**. The council will decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting. They may decide to take the action the petition requests, not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee. Where the issue is one on which the council executive are required to make the final decision, the council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision. This confirmation will also be published on our website.

Officer evidence

20. Your petition may ask for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting about something for which the officer is responsible as part of their job. For example, your petition may ask a senior council officer to explain progress on an issue, or to explain the advice given to elected members to enable them to make a particular decision.

21. If your petition contains at least **750** signatures, the relevant senior officer will give evidence at a public meeting of the council's overview and scrutiny committee. A list of the senior staff that can be called to give evidence can be found here **[insert link]**. You should be aware that the overview and scrutiny committee may decide that it would be more appropriate for another officer to give evidence instead of any officer named in the petition – for instance if the named officer has changed jobs. The committee may also decide to call the relevant councillor to attend the meeting. Committee members will ask the questions at this meeting, but you will be able to suggest questions to the chair of the committee by contacting **Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services (01709) 822779** up to three working days before the meeting.

E-petitions

22. The council welcomes e-petitions which are created and submitted through our website **[link]**. E-petitions must follow the same guidelines as paper petitions **set out in paragraphs 6 – 9 of the Scheme for handling petitions**. The petition organiser will need to provide us with their name, postal address and email address. You will also need to decide how long you would like your petition to be open for signatures. Most petitions run for six months, but you can choose a shorter or longer timeframe, up to a maximum of 12 months.
23. When you create an e-petition, it may take five working days before it is published online. This is because we have to check that the content of your petition is suitable before it is made available for signature.
24. If we feel we cannot publish your petition for some reason, we will contact you within this time to explain. You will be able to change and resubmit your petition if you wish. If you do not do this within 10 working days, a summary of the petition and the reason why it has not been accepted will be published under the 'rejected petitions' section of the website.
25. When an e-petition has closed for signature, it will automatically be submitted to **[insert details]**. In the same way as a paper petition, you will receive an acknowledgement within 10 working days. If you would like to present your e-petition to a meeting of the council, please contact **[insert details]** within 10 working days of receipt of the acknowledgement.
26. A petition acknowledgement and response will be emailed to everyone who has signed the e-petition and elected to receive this information. The acknowledgment and response will also be published on this website.

How do I 'sign' an e-petition?

27. You can see all the e-petitions currently available for signature here **[insert link]**.
28. When you sign an e-petition you will be asked to provide your name, your postcode and a valid email address. When you have submitted this information you will be sent an email to the email address you have provided. This email will include a link which you must click on in order to confirm the email address is valid. Once this step is complete your 'signature' will be added to the petition. People visiting the e-petition will be able to see your name in the list of those who have signed it but your contact details will not be visible.

What can I do if I feel my petition has not been dealt with properly?

29. If you feel that we have not dealt with your petition properly, the petition organiser has the right to request that the council's overview and scrutiny committee review the steps that the council has taken in response to your petition. It is helpful to everyone, and can improve the prospects for a review if the petition organiser gives a short explanation of the reasons why the council's response is not considered to be adequate.
30. The committee will endeavour to consider your request at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will take place at the following meeting. Should the committee determine we have not dealt with your petition adequately, it may use any of its powers to deal with the matter. These powers include instigating an investigation, making recommendations to the council executive and arranging for the matter to be considered at a meeting of the full council.
31. Once the appeal has been considered the petition organiser will be informed of the results within 5 working days. The results of the review will also be published on our website.

APPENDIX B

8A Presentation of petitions by members of the public at Council meetings

- (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (3), a member of the public may present a qualifying petition and speak for a maximum of five minutes.
- (2) Subject to sub-paragraph (3), a member of the public may ask a member to present a qualifying petition on their behalf.
- (3) A qualifying petition is a petition within the meaning of paragraphs 6, 7, 9 and 12 of the Council's Scheme for Handling Petitions, notice of which has been given at least ten days before the day of the Council meeting.

8B Debate on petition

- (1) A qualifying petition with signatures meeting the threshold set out in paragraph 19 of the Council's Scheme for Handling Petitions will automatically trigger a debate of the Council, except where the petition is asking for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting.
- (2) A petition meeting the criteria set out in sub-paragraph (1) may be debated at the meeting at which it is presented, or at a later meeting.
- (3) There shall be a guillotine on the debate of a petition of 15 minutes, after which the vote will be put, unless the Mayor at his or her discretion extends the debate.
- (4) The Council shall decide how to respond to the petition and shall decide either:
 - (a) To take the action the petition requests;
 - (b) Not to take the action the petition requests for reasons stated in the debate;
 - (c) To commission further investigation into the matter, which may include reference to a particular committee for their views, prior to consideration at a future meeting of the Council;
 - (d) Refer the petition to Cabinet where it relates to an executive function, in which case the Council may make recommendations to Cabinet.

APPENDIX C

Officers to be called to give evidence at a public meeting under section 16 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 (c. 20)

- (1) Members of the Strategic Leadership Team comprising the head of paid service, statutory chief officers and non-statutory chief officers within the meaning of Section 2 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (c. 42)
- (2) Any statutory officer not being a member of the Strategic Leadership Team.
- (3) Any service director.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1	Meeting:	Cabinet
2	Date:	28th April, 2010
3	Title:	DCSF Progress Report
4	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Service

5. **Summary**

The report presents the significant progress against the DCSF Notice to Improve, which was issued in December 2009. The report covers the background to issuing of the Notice to Improve, together with details of the significant improvements that have been made and the continued efforts that are being made to meet or where possible, exceed the targets set. Also included are the key highlights, issues and risks. The Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, and Director of Children and Young People's Services are meeting with the DCSF ministerial representatives on 22nd April to discuss progress and Compliance with the Notice to Improve. Full details are contained in the report attached at **Appendix A**.

6. **Recommendations**

That Cabinet receives this report and notes the position.

7. **Proposals and Details**

The Minister met with representatives of the Council on 26 November and on the 16th December 2009, Dawn Primarolo wrote to the Leader of the Council confirming that a Notice to Improve was being served on Rotherham MBC to improve key aspects of its Children and Young People's Services.

The key areas for improvement agreed in the Notice to Improve (**see attachment for report No. 11 - Children and Young People's Services Notice to Improve - Progress Update**) were:-

- increasing the percentage of referrals that go onto initial assessment;
- increasing the percentage of initial assessments that are completed within seven working days;
- increasing the percentage of core assessments carried out within 35 working days;
- reducing social worker and team manager vacancies;
- ensuring overall improvements in LAA children's Services and statutory attainment targets during the life of the notice period and finally
- to submit a plan by the end of January 2010 that reduces the numbers of primary schools under the floor targets at Key Stage 2.

Our response has been rapid and already a significant amount of resources, both financial and staffing, are going into help sort out the problems in children and young people's services.

Our strategy is clear; safeguarding children is the top priority which is reflected within our refreshed Children and Young People's Plan for 2010-2013. We have made a very conscious decision to focus our efforts on safeguarding children and young people. The improvement notice contains a wide range of actions but we have felt it necessary to place even more attention on safeguarding, quality assurance and initial/core assessments. We believe it is essential that we maintain this focus in ensuring our systems and processes are robust, safe and secure.

8. **Finance**

There are significant financial implications associated with the nature and degree of improvements required. The Children and Young People's Service have worked hard to successfully reduce the overspend position for the 2009/10 budget. Furthermore, savings identified for 2010/11 have been re-directed into the priority area of Safeguarding. The Council's decision to invest a further £3.1m into Children and Young People's Services is welcomed and this has been invested almost wholly into safeguarding, with a small amount being invested into prevention and early intervention to begin to make the shift away from the demands of crisis intervention in the medium term.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

A number of risks are present in relation to safeguarding and the Notice to Improve.

Key risks include:

- the pace of improvement being impaired by high vacancy rates
- the possibility that there are insufficient qualified social workers of a high calibre to draw from in the nationwide employment pool
- the quality of improvements being embedded and sustained over time
- that despite all of the significant improvement and meeting the targets, the DCSF Notice to Improve will remain in place for some time in the future
- that despite all of the improvements and progress, the impending safeguarding inspection could still judge us to be inadequate due to insufficient time to fully embed the improved quality of practice

Experience of other authorities who have been the subject of Notice to Improve or Intervention tells us that there is a distinct possibility that despite all this improvement, the Notice to Improve could be in force for many months and possibly years after the end of the original Notice which was issued.

Clearly we are making every effort to prevent this, but the experience in other authorities, in particular, Wakefield and Stoke, tells us this is a risk.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The above risks and our mitigations will impact on performance for Children and Young People's Service, the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership. If the expected inspection of safeguarding judges us to be inadequate, this will in turn act as a limiting factor on the Council's Comprehensive Area Assessment.

However, if our inspection judgements are judged to be adequate or better, even if the Notice to Improve is still in force, we are advised by the DCSF that this should not be a limiting factor on the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- DCSF Notice to Improve
- CYPS Improvement Plan
- CYPS Improvement Panel
- Monthly meetings between the Council's Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services, DCSF and GOYH.

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Rotherham MBC
DCSF Notice to Improve Meeting April 2010**Appendix A****Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to outline the significant action taken by Rotherham MBC and partners in addressing the Notice to Improve.

This document contains the following sections which set out how Rotherham MBC has responded to the Notice to Improve:

- 1) Background
- 2) Our approach and response to intervention
- 3) Assessment of progress on the requirements of the Notice to Improve
- 4) Priorities for moving forward
- 5) Lessons learned for all agencies

1) Background

The Minister met with representatives of the Council on 26 November and on the 16th December 2009, Dawn Primarolo wrote to the Leader of the Council confirming that a Notice to Improve was being served on Rotherham MBC to improve key aspects of its Children and Young People's Services.

The key areas for improvement agreed in the Notice to Improve were:

- increasing the percentage of referrals that go onto initial assessment;
- increasing the percentage of initial assessments that are completed within seven working days;
- increasing the percentage of core assessments carried out within 35 working days;
- reducing social worker and team manager vacancies;
- ensuring overall improvements in LAA Children's Services and statutory attainment targets during the life of the notice period; and finally
- to submit a plan by the end of January 2010 that reduces the numbers of primary schools under the floor targets at Key Stage 2.

2) Our approach and response to intervention

Our response has been positive and strong. Already a significant amount of resources, both financial and staffing, are going into help sort out the problems in children and young people's services.

Our strategy is clear; safeguarding children is the top priority which is reflected within our refreshed Children and Young People's Plan for 2010-2013. We have made a very conscious decision to focus our efforts on safeguarding children and young people. The improvement notice contains a wide range of actions. However, we have felt it necessary to place even more attention on safeguarding, quality assurance and initial/core assessments. We believe it is essential that we maintain this focus in ensuring our systems and processes are robust, safe and secure.

We are not complacent and have avoided using short term solutions. We are fundamentally reviewing our practices to be confident that the improvements we bring forward are reliable and enduring. We are confident we can address the issues quickly. As outlined in our submission to the Minister in November 2009, we have undertaken an extensive range of actions to address the issues.

A CYPS Improvement Panel has been set up with representatives from the Council and partner agencies which initially met fortnightly and now meets monthly to help keep the pace and momentum. The membership and focus has been strengthened following the Notice to Improve. An independent advisor with expertise in safeguarding has been appointed to support the Chief Executive as Chair to the panel and the Children and Learners Director from GOYH attends the panel in line with the Notice to Improve requirement.

The DCSF and GOYH are meeting the Strategic Director, Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive on a monthly basis to review progress and attend the CYPS Improvement Panel where performance data is routinely reported. Feedback from DCSF and GOYH indicates a healthy level of challenge and the panel is well focussed on the key issues. Progress is positive but there is a need to increase pace and demonstrate more clearly the impact of actions.

The Director for Children and Young People Services is an active participant in the Leadership Programme and this enables support and mentoring in strengthening leadership from peers in other authorities.

Specifically, in relation to social care practices we have:

- Reduced social worker and team manager vacancies;
- Increased contact workers to reduce social worker time spent on visits;
- Undertaken extensive training in assessment activity;
- Significantly improved the quality and performance in relation to contact, referral and assessment;
- Rolled out laptops and ICT to all staff to enable improved quality assurance;
- Introduced revised quality assurance and data quality strategy;
- Increased quality assurance activity across all the localities;
- Undertaken a comprehensive review of all children's homes to ensure inspection recommendations have been implemented.

Corporately, the Council and partners have taken swift action in a range of areas to provide challenge and support to the service. We are very clear this is a Council wide issue and not just one affecting the service, as illustrated by our interventions and help:

- Additional finance in year to deal with budget pressures (in excess of £500k);
- Additional investment of £3.1m has been allocated to CYPS to supplement investment in safeguarding;
- Personal commitment and involvement from the Leader and Cabinet Member e.g. visits to social care teams, payment of additional monies;
- Direct involvement from the Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive in understanding the issues, providing challenge and inspecting/visiting services e.g. children homes, locality teams, quality assurance;
- Seconded Head of Performance and Quality into the service to provide further support;

- Provision of expert staff who are working extensively on children services e.g. Human resources, ICT, social care, safeguarding;
- Additional administrative staff have cleared the document backlog;
- Additional resources of £400k have been identified by the Schools Forum to supplement investment in School Effectiveness and to improve attainment;
- External funding DCSF (£150k) and the RIEP (£125k) to support improvement.

Overall, we have made considerable progress in a short space of time. Progress is evident across all areas of the improvement notice. We now have more solid improvement foundations in place and we are confident that we can deliver further improvements over the next six months and beyond.

It would be unrealistic and naïve to expect all of the issues to be resolved in such a short timescale. Many of the problems we are facing are longstanding cultural and managerial issues. Our own investigations, inspection and challenge have highlighted further systems and procedures that need strengthening and embedding. However, now the foundations are in place we believe we have the capacity to address these issues quickly and we expect rapid progress to be made in the forthcoming year as demonstrated by evidence of impact and performance.

3) Assessment of progress on the requirements of the Notice to Improve

By March 2010, demonstrate that the necessary structures, processes and corporate support are in place to deliver on the requirements outlined below:

3.1.1: Improvements in the following performance indicators: NI 68, NI 59 and NI60

Status	All have improved on baseline position. NI 68 and NI 59 remain areas for attention
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- a) *NI 68 - Increase the Percentage of Referrals That Go To Initial Assessment by 31st March 2010 - Target 65%.*

Position as at Nov 2009	Position 31 st March 2010 (Year End)	Target	Target Status	Direction of Travel against baseline
59.8%	61.2%	65%	Not on target -3.8%	↑ 1.4%

We were concerned that there was a high volume of inappropriate, relatively low level referrals being made to our services. This meant that we were screening out a large number of referrals prior to the initial assessment phase.

To properly understand this we have undertaken a thorough audit which has shown that there was a lack of clarity in the general understanding of the thresholds for social care involvement. As a consequence we have taken considerable action to ensure that we receive appropriate high quality referrals. For example we have revised the Safe & Well Protocol and will be re-launching it on 22nd April. We have also made considerable progress in ensuring that our staff have the necessary skills to undertake effective assessments. For example we have appointed a CAF Development Officer and we have now trained 215 out of 490 staff and 50 managers from our own and other agencies. We are expecting this to impact significantly in the coming weeks on the appropriateness of referrals.

We have also placed two Qualified Social Work staff in our Access Team. This will ensure that all our call handling staff fully understand what constitutes an appropriate referral and that they can also advise any referrer regarding this.

Some of these changes have taken time to put in place and will require time to be fully embedded, however we are confident that the building blocks we now have will enable us to pick up the pace, and we will see considerable improvements in this area which will be sustained in the long term.

b) NI 59 - Increase the Percentage of Initial Assessments Undertaken in Time - Target 80%.

Position as at Nov 2009	Position 31 st March 2010 (Year End)	Target	Target Status	Direction of Travel against baseline
73%	74.8%	80%	Not on target -5.2%	↑ 1.8%

We have consistently improved performance in this area. Despite the annual year end figure having not reached the target, the trend is very positive and the rate of improvement suggests we will meet the target. For example, performance was 67% in December, 72% in January, 76% in February and 77% in March. Vacancies have impacted on our performance and also we have found instances of Initial Assessments having been undertaken but not fully completed. We have not counted these assessments in our returns.

We are not prepared to accept poor quality assessment practice. Consequently we are undertaking data checks to ensure accuracy in recording and from March all initial assessments are being quality assured by the DCSF funded team managers and our Practice Consultants.

Any assessments that ceased prematurely have been retrieved by locality managers for further action. In addition team managers are monitoring progress on a weekly basis.

All assessments that exceed the set timescales for completion are continuously monitored and risked assessed by social workers and their line manager to ensure that children and young people are safe. As a further part of the directorate's quality assurance the data portal is checked daily by managers and the Director, and any issues with assessments are raised in the weekly management team meetings.

We have made progress on this indicator, but not as rapidly as we would have liked. We recognise that we have more to do but our ongoing monitoring suggests that we will have improved the position yet again during April. With the actions we have in place we are determined to drive up quality. Our recent success in filling operational posts will also enable us to continue to improve. Overall, the trend as evidenced since the Notice to Improve, is positive and we are confident this will continue to improve and exceed our October 2010 target of 85%.

- c) *NI 60 – Increase the Percentage of Core Assessments Completed in Time.
Target 80%.*

Position as at Nov 2009	Position 31 st March 2010 (Year End)	Target	Target Status	Direction of Travel against baseline
68%	80.17%	80%	Target Met	↑ 12.17%

We have seen considerable and rapid progress on this indicator. Despite Core Assessments taking considerable amounts of social work time, our performance has improved significantly. Our performance for the year now exceeds the Notice to Improve target, however this is obviously not reflected in the full annual year end outturn figure.

As stated above we have put considerable emphasis on ensuring that we have appropriate systems in place and highly skilled staff able to undertake quality assessments.

To ensure that our work is high quality, as an additional failsafe from March all core assessments have been quality assured by our Practice Consultants.

3.1.2: Reduce social worker vacancies from 37.2% (as at 3.12.09) to 20% by October 2010, 10% by March 2011

Status	Target Met
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3.1.3: Reduce social work team leader vacancies from 33% (as at 3.12.09) to 16% by October 2010, 8% by March 2011

Status	On track to meet target
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In common with many other authorities we have experienced both significant difficulties in recruiting social work professionals and intense competition for their services. A commissioning exercise has been conducted, using the DCSF select providers framework agreement, to recruit 10 social workers. However only one bid was received in respect of provision of permanent social workers and two for temporary social workers. The bids for the temporary workers are in the process of being evaluated, but the cost of provision of permanent social workers was completely prohibitive, with costs quoted as being in the region of double the cost for each of the 10 workers.

In commissioning exercises, for team managers and social workers, costs have been extremely high, and considerably higher than the funding we have available. Nevertheless we are intent on being ambitious in our approach to recruitment and this is producing results.

We have reviewed the recruitment and retention strategy and introduced a range of different means of attracting staff. This has included innovative alternative advertising processes and financial reward packages. This has meant that we are in advance of the target set for October 2010. Whilst we have not always been able to recruit permanent staff we have nonetheless made significant progress. This will be further enhanced in the coming weeks as new staff take up offers of employment.

	No. on Establishment	No. of Vacancies	No. covered by Agency Staff	Posts not filled	Target October 2010	% of unfilled posts	Status
Social Worker	84	22.2	17.2	5	20%	5.9%	Target Met
Team Manager	15	5	2	3	16%	20%	On track

In addition to new staff already recruited, we currently have 8 shortlisted applicants for social work posts awaiting interview and 15 applications outstanding, awaiting shortlisting.

We have also commissioned four additional team managers to supplement the workforce. Two of these are to work in front line services, whilst two have already commenced work on quality assurance and capacity building. The remaining two will be in post by 2nd May. These have been commissioned using the DCSF Framework of select providers and funding will come from the £150k DCSF monies, plus additional internal investment.

We are determined to ensure that we have highly skilled and able staff. We will maintain progress in respect of recruitment, and make sure that we have the necessary procedures and support systems in place to retain our best staff. Consequently we are improving both our operational procedures and also our commitment to staff through excellent supervisory and training support. These successes are all in the context of a difficult market and strong competition to recruit social care staff.

3.1.4: The Council is expected to demonstrate overall improvements in LAA indicators relating to children's services and statutory attainment targets through the period of this improvement notice

Status	On target
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We have made considerable progress in LAA indicators relating to Children's Services and statutory attainment targets during the period of this Improvement Notice. For example at the end of Quarter 3 2009/10 67% of targets had improved performance from their baseline positions since the LAA was agreed.

3.1.5: By the end of January 2010 the Council should submit a plan to the DCSF which addresses performance across primary schools with a particular focus on addressing the performance of schools below the floor. The Council is expected to implement this plan, as agreed with DCSF and National Strategies, to bring about demonstrable and sustained improvement in primary school standards throughout the term of the Improvement Notice

Status	Plan submitted and approved
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Performance against floor targets for individual schools needs to be improved in line with overall performance trend. The plan that was submitted to DCSF relating to World Class Primaries has been approved and work is ongoing to address the issues contained within the action plan. This sets out how the CYP Service will reduce the number of primary schools currently not meeting floor targets from 13 to 0 by 2011.

3.1.6: We expect the Council to provide independent evidence that in meeting the timescales for initial and core assessments, the quality of assessments is being monitored closely and is improving consistently. This will include quality assuring the recording of the work to ensure that assessments are of a consistently high standard.

Status	Ongoing Issue
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We have to improve our performance both in hitting targets relating to volume, such as the numbers of assessments done on time, and at the same time we are also intent on ensuring that we raise the quality of the work undertaken. Improving quality can slow down progress on achieving volumes whilst implementing new processes and undertaking training. But once these practices become embedded speed will increase and we will have increased confidence in our safeguarding practice.

At the top level we have brought in an independent advisor experienced in safeguarding, to support the Chief Executive in his role as Chair of the Improvement Panel and to provide external challenge to the work carried out by the CYP Service.

In addition to Council Directorates key strategic partners are represented on the panel and along with providing support, they also are expected to provide constructive challenge to our work to improve services.

We are also internally auditing all Initial and Core Assessments, Contacts and Referrals which receive no further action. Corrective actions are identified and actions implemented to improve the quality.

Case files are being audited at Team Manager and Locality Manager level using the P&Q Framework and we are putting in place a new and more thorough process for both auditing itself and performance managing the auditing process. Progress is reviewed and corrective actions formulated at the Social Care Management Team and reporting takes place into the Directorate Leadership Team and the Improvement Panel.

As an example, following December auditing of Contact and Referral No Further Actions decisions it was felt that progress was unsatisfactory. As a result, through the Social Care Management Team the expected quality standards have been reiterated and audit activity has been stepped up to weekly until satisfactory progress is demonstrated and evidence is obtained that good practice is both embedded and sustained.

We now have clear processes in place, our key task is to make sure that they are fully implemented, embedded and owned by our staff. These processes need to be seen as part and parcel of our core activity designed to improve quality. We are currently working on developing further opportunities to do this.

3.1.7: Robust evidence of both quantitative outcomes and qualitative processes should be provided to GOYH on a monthly basis to report on progress. In addition the Council should engage in monthly performance review meetings with DCSF and GOYH

Status	Reports on quantitative outcomes and qualitative processes are reported to GOYH and DCSF at the improvement panel and the performance reviews meeting are taking place.
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Prior to the Notice to Improve we established an Improvement Panel with representatives from the Council and partner agencies. This has been strengthened and the Children and Learners Director from GOYH and representatives from DCSF are invited to attend. At these meetings we provide comprehensive reports on both quantitative outcomes and qualitative processes.

In addition, we have in place separate meetings involving the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Lead Member for Children's Services, DCS and GOYH, which enable further opportunities to advise of progress.

3.2) Build capacity and capability to deliver and sustain improvements by:

3.2.1: Appoint the Director of Children and Learners at GOYH as a member of the Improvement Panel and ensure that the Panel, chaired by the Chief Executive, provides effective challenge, and drives swift and sustainable progress through overseeing a robust action plan

Status	Completed
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As stated above the Director of Children and Learners at GOYH is an active member of the Improvement Panel. The Chief Executive chairs the panel and ensures that actions and outcomes are challenged effectively and that where necessary additional resources are allocated to improve the rate of progress.

3.2.2: Rigorously monitor a robust action plan for delivering improvements across children and young people's services, looking in particular at areas of weaknesses highlighted in Ofsted inspections, the Children First review and the 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment.

Status	Plan in place and monitored on a continuous basis
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The Improvement Panel rigorously monitor a robust action plan which made up of 43 individual actions including the:

- key performance measures (3 social care indicators and the LAA improvements);
- targets set in the Notice to Improve Plan;
- supplementary actions which support the delivery of the key areas of improvement identified by Ofsted Inspections, the Children First Review and the Comprehensive Area Agreement judgement made in 2009.

A copy of the most recent Improvement Plan Update provides an analysis of the status of each of the 43 key actions.

3.2.3: Monitor improvement in children’s social care, by establishing a rigorous performance management system which delivers regular monitoring, scrutiny and quality assurance of social care performance

Status	Performance management system reviewed and improvements made to content, format and accessibility to enable more effective continuous monitoring and action
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Significant action has been taken to strengthen performance management arrangements:

- Improved information and analysis at authority, locality, team and case level is updated and made available via a secure online portal on a daily basis to social care staff;
- More robust performance reporting to the Strategic Leadership Team, elected members, safeguarding board, children’s board, scrutiny and the CYPs Improvement Panel;
- Monitoring implementation of inspection recommendations;
- Secondment and redeployment of staff from across the Council to help support children services;
- Improvement Panel maintains a strong focus on performance and delivery of improvement plan;
- External challenge supported by external adviser who has helped focus on the need for greater quality assurance and focus on initial assessments;
- Weekly management team meetings with locality managers – strong focus on performance, initial and core assessments, quality assurance.

Over the last month we have also deployed a number of staff from within our Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate to help with inspection preparation, quality assurance, safeguarding protocols and self assessment – all of these areas have been recognised as best practice by the Care Quality Commission.

3.2.4: Increase capacity at all levels within children’s social care, in particular by ensuring that there is an effective Senior Management Team responsible for social care and by reducing social worker vacancy rates at all levels

Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
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To date we have:

- Restructured our leadership framework to reflect clear accountabilities for safeguarding, education standards and health outcomes;
- Appointed two new directors to the positions of Director of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting and Senior Director of Schools and Lifelong Learning;
- Reduced the number of unfilled social worker posts since the Notice to Improve was signed and additional capacity is in place through the use of agency staff where we have been unable to recruit to vacant posts.

3.2.5: Review social workers’ responsibilities to ensure that responsibilities are clearly and tightly defined so that no staff carry too wide a range of work. This will need to involve consideration of whether a restructure of children’s social care services is necessary

Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
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As stated previously, immediate actions were taken to address the priority areas identified in the Ofsted inspection and the range of work has been reduced as Family finding activity is now undertaken by a separate team. Additional administrative resources have been allocated to localities to limit the administrative duties Social Workers have to carry out. A fieldwork review has been conducted involving a range of staff across several disciplines and levels. Options have been considered in terms of future locality and team configuration and the range of work, moving towards dedicated teams in each locality.

Social worker's responsibilities have been considered in the fieldwork review and the key proposals include:

- Improvements to the Front Door dealing with contact and referral;
- Reduce the number of locality teams but ensure the neighbourhood teams are co-terminus with the learning communities;
- Dedicated Looked After Children (LAC) Teams including areas such as Special Guardianship, Residence Orders and Private Fostering.

3.2.6: Develop a comprehensive programme of training, mentoring and continuous professional development for all social care staff so that they have the skills to complete high quality and timely assessments	
Status	Progress already made with comprehensive programme of training, mentoring and continuous development commenced and further elements scheduled to start September 2010

Newly qualified Social Workers are undertaking the Children's Workforce Development Council Programme, with the taught element provided by the University of Sheffield.

Two posts have been created in the Family Assessment team to take newly qualified social workers on a month's placement to develop assessment skills, as well as other staff where a need arises. These posts have been appointed to with staff due to start in the next 8 weeks.

A new post-qualifying training programme has commenced with 14 places taken in the first wave. Considerable progress has also been made in assessment training, as described above.

The revised training strategy for Social Workers is being finalised, with the intention for a Post-Graduate Certificate programme to be rolled out to all Social Workers, accredited to Post Qualification. Case studies and examples used on the programme will be specific to Rotherham where appropriate.

Team Managers will undertake a separate PGC programme in Leadership and Management in Social Work. Team Managers will undertake a 3-day Supervision training programme starting in April 2010.

3.3) Developing services and front-line practice:

3.3.1: Establish and implement an effective policy on the auditing of assessment and referrals so as to ensure managerial involvement in quality assurance	
Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve

A single QA/Audit Framework has been implemented which covers all aspects of this action. The overall data quality assurance strategy and monitoring and reporting policies and procedure have been approved.

The new Director of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting has also introduced a more comprehensive audit framework which is being developed electronically to ease input and analysis. From March all initial and core assessments are being audited with a bank of good practice being developed.

- All open cases for LAC and Child protection Plans – findings reveal that some documents are either not input or associated despite addressing backlog;
- Extensive file audits ongoing - Case file audits, Case Conference Chairs auditing Child Protection Plans, Routine independent reviewing officers (IRO) work;
- Director audits of IRO reviews – findings reveal that quality of reviews needs significant improvement;
- Practice consultant review – practice audits of LAC Case files – findings not yet available;
- SCR recommendation audits – tracking in conjunction with GOYH/DCSF/Ofsted;
- SCR recommendation on sibling relationships – audit currently taking place findings not yet available;
- Weekly audits of Contact and Referral of No Further Actions – stepped up activity following December audit findings of unsatisfactory pace of progress;
- Auditing activity is being undertaken by the Director Safeguarding and Strategic Director to reinforce the critical nature of case recording standards with analysis of audits being reviewed by the performance team.

3.3.2: Ensure information systems are up to date and accurate and that staff have the capacity and administrative support necessary to input data in a timely fashion

Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
---------------	--

Additional administrative resources were allocated to clear the backlog both from the CYP Service and from the other Council directorates. The social work related unassociated document backlog has been cleared and revised working practices are being introduced to ensure that input targets will be met in the future.

The Data Quality Strategy contains targets for data input within 5 working days for social care. Data input has continued to be adversely affected by staffing levels. An update of the actions is due at the end of April and findings will be raised with the Director of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting as well as being reported to the CYPS Leadership Team. Further details have been covered in earlier sections of this report.

3.3.3: Implement the Council’s supervision policy so that all social workers receive supervision in line with the Council’s policy.

Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
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An audit of all Performance and Development Reviews and social worker supervision has been undertaken and work is ongoing to bring the social work staff in line with the Council's policy. In December 2009, an audit of PDRs was carried out with a 10% sample of the whole CYPS workforce.

- 81% of PDRs had a fully or partially completed performance plan
- 90% of PDRs had a fully or partially completed development plan

Subsequently we have launched a CYPS Supervision Procedure in January 2010, with a mandatory training session for all managers rolled out Feb-March 2010 to provide budget, PDR and Supervision training. Attendance and feedback was extremely positive.

Supervision has been impaired by staffing levels. However, we have a target for 90% of PDRs to be completed and these will be undertaken during the next two months. A further audit will be conducted in June.

3.3.4: Embed use of the CAF in practice across children’s services so that it is effectively used to inform early intervention.

Status	Initial action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
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Rotherham's approach to CAF has been reviewed and a new Prevention and Intervention Strategy is being launched in April. Feedback from consultation and training is very positive.

The use of CAF has been reviewed to ensure that a consistent approach is being taken by all partners. CAF training has been undertaken by 215 people in the last two months. The number of CAFs completed in Rotherham has risen to 144 since training commenced.

3.3.5: Demonstrate improvements in staff satisfaction and in the satisfaction of children and families with the services they receive through the term of the Improvement Notice.

Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
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The following surveys are being used to monitor satisfaction levels:

- Employee Opinion Survey (EOS)
- Looked After Children Reviews
- Audit Commission in Schools Survey
- Social Worker Survey

The baseline for EOS is 64% engagement for the CYP Service compared to 69% for the rest of Council. The target is for CYP Service to be in line with the Council average. The next EOS will start with the CYP Service in December 2010 and will be completed by the Council as a whole in 2011.

The baseline for the Audit Commission Schools survey response rate 2008 29%, 2009 63%. The target for the next survey is 80% and this will be conducted in 2011. Between 2008 and 2009 both our response rate and satisfaction levels had significantly improved.

The Family Placement Survey is a bi-annual survey of Foster Carers and Adopters, the response rate in November 09 was 29% lower than the 2006 survey - 52%. However, the rates of satisfaction have increased, particularly around the levels of support they receive. The next survey is scheduled for 2011.

3.4) Working with others:

3.4.1: Establish clear and agreed processes with partners in the Children's Trust and LSCB for contact and referral so that contacts and referrals go to the appropriate team and are dealt with quickly.

Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
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The Safe and Well protocol has been refreshed and disseminated to all partners to ensure the threshold for contacts and referrals are understood and applied consistently. This is being re-launched on 22nd April alongside the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy.

Contacts and referrals are subject to audit and quality assurance to identify areas for improvement, trends, and pressure points within the system. A weekly monitoring report is produced on a team by team basis to ensure performance is challenged and that referrals are being allocated correctly. Reports indicate inconsistent application of thresholds whilst some areas are showing good practice.

A pilot has been in place in Aston where improved multi agency working has been achieved. This has involved close collaboration between the school and social care where the NQSW has been co-located in the school. In addition to improved multi agency working and mutual understanding, tracking of cases has demonstrated real improvements in safeguarding outcomes for the children and the model is currently being fully evaluated before roll out across other localities.

3.4.2: Continue to work with National Strategies and National Challenge to improve attainment in all schools and across all Key Stages

Status	Significant action taken and will be ongoing throughout the period of the Notice to Improve
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The latest CAA performance profile for Rotherham shows NIs to be broadly in line with similar areas and national averages with only one NI being below similar areas in the Staying Safe category.

GCSE results are better than last year and Rotherham is the 13th most improved authority in the country. Rotherham's early years performance is rated as the 15th most improved in the country. Improvement plans are in place for all National Indicators and where targets are not being met performance clinics are held to identify areas where further improvement can be made.

Our progress on World Class Primary Schools is being closely monitored and whilst this is an area for improvement, our strategy is clear; we must improve our safeguarding first and foremost. A Strategy Board has been established on which National Strategies and DCSF are represented to fulfil the monitoring and evaluation function. It meets half-termly and had its first session in late March. The DCS attends and it will be chaired at Service Director Level.

4) Priorities for moving forward

The previous section of the report provides an objective assessment of progress. We are very conscious of a number of issues which warrant further action. These issues have emerged based upon the work of the CYPIS Improvement Panel, discussions

with DCSF, GOYH and feedback from Ofsted in relation to the CAA performance profile.

Self Awareness / Pace of Improvement - We recognise the need to pick up the pace of improvement and demonstrate stronger evidence of impact. We have taken action across all key areas but for some areas it is still too early to show results.

Action:

- Refocus the improvement panel on these key priorities and reduce the size of the panel to enable better quality challenge, debate and agreement on way forward;
- Strengthened performance management within the directorate through redeployment of resources from within the service and across the Council;
- Improve quality of reporting to ensure robust accurate analysis of progress and corrective action needed;
- Strengthen accountability through supervision and 1:1s of all managers.

Initial and Core Assessments - The improvement in the completion of Core Assessments within timescales (NI 60) means we are performing at a standard well above the Notice to Improve target. Performance against the targets for Referrals progressing to an Initial Assessments (NI 68) and Initial Assessments completed within timescales has not reached target, but significant progress has been made. We are not complacent and these issues will continue to be treated as a top priority by the Council and local strategic partners.

Action:

- All initial assessments are being quality assured by the DCSF funded team managers and our Practice Consultants;
- Team Managers monitoring progress and taking action on a weekly basis;
- Complete the roll out of CAF training and evaluate impact;
- Implement changes to social care team structure to improve approach to contact, referral, assessments.

Social Worker Recruitment - Vacancy levels are still too high and are having a significant impact on service delivery and resources through the over reliance of agency staff.

Action:

- To undertake the Return to Social Work campaign and begin construction of online micro-site and marketing media in support of this;
- Introduce the revised post qualification/Learning & Development Strategy;
- Introduce the revised Leadership & Management programme;
- Continuation of the Newly Qualified Social Workers programme and PG programme;
- Finalisation of recruitment of 3rd year students-to-QSW appointments;
- Review of agency appointments with Duttons (our approved agency provider)
- Continue advertising campaign to recruit to all levels of vacancy;
- RIEP proposal for recruitment and retention of social workers regionally.

Prevention and Intervention - Early intervention is crucial to improving outcomes for children and young people. Our Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy provides processes and tools which enable services to work together to identify families at risk of poor outcomes and to provide support at the earliest opportunity. It is designed to provide the framework within which all partners can cooperate, prioritise and coordinate their collective efforts.

Action:

- The Safe and Well protocol guidance updated and endorsed by partners;
- Launched early intervention and prevention strategy April 2010;
- Common Assessment Framework refresher training commenced in February 2010 – to date 215 staff and 50 managers have been trained, with a further 218 registered to undertake refresher training by the end of April 2010.

Quality Assurance - Significant action has already been taken to improve quality assurance processes as demonstrated earlier in this report. Systems, policies and procedures are in place to enable the highest possible data quality, particularly where information is shared with partners.

Action:

- Ensure compliance with quality assurance and supervision policies, including robust reporting.

Serious Case reviews - The overall Serious Case Review profile is now 1 Good, 2 Adequate and 3 Inadequate. Rotherham has received judgements on two serious case reviews since the Notice to Improve was agreed; one being rated as adequate and one as inadequate.

We have concerns that the inadequate judgement is not a true reflection of the work undertaken locally. Following discussions about the inadequate judgement the independent chair of the Safeguarding Board has decided to challenge the judgement and an appeal has been submitted. Ofsted have confirmed that they will fully re-evaluate this SCR. Whilst we await the outcome of this challenge lessons learned are being acted upon.

Action:

- Procedures for SCRs have been fully reviewed by the LSCB and detailed meetings have taken place with GOYH and DSCF;
- Outstanding recommendations have been followed up and quality assured;
- Independent audits are being undertaken in relation to sibling relationships;
- Disseminate lessons learned arising from Serious Case Reviews.

Inspections - The quality of inspected services is still a critical issue for the Council. There are signs of improvement in some areas but there is still much to do. This is partly an issue of timing as improvement is dependant upon the timing of inspections by Ofsted. However more direct, swift action is needed to ensure that 90% of inspection recommendations are implemented.

Action:

- Preparation for any forthcoming inspection of safeguarding, looked after children, fostering;
- Further improve robustness of performance management arrangements for reporting inspection findings, progress and corrective actions;
- Focus on children homes, pupil referral units, fostering and adoption service inspections and ensure all recommendations are addressed immediately.

5) **Lessons Learned for all Agencies**

We believe it is essential that as part of the improvement notice we continually reflect and assess the wider lessons for all those involved in supporting improvement. We are also aware that DCSF is evaluating what works in terms of successful interventions.

Local authority - It is increasingly evident that Councils do not come out of intervention quickly. Many authorities have been in government intervention for years rather than months and with the heightened and justified focus on safeguarding this situation is unlikely to improve in the short term. We believe the positive improvement trends we are starting to see will become stronger as the process improves and training we are undertaking become embedded. Consequently we still believe we will be able to come out of intervention far more quickly than has been the experience of other Councils.

There is a strong focus on improvement panels and the role of the chair. Our experience so far is that the improvement panel is essential for keeping a focus on the range of actions but the reality is that the real level of challenge and improvement occurs outside of these meetings. We have already strengthened the frequency and focus of our panel but we also believe it is timely to reduce the size of the panel to only include the key staff and partners who can add value.

There is an issue of pace but this has been hampered by the inability to recruit experienced social workers. This is a national issue which many other authorities are faced with. We have played our part by our innovative, sustained and persistent recruitment activity. However, more urgent attention by DCSF and GOYH is required to help solve this national recruitment shortage.

We also recognise the need to strengthen the role, accountability and governance arrangements of the safeguarding board. It needs to have a stronger emphasis on performance management arrangements and needs to openly challenge and hold to account staff involved in improving safeguarding practices.

Ofsted - The inspectorate is attempting to improve its relationship with local authorities and this is welcomed. We had a positive meeting with our link HMI inspector who gave us a very useful overview of the inspection outcomes. However, we do not feel that Ofsted are engaged or fully understand the intervention process in detail.

It would be extremely useful for the inspectorate or GOYH to provide analysis of inspection findings across the country to help dissemination of best practice. We have requested such analysis via the HMI link inspector but no such report or analysis is available currently.

GOYH - Yorkshire and Humberside appears to have the worst position in terms of children scores and intervention in the country. We believe this warrants further investigation in terms of resources, reasons and support. We welcome the critical friend approach but it would be useful to clarify the role more clearly in terms of support and assistance. For example, a regional solution to recruitment of social workers has been discussed but progress on this urgent issue is not clear at the moment.

DCSF - We have welcomed the informal and formal discussions with DCSF officials over the development and implementation of the improvement notice. The monthly meetings are constructive, open and timely. We believe a useful way forward is an urgent examination of how authorities in intervention can accelerate progress. In December we talked about additional support in terms of experienced social workers. In reality this has been difficult to deliver, although the existing DCSF improvement frameworks are welcomed.

Audit Commission - We have an ongoing dialogue with our CAA lead. It is very clear that the children's score for CAA has a disproportionate impact on the overall CAA. All Councils with the lowest score have low organisational assessment scores irrespective whether other areas are improving such as adult social care. We believe it is essential that we all seek to provide a sound and balanced understanding of progress to the CAA lead and Ofsted, otherwise progress will be solely based upon the results of inspected services.

Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership - The improvement partnership has been very helpful in acting quickly to the issues regarding children services. Through the Directors regional network and the RIEP Director additional support and assistance has been sought in the areas of quality assurance, financial assistance and recruitment practices. We would welcome further support in this area to ensure the region can be more responsible for sector led improvement.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28th April 2010
3.	Title:	Children and Young People's Services Notice to Improve - Progress Update
4.	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services

5. Summary

This report provides an overview of the progress made since the Notice to Improve was received in December, identifies a RAG rating and a direction of travel for the areas of improvement, some areas of good performance and key risks and issues to meeting the stretching targets set for the council and its strategic partners.

Five actions have now been completed which cover work around:-

- Performance Development Reviews for all staff,
- The Director of Children & Learners at GOYH is now a member of the improvement panel.
- Additional administration staff are in place in the social care locality teams with these additional resources having a positive impact.
- Work has taken place around the use of the Learning Portal for sharing social care reports for social workers and managers is in place
- Social work staff now have access to the VPN home working solution with the roll out of laptops completed and SWIFT desk guides have been issued to localities.

In addition to these, significant improvements have also been made around Common Assessment Framework (CAF) training and completion of associated paperwork and currently all initial and core assessments are being quality audited.

6. Recommendations

That the Cabinet notes the progress being made against the targets set in the Notice to Improve.

7. Proposals and Details

This report, to be read in conjunction with the Notice to Improve Action Plan (Appendix A) highlights the RAG status of the actions, any areas for concern, what the barriers are and what is being done about them.

There are 43 individual actions covering the key performance measures (3 social care indicators and the LAA improvements) in addition to the operational targets around Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Leadership and Management, Performance Management, Finance, Recruitment and Retention and ICT.

Based on a RAG rating the following is the current position as at 20th April 2010.

Red: 3 (7%)

Amber : 23 (53%)

Green: 17 (40%) (out of which 5 are now deemed as completed)

There has also been a direction of travel included within each the RAG status to establish where progress is being made on the ones that are not moving from red to amber or amber to green.

a) High Risk areas (red risks)

NI59 – initial assessments within 7 days

This stands at 74.8% which is less than the original December baseline. Focus has been on the quality and accuracy of recording and from the 1st March all initial assessments (instead of samples) are now being quality checked.

This indicator is the most important part of the process and trends over the last 3 months are showing a month on month improvement:

January: 72%

February: 76%

March: 77%

Improve the quality of serious case reviews

The results from the recent challenge submitted to OFSTED for both of the recent SCR judgements is still awaited. Until these are received from OFSTED it is considered that this is still a high risk. However, one Serious Case Review is being fully evaluated again by OFSTED following the submission of a challenge by the Directorate.

Improve the outcomes of the satisfaction of CYPS surveys

Baselines are being agreed for the key surveys with the Employee Opinion Survey and the Audit Commission Schools Survey, however both of these are not due to be repeated until 2011, after the final milestone date of the Notice to Improve. The Family Placement survey has shown an increase in satisfaction levels from service users (foster carers and adopters) of the support they receive.

b) Completed targets

- PDR guidance has been issued to managers for 2010 with a May deadline set for the completion of PDRs
- The Director of Children & Learners at GOYH is now a member of the improvement panel.
- Additional administration staff are now in place in the social care locality teams with the resources having a positive impact.
- The Portal development for sharing social care reports for social workers and managers is in place
- Social work staff now have access to the VPN home working solution with the roll out of laptops completed and SWIFT desk guides have been issued to localities.

c) areas of improvement

The CAF training re-commenced on the 24th February with 215 practitioners and 50 managers having already been trained, since the training commenced 144 CAFs have been received (only 3 had been submitted from the start of the year to the start of the training on the 24th February)

Since the 1st March all initial and core assessments are being audited with a bank of good practice being developed.

8. Finance

The DCSF has agreed up to £150,000 financial support to assist with recovery, a further £125,000 has been secured from the RIEP. This funding will be used to supplement social work staffing resources and to employ independent staff to assist in the review and further improvement of and service quality activities. (see reference above)

A review has been conducted of Children and Young People's placements; both Rotherham based and in out of authority facilities. This has focussed on whether the placements can end, in line with the care plan review, whether the council is getting the best value for money and that the placements are of the required quality.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The 3 key performance risks (red) are identified in the report and there are service delivery risks associated with the Notice to Improve action plan. Where these are significant they are being fed into the CYPS risk register.

Planning has now commenced for an announced inspection of Looked After Children and Safeguarding services. It is uncertain at this stage when this will take place, self assessments have been developed, as are briefing notes for staff and the KLOEs being circulated to potential members of focus groups in addition to the continued collection of the library of key documents that inspectors expect to receive before they are on site.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Annual Performance Assessment 2008 result was the trigger for the CYPS Review, which was commissioned jointly by the Council and NHS Rotherham. A number of recommendations arose from this review which were included in an Improvement action plan.

On 4th and 5th August 2009, CYPS received an unannounced inspection of its Contact, Referral and Assessment service. The inspection confirmed many issues related to performance, caseload and capacity, quality assurance. Ofsted's recommendation was that we should take immediate action to address the issues raised in order to prevent further decline in service performance, quality and capacity. A notice to improve was issued in December 2009.

Failure to address these issues would impact further on the CYPS Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), the Council's CAA and could lead to external intervention.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Notice To Improve

Ofsted Inspection - Contact, Referral and Assessment, 4th and 5th August 2009

Children First Review and Resource Benchmarking – January to June 2009

CYPS Improvement Plan

Comprehensive Area Assessment

CYP Directorate Performance reports

Appendix A – Notice to Improve action plan

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RMBC Notice to Improve Action Plan

Performance Measures

Date of update 20th April 2010

Objective	Key Actions	Measures			Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
		Baseline	Current performance	Targets				
Staying Safe - Performance								
	NI 68 - Increase the % of referrals of children in need to children's social care going onto initial assessment in line with the current statistical neighbour average/top band performance (mid range is good performance)	57.6% (2008/09 outturn) (2270/3940) 59.8% (position as at Nov 2009)	61.22%	65% March 2010 68% October 2010 70% March 2011	Gani Martins	↑ Amber	This indicator is slightly higher than both Baselines but has not met the 65% target. This indicator shows the level of shared understanding about thresholds of social care involvement. The Safe & Well Protocol has been revised and will be launched on 22nd April. The CAF Development Officer is in post and the CAF training commenced with 215 out of the 490 staff identified having received training since the 24th February 2010.	Social Work
Improvement Notice	NI 59 - Increase the % of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 7 working days of referral from the 2008/09 baseline in line with current statistical neighbour average/top band performance (high is good performance)	77.8% (2008/09 outturn) (1767/2270) 73% (position as at Nov 2009)	74.80%	80% March 2010 85% October 2010 87% March 2011	Gani Martins	↓ Red	74.8% of the I.A.s completed during the year have been completed in time. In March 77% were completed in time compared with 72% in January and 76% in February. Data checks are being undertaken to check accuracy in recording and from 1st March all initial assessments are being QA'd by the Practice Consultants. To date the audit has identified some I.A.s ended without completion and these have been retrieved by locality managers for action.	Social Work
Improvement Notice	NI 60 - Increase the % of core assessments for children's social care carried out within 35 working days of their commencement from the 2008/09 baseline in line with the current statistical neighbour average/top band performance (high is good performance)	84.9% (2008/09 outturn) (276/325) 68% (position as at Nov 2009)	80.17%	80% March 2010 84% October 2010 87% March 2011	Gani Martins	↑ Amber	Slightly more than the than target at 80.17%. From 1st March all core assessments are being QA'd by the Practice Consultants so that we can use findings to drive up quality. These figures need to be validated and may improve as part of this process	Social Work
LAA 2008-2011 Being Healthy; Enjoying and Achieving; Achieving Economic Wellbeing; Making A Positive Contribution - Performance								
Overall improvements in LAA indicators relating to children's services and statutory attainment targets through the period of this Improvement Notice	Overall improvement to be made against all CYP related LAA measures	Baseline for measures is the agreed position when the LAA refresh was finished in March 2009	70% Improved from baseline as at Q2 2009/10	>65% improved from baseline March 2011	Rotherham MBC / LSP Partners	→ Green	At the end of Q3 2009/10 67% of targets have improved performance from their baseline positions since the LAA was agreed.	Performance and all Workstreams

Operational Targets

Objective	Key Actions	Measures		Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
		Baseline	Targets					
1. Staying Safe - Social Work Practice and Process								
Establish and implement an effective policy on the auditing of assessment and referrals so as to ensure managerial involvement in quality assurance	Implement an improved quality assurance framework for assessments and referrals	Each Team Manager audits 3 files per month as per guidance. Locality Managers to audit 3 files per month and 5 NFA	100% compliance with the policy	Ongoing	Gani Martins	→ Amber	The previous monitoring system was not adequate. A new system has been put in place which provides monitoring and reporting on a locality by locality basis to the safeguarding and corporate parenting management team. In addition the 2 DCSF funded Team Managers have been appointed to undertake Quality Assurance work.	Social Work
	Conduct a review on all NFA cases to quality assure the high level of 'no further action' decisions being taken	NFA Contacts and Referrals 1.4.2009 to 9.12.2009 33.18% Total Contacts 11.12% Total Referrals	10% reduction in overall contact and referrals which result in NFA by March 2010	November 2009	Gani Martins	→ Green	A second review has been completed and report discussed at SCPMT. The outcomes of the review are being fed into the review of fieldwork staffing and responsibilities and improved contact and referral processing. 920 contacts received with 265 NFA'd - 28.8% which is lower than the 1st Audit carried out on contacts NFA'd (33.18%). Information has been received from another LA which has reported 50% of their contacts were NFA'd.	Social Work
	Conduct Business Process re-engineering exercise on current practices in relation to Assessments and Referrals in line with best practice to enhance performance	Practices in relation to Assessments and Referrals in need of review	Business process Re-engineering process completed	January 2010	John Dunn, RBT / Rebecca Wragg	→ Amber	3 maps have been approved and communicated, 2 maps presented to Team Managers for roll out (22nd April), 2 maps have been signed off by SCPMT with identified improvements, 0 maps are now scheduled for sign off by SCPMT. 5 business areas (consisting numerous maps) are underway. Progress continues to be highly dependant on the availability of staff	ICT
Embed use of the CAF in practice across children's services so that it is effectively used to inform early intervention	Improve quality and completion levels of CAFs	Between January 2006 and July 2009 there have been 976 CAFs completed in Rotherham.	Target for CAFs to be completed per year to be set in conjunction with partners	January 2010	Simon Perry / Sarah Whittle	↑ Amber	£20k has been sourced for CAF training. The Safe and Well protocol guidance has been updated and endorsed by The Policy and Procedure group and was approved by the CYP Board on the 3rd February 2010. This will be launched on the 22nd April 2010 as part of the early intervention improvement programme. A Pathway & Toolkit has been developed - Training Commenced on the 24th February and consists of 14 sessions, 35 people per session = 490 staff to be trained. As at 8th April 215 staff have now been trained with an additional 50 managers. 218 staff are booked on the courses between now and the end of April. Since the training started 144 CAFs have been submitted (only 3 were submitted from the beginning of the year to the start of the training)	Early Intervention
	Update Multi Agency Safe & Well Protocol and Practice Guidance	Original Safe and Well Protocol launched in 2006.	Update of Protocol Completed	January 2010	Gani Martins/ Simon Perry	→ Green	The Protocol has been updated and was endorsed by the RSCB Policy and Procedure Group on 13th November 2009. Continuum of Need Chart ratified by CYP Board on 9th December and issued to all staff/partner agencies.	Social Work
	High profile re-launch to ensure consistency in Thresholds for intervention across all agencies.	Original Safe and Well Protocol launched in 2006.	Protocol updated and relaunched	January 2010	Gani Martins/ Simon Perry	→ Green	There will be a high profile launch of the protocol on 22nd April 2010 to address inconsistencies in application of thresholds.	Social Work

Operational Targets

Objective	Key Actions	Measures		Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
		Baseline	Targets					
1. Staying Safe - Social Work Practice and Process								
Monitor improvement in children's social care, by establishing a rigorous performance management system which delivers regular monitoring, scrutiny and quality assurance of social care performance	Ensure that all children's homes are compliant with regulatory requirements	1 - St Edmunds	No inadequate children's homes	December 2009	Gani Martins	↑ Amber	Following a recent inspection of St Edmunds Avenue it was rated as satisfactory, there are now no children's homes that are inadequate. Plans are in place to further improve the performance of all the children's homes.	Social Work
	Introduce monthly safeguarding report card to CYP Directorate Leadership Team, Corporate Management Team, Safeguarding Board and Children and Young People's Board.	Safeguarding focused performance scorecard required	12 reports per year	November 2009	Julie Westwood	→ Green	The Safeguarding report card has been approved and adopted by the Improvement Panel, CYP Board and Locality Teams and was presented at the Safeguarding Board on the 19th March 2010	Performance
	Conduct a self assessment using the Safeguarding Inspection Criteria to identify any areas for development prior to inspection	Initial work started	Assessment completed and approved	November 2009	Gani Martins / All Managers / Performance and Quality	→ Green	Initial Self Assessment completed which will be validated and updated on a monthly basis. A internal challenge session was undertaken on 4th March and 2 sessions on the 11th March involving the Asst Chief Exec in respect of the self assessment. The assessment will now be shared with partners via the Rotherham SCB to ensure a broader contribution.	Social Work
	Improve quality of serious case reviews to ensure all judged adequate or better	Two of Four judged inadequate	All future SCRs to be rated good or better	Ongoing	Catherine Hall	→ Red	Since the last panel meeting Rotherham has received judgements on two serious case reviews; one being rated as adequate and one as inadequate. Rotherham's partners have concerns that the inadequate judgement is not a true reflection on the work undertaken locally. Following discussions about the judgements the independent chair of the Safeguarding Board has decided to challenge both SCRs in relation to the issues identified and the overall judgement itself. OFSTED are fully re-evaluating the latest inadequate SCR. The Chair of the LSCB and the Strategic Director for CYPS now accept the adequate judgement. However, one SCR is being fully evaluated again by OFSTED following the submission of the challenge	Social Work
	Ensure that all actions from recommendations from SCRs are implemented and that evidence is provided to ensure robust audit trail.	Baseline 37 Actions	Number of recommendations in red status = 0.	January 2010	Alan Hazell Catherine Hall Phil Morris	→ Amber	Rotherham LSCB constitution signed off on 19th March 2010 including TOR of P&Q sub group. SCR sub committee to retain overall responsibility for SCR action plans and P&Q sub group will evaluate impact and outcomes. 1 action plan has now been signed off by GO on the 15th March and the remaining 3 actions will be reviewed with GO on the 23rd April	Social Work
	Permanent Safeguarding Manager to be in post	1 individual working 2 days a week conducting safeguarding manager duties	Safeguarding Manager in post	February 2010	Joyce Thacker	→ Green	Interviews for a permanent Safeguarding Manager were held on 18th March 2010, an appointment was not made but alternative action has been agreed with the RSCB independent chair.	Workforce

	Conduct robust quality assurance checks on information systems to ensure that contacts, referrals and the status of investigations, assessments and plans are up to date	Quality assurance and audits require improved performance framework	% of monthly supervision checks conducted - 100% Number and % of adequate data quality checks conducted - 100%	Ongoing	Gani Martins	↑ Amber	A single QA/Audit Framework has been implemented which covers all aspects of this action. The overall data quality assurance strategy and monitoring and reporting policies and procedure has been signed off by the SCPMT. From the 1st March all initial and core assessments are being audited with a bank of good practice being developed. Further, more robust recording of audits has recently been introduced.	Social Work
Review social workers' responsibilities to ensure that responsibilities are clearly and tightly defined so that no staff carry too wide a range of work. This will need to involve consideration of whether a restructure of children's social care services is necessary	Undertake Fieldwork Review and implement improved operational structure	The remaining priority action to be addressed	Fully reviewed social care infrastructure in place	Feb 2010	Gani Martins	→ Amber	A draft report of the review has been completed and is due to be circulated for further consultation prior to implementation. Key areas include: Front Door improvements, the number of locality teams, and introduction of dedicated LAC teams.	Social Work / Workforce

Operational Targets

Objective	Key Actions	Measures		Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
		Baseline	Targets					
2. Enjoying and Achieving - Practice and Process								
Improve Performance across primary schools with a particular focus on addressing the performance of schools below the floor targets	Submit a plan to the DCSF which addresses performance across primary schools with a particular focus on addressing the performance of schools below the floor targets	Existing plan in need of review	Plan Agreed With DCSF	End of January 2010	David Light	→ Green	Performance against floor targets for individual schools needs to be improved in line with the overall performance trend. The plan that was submitted to DCSF related to World Class primaries has been approved and work is ongoing to address the issues contained within the action plan. Report was submitted to the Improvement Panel on 25th March 2010.	Enjoying and Achieving
	Implement this plan, as agreed with DCSF and National Strategies, to bring about demonstrable and sustained improvement in primary school standards throughout the term of the Improvement Notice.	13 Primary schools below floor targets	13 down to 8 during 2010 and then down to 0 in 2011	March 2010 October 2010 March 2011	David Light	→ Amber	Report was submitted to Improvement Panel on 25th March 2010 and report submitted to the strategy group	Enjoying and Achieving

Objective	Key Actions	Measures		Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
		Baseline	Targets					
3. Leadership and Management / Capacity Building / Support								
Build capacity and capability to deliver and sustain improvement	Obtain external funding from Regional Improvement Efficiency Programme/DCSF including sector led expertise as required	No funding agreed	Funding obtained and apportioned	December 2009	Matthew Gladstone	→ Green	£125k additional funding was agreed by the RIEP. DCSF allocated £150k (over two years) to support improvement. Additional social work resources have been selected from tenders using the DCSF funding and will focus on quality assurance and improvement work.	Finance
	Develop a comprehensive programme of training, mentoring and continuous professional development for all social care staff so that they have the skills to complete high quality and timely assessments	Director of Children's Services holds monthly 1:1 challenge meetings with each Service Director covering all aspects of performance	Monthly supervisions currently in place	12 challenge meetings per year per director	December 2009	Joyce Thacker	Complete	
	Improve induction process for CYPS	Induction process for CYPS inconsistent	Induction process for CYPS consistently adhered to and monitored	January 2010	Gani Martins/ Warren Carratt	↑ Green	CYPS Welcome Days now running. NQSW programme in place and running, All staff in CYPS are chased up re completion of e-induction, manager induction dates (for PDR/ Budget and Performance) in addition to ones for existing staff have been completed with additional training identified and organised as a result of the sessions	Workforce
	Ensure that accountabilities for each individual are being reinforced through consistently applied PDR's to ensure staff have a satisfactory Performance Plan.	81%	90%	January 2010	Julie Westwood/ Warren Carratt	↑ Amber	PDR guidance issued for 2010 with deadline set for the end of May for completion of PDRs. All managers were required to attend PDR/ supervision training. The training has been held and feedback has been positive, a further audit will take place in June	Workforce / Performance

<p>Demonstrate improvements in staff satisfaction and in the satisfaction of children and families with the services they receive through the term of the Improvement Notice</p>	<p>Improve outcomes of CYPS satisfaction surveys</p>	<p>Employee Opinion Survey TBC LAC reviews TBC Audit Commission in Schools Survey TBC Social Worker Survey TBC</p>	<p>Employee Opinion Survey TBC LAC reviews TBC Audit Commission in Schools Survey TBC Social Worker Survey TBC</p>	<p>March 2010 Oct 2010 and March 2011</p>	<p>Julie Westwood/ Warren Carratt</p>	<p>↑ Red</p>	<p>Baseline for EOS - 64% (CYPS) rest of Council 69% - target to be discussed 69%, the next EOS is not until 2011, however HR have advised that a specific survey for CYPS can be run earlier than planned at the end 2010. Baseline for AC schools survey response rate 2008 29% 2009 63%. Target 80%, next survey not now run until 2011 (now 2 yearly). The Family Placement Survey is a bi-annual survey of Foster Carers and Adopters, the response rate in November 09 was 29% lower than the 2006 survey - 52%. However, the rates of satisfaction have increased, particularly around the levels of support they receive. The next survey is scheduled for 2011.</p>	<p>Workforce and all Workstreams</p>
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Operational Targets

Objective	Key Actions	Measures		Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
		Baseline	Targets					
4. Performance Management								
Improve Annual Children's Service Scores Profile to Performing well by 2011 through implementation of all outstanding recommendations and improvement of inspection scores to good or better	Continually assess the position in relation to all outstanding external inspection recommendations including all those listed in CAA Blocks A and B	Performing Poorly	90% of recommendations met in original timescale 12 reports per year	monthly	Julie Westwood	↑ Amber	Recommendations from key high risk inspections being input. Visits undertaken to Early Years and SES to examine recording systems already deployed. These have been found to be satisfactory. There will be on site visits to validate the implementation of recommendations and the state of readiness in terms of achieving a positive outcome in the next inspection. Action plans have been requested from the services to shift proportion of services to good or better and have been received.	Performance
	Introduce robust monthly monitoring arrangements to ensure implementation of all outstanding inspection recommendations from all inspections in original timescales	Inspection recommendations from key inspections are being monitored but reports need to include all inspected services	90% of recommendations met in original timescale 12 reports per year	Quarterly	Julie Westwood	↑ Amber	All inspection recommendations (with the exception of schools and childminders which have an established monitoring system) are being entered into the reconfigured CYP inspections monitoring database. Monitoring reports will be presented quarterly to each Improvement Panel Meeting, reported to Improvement Panel on 25th March focusing on the high risk area, children's homes, this will be developed further and submitted to a future Improvement Panel with other information in	Social Work / Performance
	Conduct a minimum of 2 mock unannounced inspections, in line with the Ofsted criteria per quarter	0	Minimum of 2 mock inspections per quarter to have been conducted	Quarterly	Julie Westwood/Gani Martins	↑ Amber	Resources have been committed to commissioning this externally. The work will take place over 6 half days to allow "deep dive" focus on a number of areas but with a particular focus on those which have been highlighted in the self assessment work and challenge. work will take place with Team and Locality Managers in respect of "what does good look like". As Part of Gani Martin's induction she visited 2 of Rotherham's localities and will be producing a paper for the May Improvement Panel.	Social Work / Performance
	Improve CYP Performance Profile rating for Block A by increasing % of inspected services rated "good or better"	Performing Poorly (bottom band for both PRU and Children's Homes) 54.9%	Performing Well (65% - 79% categorised as outstanding or good)	Quarterly	Julie Westwood	→ Amber	As at the Ofsted Quarter 4 Profile (which does not correspond with our quarterly dates) the overall Inspected Services position is that 64% of judgements on providers are below the average for similar areas and 71.43% are below the national average. The accuracy of the Ofsted information in the Profile was challenged as a number of inaccuracies have been found. Responses have been received back but the profile has not been amended. The report will be submitted to a future Improvement Panel once the update is received from OFSTED	Performance
	Improve CYP Performance Profile rating for Block B by: Ensuring majority of inspected scores are rated "good or better" for safeguarding LAC and SCRs	Fostering - Satisfactory SCRs 2/4 judged inadequate	Fostering - Good All future SCRs rated adequate or better	Quarterly	Julie Westwood	→ Amber	The overall Serious Case Review profile is now 1 Good, 2 Adequate and 3 Inadequate. As stated above, the last inadequate SCR is being challenged with Ofsted. Awaiting decision from OFSTED on the seventh SCR submitted last year. However, one SCR is being fully evaluated again by OFSTED following the challenge	Performance
	Improve CYP Performance Profile rating for Block C by improving NI performance	Not In line with or better than statistical neighbours and the national position	In line with or better than statistical neighbours and the national position	Quarterly	Julie Westwood	→ Amber	Improvement plans are in place for NIs and where targets are not being met performance clinics are held to identify areas where further improvement can be made. The latest profile shows NIs to be broadly in line with similar areas and national averages - see performance profile included in the panel documents. The accuracy of the Ofsted information in the Profile was challenged as a number of inaccuracies have been found. A response has been received but the profile has not been amended a report will be submitted to a future Improvement Panel once the updates have been received from OFSTED	Performance

	Ensure quarterly reporting on the Children's Services Performance Profile on their release clearly outlining areas of risk and potential impact	Report on Quarter 2 profile prepared	4 reports per year and improvement in each service block	Quarterly	Julie Westwood	↑ Amber	Risks will be incorporated in more detail from the next report. The accuracy of the latest release of the Ofsted Profile has been being challenged as a number of inaccuracies have been found. It is unwise to report anything until these inaccuracies have been corrected. A Response has been received but the profile has not been amended. A report will be submitted to a future Improvement Panel once updates have been received from OFSTED.	Performance
	Implement all the recommendations arising from the Children's First review undertaken using the DCSF Improvement Framework	67% when Improvement Notice Made	100% of recommendations implemented	March 2010	Julie Westwood	→ Green	A report on progress and the overall completion of the actions with evidence will be submitted to the next Improvement Panel in May.	Performance
Ensure that the Panel, chaired by the Chief Executive, provides effective challenge, and drives swift and sustainable progress through overseeing a robust action plan	Appoint the Director of Children and Learners at GOYH as a member of the Improvement Panel	N/A	Director of Children and learners at GOYH to attend CYP Improvement Panel meetings	December 2009	Joyce Thacker	complete		Performance

Objective	Key Actions	Measures Baseline	Targets	Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
5. Finance								
Strengthen financial management arrangements to ensure they are fit for purpose and financial targets 09/10 are met	Tackle the existing overspend in Directorate (particularly Social Care)	£4.5m overspend	Corporate Variance on target 2% +/-	March 2010	Joyce Thacker	→ Amber	The overspend has been addressed by reviewing budgets and the imposition of a moratorium on spending within the directorate. A review of the commissioning, quality and value for money of placements within Rotherham and in out of authority settings has just been completed. The corporate SLT has agreed the reduction targets for agency staff and overtime working. The overspend projected at the end of January 2010 was £4.2m. As at end of February 2010, the overspend was projected at £4.377m, due to agency fees and continued high levels of children in care. The current projected estimate is now £4.097m.	Finance
	Address the under funding issues in Social Care and School Effectiveness Service	In 2008/09 the gap was £8.3m. In 2008/09 had narrowed to £6.8m.	Close the gap against statistical neighbours average spend for CYP Services	March 2010	Joyce Thacker	↑ Amber	Schools Forum agreed to £400K from April 2010 for School Effectiveness. VFM Panel considered Social Care under funding and the investment proposal for CYP as a whole has been considered by Full Council on 4th March 2010, an agreed investment of £3.1m for CYPs.	Finance

Operational Targets

Objective	Key Actions	Measures Baseline	Targets	Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
6. Recruitment and Retention								
Increase the capacity of social carers to ensure effective services to safeguard vulnerable children	Reduce the vacancy rate of qualified social workers from the December 2009 baseline to meet the improvement notice target	37.2% 16th December 2009	20% vacancy rate by October 2010 10% vacancy rate by March 2011	October 2010	Gani Martins	↑ Amber	There are currently 5.9% of social worker posts unfilled. There are 84 social worker posts in the establishment with currently 22.2 vacancies. 17.2 posts are covered by agency staff and 5 posts remain unfilled (5.9%). A commissioning exercise using the DCSF framework has been conducted with further work being done for temporary workers, these bids are currently being evaluated.	Social Care / Workforce
	Reduce the vacancy rate of team managers from the December 2009 baseline to meet the improvement notice target	33% 16th December 2009	16% vacancy rate by October 2010 8% vacancy rate by March 2011	October 2010	Gani Martins	↑ Amber	There are currently 20% Team Manager posts unfilled. There are 15 Team Manager posts in the establishment with 5 vacancies, 2 are covered by agency staff and 3 remain unfilled (20%). There will be 2 more permanent staff starting in May 2010.	Social Care / Workforce
	Recruit 30 new Foster Carers	126 (January 2009)	156	March 2010	Gani Martins	→ Green	Since 1st April 2009 18 foster carers have been recruited, 5 more went to panel on the 29th March and a further 7 on the 12th April	Social Care / Workforce
	Reduce the over reliance on agency staff	2009/10 spend to date = £494,737.55 (6 months)	Target to be determined	October 2010	Gani Martins	→ Amber	The recruitment campaign for permanent social workers and team managers continues however, there is still expenditure against the agency staff budgets with £174k in January and £190k in February as a result of recruiting 10 additional agency social workers to cover the start of the permanent contracts commencing. There are currently 19.2 posts across social workers and team managers covered by agency staff.	Workforce / Finance
	Increase the number of additional administrative staff within the Directorate to free up time of social workers and assess impact to inform future budgets	7.9 FTE additional admin staff transferred into the Directorate to provide support and 7 admin agency staff.	Impact Assessment completed	December 2009	Julie Westwood	complete		Workforce / Finance

Objective	Key Actions	Measures Baseline	Targets	Target Date	Lead	RAG	Performance Commentary	Lead Workstream(s)
7. ICT								
Improve information systems to enable social workers/managers to process and access assessments and plans and transfer of case information on vulnerable children in a timely, accurate manner.	Increase email 'in box' capacity for managers	Inspectors recommendation	Resolve Issues raised	November 2009	Julie Westwood	complete		Performance / ICT
	Revise and accelerate the implementation of the corporate agile working programme for social work staff	Social Work teams in a later phase of the council's agile working programme - Worksmart.	Prioritise Social Work teams in the Worksmart programme. 106 Laptops and VPN tokens to be issued	January 2009	RBT	complete		ICT

CYPS Achievements

- 100% of care leavers are living in suitable accommodation.
 - CPP lasting over 2 years have reduced from the 2008/09 outturn of 4.8% to 1.3%.
 - 100% of CPP are reviewed within timescales. Child Protection Reviews are maintaining the top 100% performance.
 - LAC Reviews in timescales improved from 85.4% to 96.5%
-
- 97% of all Rotherham Schools (including PRUs) have achieved National Healthy Schools Status
 - Childhood obesity for both reception and Year 6 has improved by 2% and we are now in line with our statistical neighbours.
 - 86% of children and young people participate in 2 hours+ sport or PE (increase of 25% since 2006)
-
- 93% of schools are meeting Extended Services Core Offer.
 - Rotherham has just been rated the best in the region for children getting their first choice of secondary school 97%.
 - Rotherham's Audit Commission Schools Survey 35% increase in response in 2009.
 - Since 2005/6 there has been a 34% reduction in the number of young people entering the criminal justice system.
-
- Ofsted have judged Hilltop School to be outstanding in all major areas including Safeguarding.
 - 68% of Rotherham's Under 5s are currently part of the Imagination Library Project, that's 10,439 children.
 - GCSEs 2009 - 13th most improved Authority
 - Foundation Stage 2009 15th most improved Authority.
 - Thornhill has been judged by Ofsted as outstanding with an outstanding capacity to improve.
 - Herringthorpe Junior School is one of the top 20 schools in the UK for the best use of technology. Runner up in the learning experience Primary Becta ICT Excellence Award
 - Rotherham Schools Music Service - Second outstanding Ofsted inspection report.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28 April 2010
3.	Title:	Economic Downturn: One Year Later
4.	Directorate:	Financial Services

5. Summary

In February 2009 the Local Strategic Partnership approved its strategy and action plan for responding to the economic downturn.

This report refers to a document entitled '*Economic Downturn: One Year Later*', which identifies how the Council and its partners have responded to the downturn and the positive outcomes from the work done and investment made.

Proposals are included for publicising the document.

6. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to agree the 'Economic Downturn: One Year Later' review and proposals for publicising it.

7. Proposals and Details

Attached at **Appendix A** is a report on the impact of the economic downturn in Rotherham and Rotherham's response to it, one year after the approval of the Local Strategic Partnership's strategy for addressing the impact of the downturn. The report is entitled 'Economic Downturn: One Year Later'.

The report shows that the impact of the downturn appeared to stabilise during the second half of 2009, after major redundancy announcements and a large increase in the number of people claiming jobseekers' allowance during late 2008 and early 2009.

The report highlights the significant prevention work done by partners including:

- Providing a wide range of support to people finding themselves unemployed, helping 85% of people to find new jobs or training within 1 year.
- Providing loans to 340 families*¹ to secure private sector rented accommodation and saving over £2m in homelessness costs to use on other services.
- Providing 300 furnished properties to residents who might not otherwise have been able to afford to take up a tenancy.
- Making £200,000 available through the Rothersave Credit Union to assist residents in greatest financial need, including mortgage arrears.

The report also summarises the impact of the additional investment of £174,000 made by the Council (£121,000) and NHS Rotherham (£53,000) in voluntary sector advice services between February 2009 and March 2010. Citizen's Advice Bureau statistics show that the investment has enabled Rotherham to help a greater proportion of its residents than other districts.

This has been a significant success story, with an extra 5,000 residents helped in 2009/10. The following table shows the additional demand for CAB alone:

Referrals made to Citizen's Advice Bureau 2008/09 and 2009/10:

Area of advice sought	Referrals 2008/09	Referrals 2009/10 ^{*2}
Debt	1,192	2,224
Benefits	563	1,480
Employment	208	680
Housing	283	545
Relationships	7	317
Total	2,253	5,246

The work done by the services helps reduce the incidence of stress and mental health and prevents (potentially expensive) referrals to statutory services. The advice services have also helped secure an estimated £2m of additional benefits for residents.

¹ Since 2007

² Extrapolated from figures up to November 2009.

Rotherham Council and NHS Rotherham have earmarked a further £130,000 (£100,000 and £30,000 respectively) to direct towards this important priority during 2010/11.

Other key actions and achievements by partners that are highlighted in the report include:

- Securing funding from the Government's 'Future Jobs Fund' to provide up to 600 jobs in Rotherham over 18 months. Over 100 jobs have already been filled under this scheme.
- Providing a host of other ways of helping our residents manage better, including freezing school meal prices, continuing the Rothercard Discount Scheme and extending the period over which Council Tax instalments could be paid, from 10 to 12 months.
- Supporting businesses to continue trading and, in several cases, grow.

The document was drafted following consultation with the Economic Downturn Partners' Group, which includes representatives from various Council services. The document was agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership at its meeting on 25 March.

It is proposed to place the document on the Council's credit crunch website and on partners' sites. It is proposed to draft an article for inclusion in *Rotherham News* and to send a press article to relevant agencies.

The document has been sent to the Audit Commission, for consideration as part of the 2010 comprehensive area assessment.

Cabinet is asked to note the 'Economic Downturn: One Year Later' review and support proposals for publicising it.

8. Finance

There are no direct costs associated with this report.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure to respond effectively to the economic downturn will place jobs, businesses and homes at risk. The Council and its partners' response to the economic downturn has helped to protect residents and businesses from the downturn.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Tackling the economic downturn and the impact of it is consistent with a range of priorities within the community plan and Rotherham MBC's corporate plan.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Local Strategic Partnership, 25 March 2010

Contact Names:

Colin Earl, Director of Audit and Governance, x22033

Appendices:

Appendix A: 'Economic Downturn: One Year Later'

Economic Downturn in Rotherham

One Year Later



Foreword by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Roger Stone

I am pleased to present on behalf of the Council and our partners this review of our work done in response to the economic downturn.

A year ago we set out our action plan to help the district, its businesses and residents to manage through this turbulent economic period. Local services have adapted to treat the economic downturn as a significant priority and the Council has itself invested more than an extra £1/2 million specific funding to help local people and local businesses.

It has been a difficult time for many. But, this review shows that the investments made and efforts of partners have cushioned the impact for a large number people affected either directly or indirectly by the downturn. In particular, we have:

- Secured funding from the Government's 'Future Jobs Fund' to provide up to 600 jobs in Rotherham over 18 months, starting in October 2009. Over 120 jobs have already been filled under this scheme.
- Provided a wide range of support to people finding themselves unemployed, helping 85% of people to find new jobs or training within 1 year:
- Provided loans to 340 families*¹ to secure private sector rented accommodation and saved over £2m in homelessness costs to use on other services.
- Provided 300 furnished properties to residents who might not otherwise have been able to afford to take up a tenancy.

- Invested an extra £174,000 in voluntary sector advice services in 2009 to enable them to help an extra 5,000 residents who might not otherwise have been supported and to generate an estimated £2m of additional benefits these residents were entitled to but were not receiving.
- Made £200,000 available through the Rothersave Credit Union to assist residents in greatest financial need. So far the scheme has helped 20 residents to deal with a range of issues including mortgage arrears.
- Provided a host of other ways of helping our residents manage better, including freezing school meal prices, continuing the Rothercard Discount Scheme and extending the period over which Council Tax instalments could be paid, from 10 to 12 months.

We have also helped many businesses to secure inward investment and create and safeguard a significant number of jobs. We recognise that for business owners operating on the most slender of margins and for people still out of work, this continues to be a stressful time. We will continue to help and support these businesses and residents.

Without losing sight of the present, now is the time to think about the future. We want to make sure that our businesses and our residents can maximise the opportunities that will arise as the economy starts to improve.

Some businesses are thriving and prospects look positive in a number of areas. We have a much more diverse and resilient economy that is no longer substantially reliant on a small number

¹Since 2007

A Review of Rotherham's Response to the Economic Downturn

of large industries. A recent announcement of major investment into the Advance Manufacturing Park at Catcliffe by the Secretary of State for Business, Industry and Skills reflects the confidence in Rotherham to support technology companies of a global importance. Our education attainment and training performance continues to improve, although we will need further step change in skills to ensure it is Rotherham people who are filling the jobs created in these technological high skills areas.

This review highlights the various activities we have undertaken over the last year and resulting outcomes. It also reminds businesses and residents in Rotherham where they can get free help and support from the many excellent organisations that have worked hard and will continue to work hard to protect and strengthen our position.

I am sure you will find something in this review that will be of help or interest to you. More details can be found on our dedicated website at www.rotherham.gov.uk/creditcrunch. Finally, if you have any comments, questions or ideas as a result of reading the document please contact us. We have shown during 2009 that we are prepared to adopt a whole range of ideas to help alleviate the impact of the economic downturn.

Please contact Angela Kemp or Colin Earl on Rotherham (01709) 822003 / 822004 if you would like any further information on this area or anything in this document.

Councillor Roger Stone
Leader, Rotherham MBC

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Section I: The Local Impact of the Economic Downturn

Global economic activity was severely affected by the banking crisis, which was exposed in the Autumn 2008. As with everywhere else, Rotherham suffered from the resulting credit crunch and recession. The impact on businesses, jobs, housing and health is summarised in this section of the review.

Jobs

Rotherham lost 4,800 workplace jobs in 2008 according to the annual business survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics, and the trend continued in the first few months of 2009, when the number of people claiming Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) increased by 2,400.

However, improvements were experienced from June 2009 onwards when, with the exceptions of July and August 2009, the number of people claiming the allowance fell. The chart below shows the monthly

changes in the numbers claiming jobseekers' allowance during 2009.

There has also been an increase in the number of jobs made available through Jobcentre Plus*² during the second half of 2009. 8,400 new jobs were made available between June and November 2009, compared with 7,500 for the same period in the preceding year.

Housing

The experience in relation to housing repossessions has been less severe than predicted at the beginning of the economic

downturn. Nationally, the Council of Mortgage Lenders has cut its forecast for the number of repossessions this year to 48,000 from an earlier forecast of 75,000 repossessions. Experts report that Government measures and the beneficial effect of continuing low interest rates are helping most borrowers facing difficulty to keep their homes.

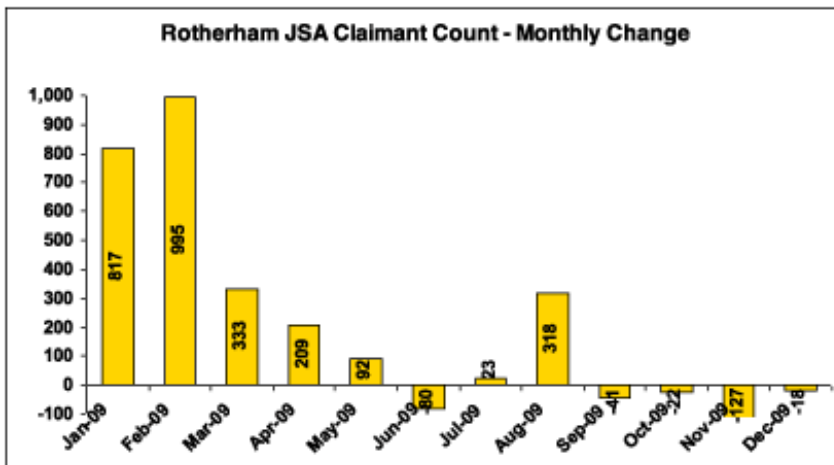
Locally, statistics relating to housing repossessions show that numbers of repossession orders have fallen during 2009 from a peak in late 2008 / early 2009. During the quarter ending September 2009, 251 repossession orders were made in Rotherham, which is 30% fewer than in the same period of 2008*³.

Health

The extent to which residents seek advice is an indicator of their need for help and / or counselling due to current or perceived future problems.

There has been a large increase in referrals to the Citizen's Advice Bureau for each area of advice. This is demonstrated in the following table:

Monthly Changes in the Number of People Claiming Jobseekers' Allowance in Rotherham - 2009.



²Jobcentre Plus deals with approximately one-third of all jobs filled

³Ministry of Justice - Statistics on mortgage and landlord possession actions in the county courts – third quarter 2009

Referrals made to Citizen's Advice Bureau 2008/09 and 2009/10

Area of advice sought	Referrals 2008/09	Referrals 2009/10 *4
Debt	1,192	2,224
Benefits	563	1,480
Employment	208	680
Housing	283	545
Relationships	7	317

Other advice services have reported similar trends.

Businesses

During the second half of 2008 and early 2009, Rotherham suffered a number of setbacks, particularly in its manufacturing sector. High profile job losses were announced with the downsizing of Corus and the closure of the Burberry clothing manufacturer. There was also some downsizing in call centre operations in the Dearne Valley. On the high street, Woolworths, amongst others, closed as a result of lower demand and changing consumer trends.

The situation has not, however, been all negative. While Rotherham still has a substantial manufacturing sector, our economy is increasingly diversifying and, since April 2009, 285 businesses have either started up, taken on new employees or have secured investment to expand or continue trading.

These range from a large number of sole traders / small businesses through to larger employers. Collectively, these businesses have created 1,434 new jobs and safeguarded a further 1,326 during this period.

In particular the technology sector, where Rotherham has a track record of support and inward investment, has bucked the trend. Rotherham's Advanced Manufacturing Park has been chosen as the base for the UK's new £25m Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre. This investment will create more than 300 jobs, with more expected to be made throughout industry supply chains across the region.

Also at the Advance Manufacturing Park:

- Rolls Royce will be establishing a new facility at the site
- Drive Management Systems, a business running on-site and

wireless monitoring services for industrial equipment, has relocated to the Advanced Manufacturing Park in Rotherham after outgrowing its base at Sheffield Technology Parks.

- Pulse Tidal is to receive European grant of 8 million to enable the company to develop its first fully commercial tidal energy generator, which is expected to provide electricity for up to 1,000 homes by 2012.
- Struers, an international company providing technical support for manufacturers, is bringing its UK operation from the West Midlands to the Park.

Other examples of Rotherham's successes include:

- Sandvick specialist medical equipment supplier created 100 jobs to meet an increase in demand for its services
- Original granite marble established 60 new jobs
- Manor motorsport, which is involved in high level motor racing, has created 50 jobs
- Rotherham based Pegler Yorkshire Group, the fittings manufacturer, has expanded, creating almost 100 new jobs

*Extrapolated from figures up to November 2009

Prospects for the future in Rotherham look promising as the economy further diversifies. In 2009, 25 out of the top 100 performing SMEs*⁵ in the Sheffield Region, which includes Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire, were based in Rotherham. This is more than twice as many as in Doncaster and Barnsley. Also in 2009, Rotherham had 99 high growth

SMEs – high growth is defined as an increase in turnover of at least 20% per year for 3 consecutive years.

It is also worth noting that the July to September 2009 Economic Survey conducted by the Chamber of Commerce showed an increase in sales and investment in Rotherham, which have contributed to a significant increase in confidence.

The main part of this review, which follows, shows what the Council and its partners have done to help businesses and residents through the last turbulent year.



⁵Small to Medium Enterprises

Section 2: Employment and Training

This part of the review looks at how residents have been supported when they have found themselves out of work.

Jobcentre Plus has aimed to ensure that anyone unemployed has had the opportunity to:

- See an expert Jobcentre Plus adviser who can support them
- Access a wide range of jobs
- Get help with CV writing and completing job applications forms
- Get help with skills advice and re-training
- Access one-off cash help to improve an individual's immediate job prospects
- Access one day advice and coaching sessions
- Access to Learning and Skills Council funded work-focussed training, to help people to move into a new job.

Rotherham's joint bid with Sheffield and Doncaster for 'Future Jobs Fund' monies was successful and, as a consequence, will support up to 600 jobs in Rotherham over 18 months. Jobs are being targeted wherever possible at our growth sectors and areas suffering from the economic downturn. Over 120 jobs have already been filled under this scheme since it started in October 2009. Claire Wardell

and Daniel Marples are partners who have benefitted from the scheme:

Case Study:

Future Jobs Fund helps partners to enter employment

Both Claire Wardell (aged 22) and her partner, Daniel Marples (aged 24), have found work under the future jobs fund scheme. They were both previously unemployed and claiming benefits. It has made a big difference to them.

Claire told us *“ I started on the Future Jobs Fund scheme on the 7th December 2009; the scheme has made a very big difference to me and my partner. My partner is now also on the scheme. The scheme has made a huge difference to all aspects of our lives... the main changes are having a reason to get up in the morning and being financially independent – all we wished to do was pay our way in life.*

Whilst on the scheme I am completing, through my placement a number of training opportunities to forward my career when the scheme ends ”.

Jobcentre Plus can also help with the 'New Deal', which aims to help unemployed people, particularly those who have been unemployed for a long time, people with disabilities and anyone in need of extra help to find work. The New Deal will give residents a chance to train, learn and do work experience.

800 unemployed people have been given an opportunity to improve their skills levels through the local colleges using arrangements established by Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council and colleges. Rotherham has been able to make an offer of learning to over 95% of eligible 16 and 17 year old people not in employment, education or training.



The Learning and Skills Council and Jobcentre Plus are developing pre-employment training packages for people who are unemployed for more than 6 months. In the future, all 18-24 year olds out of work*⁶ for more than 6 months will be guaranteed a job, work experience or training.

The Council and Jobcentre Plus have arranged job fairs for the unemployed. For example, a Care Sector jobs fair in May 2009 attracted 14 employers and over 100 prospective employees.

Rotherham's Work & Skills Board is promoting the 'Backing

Young Britain' programme*⁷ and encouraging employers to make one of the programme's pledges. Additionally, 98 Rotherham employers have so far signed the skills pledge, committing them to support employees to achieve level 2 NVQ qualifications.

RiDO is working with UK Steel Enterprise through a grant and loan fund scheme to support individuals to develop business ideas. 38 businesses have been helped so far through the scheme.

Partners are promoting volunteering schemes as one way back into employment. Since

April 2009, Voluntary Action Rotherham has:

- Helped over 400 people into volunteering.
- Provided a workshop for 50 people to explore the benefits of volunteering whilst unemployed.

It is worth noting during this period that 7 out of 10 people losing their jobs found work or training within 26 weeks and 85% of people found new employment or training within 1 year.

⁶Claiming jobseekers' allowance

⁷Backing young Britain is about bringing businesses and public and voluntary sectors together to ensure that the valuable skills and experience of our young people aren't being wasted. Under the programme, organisations are asked to commit to one of seven pledges.

Section 3: Advice and Financial Support for Residents

This section shows what the Council and its partners have done to help residents over the last year.

'Advice In Rotherham' (AIR) is a group of community based support services available to assist all residents in Rotherham with any difficulties arising from the economic downturn or otherwise. The group consists of:

- Age Concern Rotherham
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Kiveton Park Independent Advice Centre
- Rotherham Diversity Forum
- Rotherham Disability Information Service (South Yorkshire Centre for Independent Living)
- Rotherham Advice and Information Network
- Shelter Housing and Homeless Charity
- Shelter Richochet, housing advice for under 25s
- Rotherham Council Welfare Rights and Money Advice

Collectively, these organisations support some of the most vulnerable people in Rotherham on an ongoing basis. Demand for their services has increased substantially during late 2008 and 2009 as a result of the economic downturn. Contact details for

these organisations can be found in Appendix A.

The work of these organisations is demonstrated clearly through a scheme sponsored by NHS Rotherham and delivered by the Council's Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service, to help Macmillan Nurses clients to manage their finances and maximise income at a time when they are more concerned with their health and welfare. This is proving to be a very positive project:



Case Study:

Macmillan Nurses clients are helped to access benefits they are entitled to

NHS Rotherham asked the Council's Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service in 2009 to help very vulnerable residents receiving Macmillan Nursing Care to manage their finances and maximise their income. The scheme has shown that clients were losing out financially at this very crucial time.

During the first six months of the scheme, the Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service:

- saw 265 clients
- undertook 257 home visits
- lodged 358 claims for benefits
- gained an annual income of £606,388 for the clients

The Council and NHS Rotherham paid an extra £174,000 to voluntary sector advice services in 2009 to enable them to increase services during a period of intense demand. In the 6 months period from April to September 2009, the advice services helped an extra 5,000 residents who might not otherwise have been supported. This assistance has helped residents access over £2m of additional benefits they were entitled to but were not receiving.

Credit unions are local not-for-profit savings and loans co-operatives that aim to help you take control of your money. Credit unions have a particular understanding of the needs of people who want to borrow or save relatively small amounts. They encourage members to save what they can, and provide loans at competitive rates that help members avoid very expensive rates charged by some lenders. Rothersave and LASER Credit

Unions operate from the town centre, while the Ryton Credit Union is based at Dinnington. The Council has made £200,000 available through Rothersave Credit Union to assist residents in greatest financial need as a result of the economic downturn. So far the scheme has helped 20 residents to deal with a range of issues including mortgage and rent arrears. Mr Lindsay is one resident benefiting from the scheme:

Case Study:

Rothersave helps Mark keep his home

When Mark Lindsay was faced with the prospect of losing his home, Rothersave Credit Union was able to provide him with a loan that meant he could pay his mortgage. Mark (41) from Thrybergh has owned his three-bedroom semi-detached house for three years and has always been able to pay his monthly mortgage repayments.

However, as a dry liner subcontractor in the construction trade, self-employed Mark has found it difficult to get work in recent months thanks to the impact of the current recession. He has been in the industry for 20 years and has never struggled to find work until now.

After hearing about Rothersave, Mark approached them in July to see if they could help him with his situation. He had fallen into arrears and was being threatened with repossession.

"I'd already arranged an IVA (Individual Voluntary Arrangement) with the lender and had a deadline to pay what I owed but things have been a struggle

as I work in a competitive industry," said Mark. "I contacted Rothersave and they pushed through an application for a loan to help me make repayments. They have been really good." "They asked me all about my situation and did everything they possibly could to help me."

Initially Mark's loan request was declined as he failed to meet the criteria as he was unemployed at that time but a couple of weeks later he found work and was granted a £1,500 loan from Rothersave.

Mark said: "The loan is paid back at a minimum rate so it's affordable for me and relieves a bit of pressure so I don't get deeper into debt. It's given me a bit of breathing space and I feel a lot better." "If I had lost the house it would have been meant going to the council for housing support." "The credit crunch loan is great, helping people just like me to resolve their debts." Rothersave offers low-cost loans and has £200,000 to support individuals suffering during the credit crunch.

Roadshows held in Rotherham helped around 500 people in a range of issues including:

- Over 80 people were advised on the loan shark initiative and given information on options available to avoid having to resort to illegal lending (see below)
- Various people were advised about redundancies
- A number of council tenants were given advice about their rent accounts and managing their debt
- Over 50 people received advice on travel discount schemes
- Age concern gave advice and information to around 40 older people
- Numerous people were given advice on a range of topics by the Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Several people enquired about becoming self-employed
- Over 30 people received advice on pensions
- Several people enquired about volunteering, as a way back into employment
- Over 20 people were helped with benefits enquiries
- Several people were helped to apply for the Rothercard discount scheme (see below)
- A number of people received information on and had referral details for NHS general health / stress management training
- Over 40 people took away information about training opportunities.

20 community support services had stalls at the Roadshows, which were very well received:

It's good that the communities are being thought about...

(Peter Laphish, Ruskin Close)

I found it very worthwhile...

(Mrs Holden, West Melton)

It was excellent... We found everything we expected and more

(Nicola Gilroy, Wath)

We are operating a scheme jointly with Birmingham City Trading Standards to help people who find themselves needing extra cash to avoid using illegal lenders (loan sharks). The scheme:

- Increases awareness of illegal lending and the impact it has on borrowers' lives.
- Creates a climate in which people will report the activity of loan sharks
- Helps to identify, arrest and prosecute illegal lenders
- Assists victims to access legitimate affordable credit, face to face debt advice, and other relevant sources of support and assistance.

Voluntary Action Rotherham*⁷ is leading locally on tackling financial exclusion, which affects a quarter of adults in Rotherham. Financial exclusion may include not having a bank account, not being able to access affordable credit, inability to take advantage of cost savings associated with using direct debits or being unable to make informed choices about financial services such as savings and insurance products. It also may mean lack of or limited access to free, face to face advice and not having the skills or the confidence to manage your finances effectively. It often leads to disadvantage and loss of opportunity, and creates barriers to employment and full participation in society and the wider economy. Very good progress is being made on the key

elements of the financial inclusion strategy. To date, 418 people have been helped to obtain credit union accounts, 277 to receive training in financial capability and 76 people have been trained to give financial capability support. In addition 116 organisations are now involved in improving financial inclusion in Rotherham and 14 new initiatives have started.

The Council, Voluntary Action Rotherham and Financial Inclusion South Yorkshire secured £120,000 regional grant funding to improve people's chances across the whole of South Yorkshire, focusing on three areas:

- provision of financial capability training
- developing capacity to deliver financial advice
- working with offenders to improve access to finance.

Financial worries and job insecurities are often a cause of poor mental health. NHS Rotherham is helping the Public, employers and employees to minimise the incidence of mental health problems created by financial pressures, by providing public and work based stress awareness and alleviation projects. The 'Mind Your Own Business Project' provides advice to employers on creating a mentally healthy work environment and training and resources for employees such as Mental Health First Aid and Managing Mental

Health: Skills for Line Managers. This project is helping employers to support employees who may be experiencing stress or poor mental health.

NHS Rotherham is also:

- Providing self help books for common mental health problems. There has been an 80% increase in the number of books issued during 2009
- Holding Public stress control groups to help people manage anxiety.
- Ensuring residents can access mental health practitioners through their GPs. Each GP has a practitioner attached to it
- Facilitating access to Rotherham Occupational Health Advice Service, which provides advice and support to enable people to deal with a range of work related ill health issues.

Rotherham Council kept school meal prices at the previous year's level. The Council decided to absorb cost pressures, rather than ask parents to pay more for the 3 million school meals provided every year. The Council also offers the Rothercard Discount Scheme which provides residents with discounted use of services, eg leisure facilities

The Council extended the period over which Council Tax instalments could be paid, from 10 to 12 months, so that residents could spread the costs over a longer period.

⁷Voluntary Action Rotherham is the lead body for supporting, developing and promoting the voluntary and community sector in the Rotherham borough. Its core activities and associated projects are a keystone for local community engagement and development.

Section 4: Housing

This section identifies the support we have provided to residents to ensure, as much as possible, they can stay in their own homes.

There are various actions people can take to prevent losing their home, but it is critical to seek advice as soon as you think you may need some help with managing your bills. The Council's Key Choices Property Shop brings together a range of advice services to prevent homelessness. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, our Housing Solutions Service will help find alternatives.

Rotherham's proactive work to help avoid homelessness is achieving positive and cost effective outcomes:

- 26 applications for mortgage rescue are currently being supported.
- During 2009, 102 'rent-in-advance' loans (in partnership with Laser Credit Union) were awarded, helping families to move into private rented accommodation and providing them with banking services, savings facilities, low cost credit for emergencies and support in managing their finances.

In total, over 340 families have received assistance to find accommodation under the scheme since 2007. This proactive work has saved over £2m in homelessness costs to use on other services.



During 2009 there have been 294 households prevented from becoming homeless by the Key Choices Housing Solutions team. Of these, 72 were in financial difficulties, including 17 with mortgage arrears.

In November 2009, the Council's housing service attended a "drop in" advice session at Refugee Support. The team were able to answer a range of questions and were able to help with the process of explaining issues relating to housing and employment.

In order to provide an integrated approach, Jobcentre Plus provides Job Search sessions at the Town

Centre Property Shop every Tuesday, where residents can explore and discuss employment and housing issues in the same visit.

During 2009, the Housing Services Team has provided 300 furnished properties to residents who would not otherwise have been able to afford to take up a tenancy. The Team is also encouraging landlords to complete repairs and provide carpets before to enable tenants to move in with minimum outlay of their own.

The Council's Housing Service and Housing Benefits Teams are assisting vulnerable tenants by arranging for their rent to be paid directly to the landlord and to help the vulnerable customers to manage their finances effectively, as demonstrated in the following case involving one tenant with learning difficulties:

Case Study:

The Council's Key Choices Housing Service prevents the potential eviction of a vulnerable tenant

The Council's Key Choices Housing Service took over the management of a block of flats in an area of West Melton as the private sector landlord's letting agents were not managing the property to the landlord's satisfaction.

There was a large amount of arrears on one tenant's account and the landlord asked the Council to commence repossession proceedings.

The tenant has learning difficulties and thought housing benefits were being paid direct to the landlord to cover the rent. However, the tenant's housing benefit had been suspended awaiting information on the tenant's income.

Key Choices agreed with the landlord to let the tenant stay in the property until the housing benefits could be checked. The Team helped the tenant to complete a new benefits claim, obtain backdated benefits of £1,900 and organised for future rent payments to be paid to the Council.

Both the tenant and landlord were delighted with the outcome. The landlord is investing the back dated rent into making

Section 5: Support for Businesses

This section of the review identifies the work we have done as partners to help businesses manage during the economic downturn.

The Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO), the Chamber of Commerce, Business Link and Yorkshire Forward have provided critical support to the Town's businesses during this testing period, including:

- The Council (RiDO) and Business Link have provided consultancy advice to 81 businesses since April 2009 and helped 20 businesses to secure training support.
- Additionally, 60 businesses have accessed Business Link support to carry out skills diagnostics
- RiDO has worked with 38 companies creating or safeguarding almost 1,000 jobs in the district since April 2009
- RiDO has also actively supported investment at the Advance Manufacturing Park
- The Chamber of Commerce's Business Community Support Officers have so far in 2009/10 provided at least 2 days dedicated support to 150 SMEs, designed to help the businesses consolidate and grow



- 14 businesses have accessed Financial Health Checks, 40 have received Business Development Vouchers and 22 have accessed Innovation Vouchers*⁹ offered by Business Link.

We are making local contracts available to local businesses wherever rules allow us to do this. Initiatives include listing contracts due to be tendered in an accessible forward plan and, where appropriate, supporting local procurement in contracts. Additionally, the Council has hosted two 'Meet the Buyers' conferences in March 2009 and in January 2010, bringing buyers and suppliers together, providing advice to local suppliers and giving information to them on upcoming contract opportunities. These were excellent events attended by over 300 representatives.

A range of business seminars were held during the Summer 2009 and more are planned. For example, a programme of four 'Beating the Recession' events attracted 63 delegates. 87% of the attendees stated the events met their expectations.

The Chamber of Commerce has held a range of other events for its members and other businesses during the year.

Beating the Recession
Practical Advice for Businesses
 Register NOW for your place at one of the FREE Seminars.

	Venue: Moorgate Crofts Date: Tuesday 9th June 2009 Time: 16:30 - 19:30 Afternoon tea will be served.
	Venue: Century@Manvers Date: Thursday 9th July 2009 Time: 7:30 - 10:30 Breakfast will be served.
	Venue: Fusion@Magna Date: Tuesday 28th July 2009 Time: 16:30 - 19:30 Afternoon tea will be served.
	Venue: Matrix@Dinnington Date: Thursday 20th August 2009 Time: 7:30 - 10:30 Breakfast will be served.

For further information or to register to attend one of the seminars contact Laura Brown or Rachel Blake on: **01709 823817** or email: laura.brown@rotherham.gov.uk

RiDO
Rotherham Investment & Development Office

Rotherham
Borough Council
Where Everyone Matters

⁹Innovation vouchers help small to medium sized businesses (SMEs) in the region, with financial support to engage with Yorkshire's universities and other academic institutions to help their business grow and develop

Jobcentre Plus is achieving its target of offering a 'Rapid Response Service' within 48 hours to any business reporting potential redundancies to it. The service includes a range of partners providing dedicated and tailored support to meet the needs of businesses and employees at risk as a result of the downturn. Most notably, support provided to Burberry, until its closure in April 2009, and to Corus since February 2009 included:

- Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Rotherham Council provided ongoing dedicated on-site support
- Various specific events were held on site involving local colleges, Business Link and Yorkshire Forward offering suggestions and options to employees
- Housing and benefits advice, CV writing guidance and job search support has been provided by the Council's Housing and Employment Solutions Service
- Employers took part in jobs fairs on site, to enable employees to enquire about new careers and, where relevant, make applications for available jobs

- Advice has been provided regarding the possible use of vacant office space and marketing of empty buildings.

Business Link and the LSC have offered a range of options to keep employees in training while operations have been less busy. For example, one company in Rotherham was one of the first two businesses regionally operating a pilot 'Time to Train' project, which provides training whilst during periods of short time working.

The Council has awarded 5 Town Centre Business Vitality Grants and 7 Street Café grants to new businesses or businesses requiring support for development in the town centre.

To encourage retail spending in the Town Centre, the Council has provided free car parking, firstly through the 'Free after 3pm' scheme, which has operated since May 2009, and for five Saturdays leading up to Christmas. The Council has arranged a free bus service between the town centre and Parkgate. And, the Council's Town Centre Manager has arranged a wide range of discount vouchers available for use in town centre shops.

2009 was very challenging for developers, who found it difficult to obtain funding to continue with significant development schemes. Many schemes regionally and

nationally have been mothballed; suspended until economic conditions improve. In Rotherham we have worked with developers and Yorkshire Forward to ensure our flagship schemes have continued. Reasonable progress has been maintained on the Town Centre Renaissance Scheme, using public funding to supplement private investment to keep the various phases progressing. This project is crucial to the town centre's economic prosperity. As a consequence, interest from retailers in the new facilities is increasing.

On the housing front, the Council has been successful in its bids to secure funding to provide much needed new affordable housing:

- The approval of £2.3m to build 36 new homes in a development at Dalton / Thrybergh will lead to the first new council houses built for 30 years.
- The Council has also secured £3.5m investment to build 98 new homes with developers, by 2011.

Delivering these projects will help local businesses and local people.

Our interventions have had many positive benefits. We know, however, the situation remains precarious and we will continue to support all of our businesses throughout 2010 and beyond.

Appendix I: Useful Organisations for Information and Advice

These pages give you details of organisations that can provide advice and/or information if you are having any financial difficulties.

Employment and Training

- The **Learning Skills Council** is responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone. It can provide access to a range of training initiatives and funding. Telephone 0845 019 4171, email southyorkshireinfo@lsc.gov.uk or go to the website at www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/YorkshireHumber/
- The **Department for Work and Pensions** provides crisis loans in certain circumstances to help people meet immediate short-term needs in emergencies. The loans are short term and applications have to meet strict criteria. For more information contact **Jobcentre Plus** or see the Jobcentre Plus website at: <http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/WorkingAgeBenefits/Dev013949.xml.html>
Anyone making new claims to benefit can phone 0800 055 6688 or textphone 0800 023 4888

Help for Residents

- Rotherham Council's **Money Advice Service** offers a free confidential debt counselling service to Rotherham residents. The service advises on different types of debt such as rent and mortgage arrears, credit card debts and bank loans. The service can help check you are getting all the benefits you may be entitled to, help you plan your weekly and monthly budget and negotiate with the people you owe money to. Home visits can be made and advisers are available at the County Court for rent and mortgage repossession hearings. Tel 01709 822329 (24 hour answerphone service) Enterprise House, Bridge Street, Rotherham, S60 1QJ
- The **National Debt Line** at www.nationaldebtline.co.uk or 0808 808 4000 helps people to manage their debt
- The **Financial Services Authority** website - www.moneyadviceclear.fsa.gov.uk provides independent consumer advice with more than 100 guides available that can be ordered free of charge, including a parents guide to managing money.
- **Housing Benefit** is a national scheme administered by Rotherham Council to help people on low incomes pay their rent. For information and help, contact Benefits Services, RBT (Connect) Ltd, Civic Building, Walker Place, Rotherham, S65 1UF. Telephone (01709) 336006
- To see if you're eligible for help with your **council tax** bills, contact Rotherham Council on (01709) 336006 or Jobcentre Plus on 0800 055 6688, or visit: <http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/WorkingAgeBenefits/Howtoclaim/index.html>.
- **Voluntary Action Rotherham** is the lead body for supporting, developing and promoting the voluntary and community sector in the Rotherham borough. It is a network consisting of over 150 individuals and organisations and is leading locally on tackling financial exclusion. For more information telephone the Financial Inclusion Team on 01709 726896
- **LASER Credit Union** is a savings and loans cooperative offering its members access to affordable savings and fairly priced loans. Contact LASER at the Guardian Centre, Drummond Street, Rotherham, S65 1HY. Tel: 01709 836500

- **Rothersave Credit Union** was established in April 1998 and provides a financial service for anyone who lives or works within the boundary of Rotherham. Contact Rothersave at R.A.I.N. Building, Eastwood Lane, Rotherham S65 1EQ or Tel 01709 514263
- The **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)** provides help to resolve any legal, money, welfare benefits issues or other problems. See Citizen's Advice at www.citizensadvice.org.uk or www.adviceguide.org.uk for further contacts and information. Rotherham CAB can be found at 120 - 126 Old Hall, Wellgate, Rotherham S60 2LN. Tel: 01709 515680
- The **Financial Services Authority (FSA)** operates a consumer helpline 0300 500 5000. It also operates a website that provides independent consumer advice with more than 100 guides available that can be ordered free of charge through www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk
- For information and advice about **income support and jobseeker's allowance** or the **New Deal**, or to make a claim, contact Jobcentre Plus on 0800 055 6688 or visit www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/index.html.
- For information about the **Working tax credit and child tax credit** call 0845 300 3900 or visit www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits

Help with Housing

- **Key Choices** is a scheme that lets you apply for a home of your choice, apply to join the housing register, see existing properties, find out about your 'right to buy', and access properties available through the quality landlord scheme. Telephone on 01709 336565, email keychoices@rotherham.gov.uk or visit or write to Key Choices Property Shop 20/21 Old Town Hall Rotherham S60 1QX
- The Council's **Neighbourhood Investment Service** provides advice on housing shared equity options and on affordable warmth initiatives. Contact the service on 01709 823114
- Help with **Council House Rent** can be obtained from 2010 Rotherham Ltd, which is responsible for collecting housing rents. The Income Collection Section helps tenants to manage their accounts effectively and agrees payment arrangements for those falling behind with their rent. The Section can be contacted on Tel 01709 822250.
- Free housing advice can be obtained from the **Shelter** helpline 0808 800 4444*, open 8am-8pm, seven days a week and includes help on related mortgage debt or welfare benefits issues. Alternatively visit www.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/

For businesses

- The **Rotherham & Investment & Development Office (RiDO)** is the regeneration arm of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. RiDO provides support for new businesses starting up, existing Rotherham businesses looking to expand, or inward investors from outside the borough considering an operation in the borough. RiDO provides a free, professional service that can help with everything from finding the right sites and premises, to planning advice and guidance, finding and training recruits and locating new customers and suppliers. Telephone 01709 254444 or see the RiDO website at www.investinrotherham.co.uk/
- The Barnsley and **Rotherham Chamber of Commerce** can be contacted through 0844 414 5100 or www.brchamber.co.uk/
- Real help for businesses now. **Business Link** is available to offer practical advice and information for saving your business money. Contact Business Link on 0845 6 048 048 or visit www.businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk/

- **Yorkshire Forward** is the regional development agency for the Yorkshire & Humber region. There are 9 such agencies in England, and each is tasked with improving the economy in its own particular region. Yorkshire Forward can be contacted through 0113 394 9600 (8.30 - 17.30) or www.yorkshire-forward.com/
- Rotherham Occupational Health Advice Service, Workplace Health Advice Service, The RAIN Building, Eastwood Lane, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S65 1EQ. Tel. 01709 428964

For more information on Rotherham's response to the economic downturn and where to get help please telephone Rotherham Council on **01709 822003 / 822004** or look at the credit crunch website at www.rotherham.gov.uk/creditcrunch

If you have any questions or comments about this document please telephone Rotherham Council on **01709 822003 / 822004** or use our online comments form at http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/graphics/YourCouncil/_Onlinefeedback.htm



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Contact us at:

minicom 01709 823 536

www.rotherham.gov.uk

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در صورتیکہ ابن مطلب را به زبان و یا شکل دیگری می خواهید لطفاً با ما تماس بگیرید

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	28 April 2010
3.	Title:	Proposed revisions to the LDF Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference
4.	Programme Area:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

Consideration of proposed revisions to the Local Development Framework Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference.

6. Recommendation

- 1. That Cabinet recommends to full Council adoption of the revised LDF Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference.**

7. Proposals and Details

Background

7.1 The constitution and remit of the Steering Group was approved in August 2004 (see Appendix 1) in anticipation of the commencement of Local Development Framework (LDF) preparation under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. Government guidance advised that member steering groups were an important part of efficient arrangements to secure timely adoption of LDF documents. The Government sponsored Planning Advisory Service has subsequently recognised the existence of a steering group, together with effective corporate support and adequate resources, as essential pre-requisites of successful LDF delivery. Both Barnsley and Sheffield Councils have similar informal officer/member steering groups to guide LDF preparation.

The Steering Group's role

7.2 The Steering Group, comprising senior politicians supported by corporate advisors, is intended to:

- Enable early political and corporate understanding and buy in to the formative stages of LDF preparation
- Encourage informal discussion to guide ongoing technical work and formulate options
- Facilitate improved efficiency in corporate and key stakeholder contributions to LDF preparation and consultations
- Help mitigate identified risks associated with delivering the LDF to quality, budget and timescale requirements
- Advise on reporting arrangements for key issues to be addressed within the Council's publicly accountable formal decision making process

Why revise the remit of the Steering Group?

7.3 The main reasons for the review and proposed revisions to the Group's remit are the procedural changes to the LDF process introduced by revised Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12 "Local Spatial Planning", the amended regulations published in 2008 and the desire of Cabinet to review the operation and constitution of the group. Some minor amendments to wording are also required to reflect changes in departmental structures and officer designations.

Balancing operational efficiency and democratic accountability

7.4 The principal function of the Steering Group is to promote the timely and efficient preparation of the LDF. Informal discussion and debate within the Group is intended to prepare the ground for key decisions to be made within the normal publically accountable reporting structures of the Council. It is not intended to replace this process.

7.5 Public engagement in LDF preparation will continue to be via the methods and media set down in the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. Draft development plan documents will continue to be subject to public consultation and scrutiny before progressing to examination by a Government appointed independent Inspector.

7.6 The proposed revised Steering Group constitution and remit is set out in Appendix 2. The revisions include the replacement of the term "Delegation Scheme" which appeared to convey greater decision making powers upon the Group than have operated since inception. It is considered that "Terms of Reference" would be more appropriate to the Group's informal status.

8. Finance

8.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report although continuing to ensure the timely and efficient preparation of the LDF will accrue efficiency savings and improved receipts under Government grant incentives.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

9.1 Complex reporting arrangements could cause further delays in LDF preparation. The proposed revisions will permit efficient internal reporting whilst still guaranteeing decision making at the appropriate Council level.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

10.1 Updating of the remit of the Steering Group will assist performance in meeting milestones in the Local Development Scheme and targets in the Corporate and Service Plan.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The existing LDF Steering Group Constitution and Delegation Scheme – Minute B39 of Cabinet 11 August 2004 (see Appendix 1).

The content and recommendations of this report have been discussed with officers of Legal and Democratic Services.

Contact Name:

Andy Duncan, Strategic Policy Team Leader
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APPENDIX 1: Existing LDF Steering Group Constitution and Delegation Scheme

MINUTE B29 OF CABINET 11 AUGUST 2004

UDP REVIEW MEMBERS STEERING GROUP - FUTURE ROLE

Councillor G. Smith, Cabinet Member, Economic and Development Services, introduced a report by the Forward Planning Manager relating to the future role and constitution of the UDP Steering Group in the light of the requirement to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF) under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

It was reported that, in order to comply with the Government's timescale for the adoption of the LDF, it was necessary to look to streamlining reporting and decision making arrangements as well as providing the Steering Group with delegated powers for the preparation of the new planning framework.

The following suggestions were put forward for consideration :-

- The Steering Group to have specific powers of delegation for all but the most sensitive policy issues. A Draft Delegation Scheme was attached as Appendix 1 to the report submitted.
- The current Chair of the Steering Group, in consultation with the Head of Planning and Transportation, to prompt the attendance of additional Cabinet Members as required by agenda content (particularly Cabinet Members for Housing and Environmental Services; Education, Culture and Leisure Services; and Finance and Resources). Ward members and Parish Councils Chairs may be required to attend matters of specific local interest.
- Steering Group minutes be included on Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet agendas. (The Head of Planning and Transportation to attend CMT as required). Appropriate items to be referred on to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) via Council representatives on the LSP Board.
- Scrutiny Chairs agree a protocol for LDF business to be generally channelled through Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee or alternatively for major issues to be dealt with in an open seminar for all Council Members.
- The LSP Director to receive Steering Group agendas and minutes with attendance prompted as appropriate. Other stakeholders be invited to attend appropriate meetings as required.
- Wider corporate technical officer attendance be encouraged as required, in particular :-

Chief Executive's Office (Policy and Partnerships)
E&DS - Transportation Unit Manager, RIDO
Education (forward planning/strategy)
Leisure (pitches/greenspace strategy)
Housing (strategy/Pathfinder)
Environmental Health (Waste management/air
quality/amenity)
Social Inclusion (Community Planning/Area Assemblies)

The above to receive agendas and minutes.

- With the coming into force of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act the Steering Group be renamed "Rotherham LDF Steering Group".

The Head of Planning and Transportation Service elaborated on the proposed delegation scheme set out at Appendix 1.

Recommended:- (1) That the above suggestions for enhancing the role and constitution of the UDP Members' Steering Group be approved.

(2) That the proposed delegation scheme set out below (as referred to at Appendix 1) be approved:-

KEY DECISIONS REFERRED TO COUNCIL:-

1. **Agree Local Development Scheme (content of LDF)**
2. **LDF Vision and Community Strategy relationship**
3. **Core Strategy and supporting policies**
4. **The future role of settlements**
5. **Spatial options**
6. **Major Green Belt issues**

KEY DECISIONS REFERRED TO CABINET:-

1. **RSS growth targets (economy, population, housing)**
2. **Transportation schemes/priorities.**
3. **Co-ordination of Corporate and stakeholder development and regeneration activities.**

MATTERS FOR DELEGATION TO LDF STEERING GROUP:-

1. **Economic development land requirements**

- 2. Housing development land requirements**
- 3. Environmental protection and enhancement policies**
- 4. Sustainability appraisals**
- 5. Development strategy for settlements**
- 6. Site specific proposals and sequential release policies**
- 7. Development Control policies**
- 8. Minor Green Belt adjustments**
- 9. Area Action Plans**
- 10. Masterplans**
- 11. Supplementary Planning Documents**
- 12. Agree response to representations from consultation stages**
- 13. Monitoring arrangements and Annual Monitoring Report**
- 14. Statement of Community Involvement**

The above minute was resolved at the special Council meeting held on 25 August 2004.

APPENDIX 2: Revised Local Development Framework Steering Group Constitution and Terms of Reference

CONSTITUTION

The purpose of the Steering Group is to provide a forum for corporate discussion and political guidance on all aspects of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and to oversee the statutory process of preparing LDF Documents.

This requires:

- The Steering Group to have some decision making over routine LDF matters (excluding matters of policy) as set out in the Terms of Reference below.
- The Chair of the Local Development Framework Steering Group, in consultation with the Director of the Planning and Regeneration, to prompt the attendance of appropriate Cabinet Members as required by agenda content. Appropriate ward members and parish council chairs may be invited to attend matters of specific local interest.
- Appropriate items to be referred to Strategic Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board. Steering Group minutes to be included on Cabinet agenda.
- Major issues to be dealt with in an open seminar for all Council Members or reported to Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee as required.
- The LSP Director to receive Steering Group agendas and minutes with attendance prompted as appropriate. Other stakeholders to be invited to attend appropriate meetings as required.
- The following corporate representatives to receive agendas and minutes and to attend meetings as appropriate:

Chief Executive's Office (Legal and Democratic Services and Policy and Partnerships)
EDS Transportation Unit
EDS RIDO
EDS Culture and Leisure
EDS Waste Management
Housing and Neighbourhood Services (Housing Strategy/HMR Team, Neighbourhood Development & Environmental Health)
Children and Young People's Services (School Organisation and Planning)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Matters referred to Council

- Adoption of all Development Plan Documents (including Proposals Map)
- Adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement
- Resolution for the Local Development Scheme to come into effect
- Approval of all Development Plan Documents (including Proposals Map) prior to publication and submission to the Secretary of State
- Withdrawal of Development Plan Documents

Matters referred to Cabinet

- Approval of draft Development Plan Documents prior to public consultation
- Approval of major revisions to the Local Development Scheme (that have significant corporate priority and resource implications)
- Endorsement of the Council's consultation response on emerging policy in the Regional Spatial Strategy (or replacement statutory documents)

Routine matters for consideration by the LDF Steering Group

- Draft Development Plan Documents (including Proposals Map)
- Sustainability Appraisal of Draft Development Plan Documents
- Draft Supplementary Planning Documents
- Annual Monitoring Reports
- LDF Consultation Plan
- Employment and housing land forecasts and requirements
- Evidence base studies and findings
- Settlement capacity findings and potential site allocations
- Draft Masterplans
- Regional and sub-regional planning issues and interaction with the LDF
- Minor amendments to, and updating of, the Local Development Scheme
- Planning Inspectorate Service Level Agreement and Examination arrangements

Appropriate reporting and approval arrangements for these matters (and any others not anticipated above) will be agreed by the Chair of the LDF Steering Group in consultation with the Director of the Planning and Regeneration and the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services).

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	CABINET
2.	Date:	28th APRIL, 2010
3.	Title:	MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF) MEMBERS' STEERING GROUP HELD ON 19TH MARCH, 2010
4.	Programme Area:	ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

5. Summary

In accordance with Minute No. B29 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th August, 2004, minutes of the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group are to be submitted to the Cabinet.

A copy of the minutes of the LDF Members' Steering Group held on 19th March, 2010 is therefore attached.

6. Recommendations:-

That progress to date and the emerging issues be noted, and the minutes be received.

7. Proposals and Details

The Council is required to review the Unitary Development Plan and to produce a Local Development Framework (LDF) under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

8. Finance

The resource and funding implications as the LDF work progresses should be noted.

Changes to funding will occur following consultation on the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. It should be noted that the new regime would focus on plan making and delivery of new housing rather than development control performance.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure to comply with the Regulations.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

There are local, sub-region and regional implications. The Local Development Scheme will form the spatial dimension of the Council's Community Strategy.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Minutes of, and reports to, the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group.

Attachments:-

- A copy of the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March, 2010.

**Contact Name : Karl Battersby, Strategic Director,
Environment and Development Services
Ext 3801
karl.battersby@rotherham.gov.uk**

**ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP
Friday, 19th March, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Dodson, McNeely and Pickering.

together with:-

Lewis Coates	Community Protection Unit
Andy Duncan	Strategic Policy Team Leader
David Edwards	Forward Planning
Paul Gibson	Transportation Unit
Ken MacDonald	Solicitor
Bronwen Peace	Planning Manager
Gordon Smith	Quality and Design Co-ordinator

1. INTRODUCTIONS/APOLOGIES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from the following:-

Councillor St. John	
Councillor Sharman	
Councillor Stone	
Councillor Whelbourn	
Neil Finney	Technical Assistant

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11TH DECEMBER, 2009

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

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

3. MATTERS ARISING

The following issues were reported on:-

(i) **LDF Next Steps**

Andy Duncan, Strategic Policy Team Leader, reported that further steer on the feedback report had been received. As a result more work was to be carried out on the draft report and, therefore, would not be published when anticipated.

(ii) **Landscape Assessment Study**

David Edwards, Forward Planning, reported that the final report had now been received and would now inform the LDF as it went forward.

4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY REGULATIONS

Further to Minute No. 19 of 16th October, 2009, David Edwards, Area and Environmental Planning Team, submitted a report outlining the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (CIL), due to come into effect in April, 2010. These were:-

- CIL would now be levied on net increase of floorspace rather than gross increase
- Allowed payment of CIL to be made in-kind in the form of land provided that land was transferred with the intention of providing infrastructure
- Extended payment period from 28 days to 60 days with instalments for large sums increased to 240 days
- Minimum 100 sq m threshold for CIL payments
- Charities would receive a mandatory exemption from paying CIL
- Social housing exempt from paying CIL
- In exceptional circumstances, local authorities would be able to provide relief from CIL to developers
- Secretary of State able to direct that authorities may prudently borrow against future CIL income to allow infrastructure provision to be unlocked earlier in development
- Authorities able to use up to a maximum of 5% income from CIL receipts to cover set up and monitoring costs
- CIL reporting included in LDF Annual Monitoring Reports with a deadline of 31st December
- Government believed the liability notice was sufficient warning about late payment surcharges and would not require local authorities to issue further warnings

The report also set out:-

- The radical changes to the existing system of planning obligations
- Next phase of delivery including a new policy on planning obligations and guidance and support for local authorities considering introducing the CIL
- The requirement for an adopted Core Strategy, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and a CIL charging schedule
- The Conservative Party's position
- Formation of a Sheffield City Region Spatial Development Group – Community Infrastructure Level Sub-Group

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

- o Guidance awaited

**ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP -
19/03/10**

- Not mandatory at present
- Developer's contributions towards infrastructure
- Section 106 Agreements only for social housing and site specifics
- Until decision on CIL and adoption of a Core Strategy, current applicants judged against Section 106
- Utility companies' infrastructure costs included in CIL schedule
- CIL schedule subject to independent scrutiny by an Inspector
- Position as regards Affordable Housing.

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

(2) That the report be referred to the Cabinet and the Planning Board for information.

5. DEFRA NOISE MAPPING

Lewis Coates, Community Protection Manager, reported that the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs had commissioned nationally the mapping of noise sources likely to impact on health in order to comply with Directive 2002/49/EC (Environmental Noise Directive).

The process was being carried out in 2 phases; first round areas had undergone noise mapping and would shortly have Noise Action Plans to address and comply with. Second round areas would have undergone the same process by 2013.

Rotherham was included in the first phase as part of the Sheffield Agglomeration. Noise mapping had taken place and included areas of Rotherham, particularly along the M1 corridor and along the A631 between Bramley and Maltby where noise levels were of concern.

It was not currently known what the full implications would be of the Noise Action Plan for the Sheffield Agglomeration. However, the early indications were that local authorities would have a key role to play in minimising the effects of noise in the action planned areas.

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

- It was currently not known what action the Noise Action Plans would identify for Rotherham
- Performance would be measured against the Sheffield Agglomeration
- Links to LDF and new developments within the vicinity of areas mentioned in the Plans
- Possible implications in terms of growth locations

Resolved:- That the current position in the mapping of environmental noise and production of associated action plans and consider the potential implications for the LDF be noted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Constitution of this Steering Group

Members and officers discussed the present constitution of the Group.

It was reiterated that the value of the group lay in the debate which could take place within the forum of a Steering Group between officers and Elected Members assisting in the shaping of the LDF work.

Resolved:- That the Director of Planning and Regeneration Services in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) bring forward, at the earliest opportunity, revised Terms of Reference for the Group.

7. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That a further meeting be held on Friday, 23rd April, 2010, commencing at 10.00 a.m. in Bailey House.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	CABINET
2.	Date:	28TH APRIL, 2010
3.	Title:	MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL – MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 25TH MARCH, 2010.
4.	Directorate:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S

5. Summary

To consider Members' training matters.

6. Recommendations

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel held on 25th March, 2010.

7. Proposals and Details

To ensure implementation of the Council's Training and Development Policy in accordance with the meeting's Terms of Reference.

8. Finance

The Panel has its own training budget.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Without proper training and support being in place there is a risk that Members' capacity to make decisions is not soundly based.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

To consider best practice in relation to Member training and development.

The aim is for every Elected Member to be given suitable opportunities for development and training to help support all aspects of their role.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

A copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Members' Training and Development Panel held on 25th March, 2010, is attached.

Contact Name : Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny and Member Services, Chief Executive's Directorate – Tel. 01709 822779 cath.saltis@rotherham.gov.uk

**MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
THURSDAY, 25TH MARCH, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Cutts, Dodson, McNeely, Parker, Pickering, G. A. Russell, Sangster, St. John, Whelbourn and Whysall.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Gosling, Hughes, Lakin, Littleboy, Sharman, Turner and Wootton.

43. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21ST JANUARY, 2010

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st January, 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

44. MEDIA TRAINING - FEEDBACK

Further to Minute No. 33 of the meeting of this Panel held on 17th December, 2009, a report on media training feedback would be made available at the next meeting.

45. UPDATE ON "A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A COUNCILLOR" DVD

Further to Minute No. 39 of the meeting of this Panel held on 21st January, 2010, consideration was given to the report presented by Sioned-Mair Richards, Scrutiny Adviser, which asked to note the progress of a DVD which will be designed to promote greater understanding of the democratic process in Rotherham.

The idea of producing a DVD to be used as a borough wide resource to inform citizens of the work of elected members originated from the Rotherham South Area Assembly and was then agreed by the Members' Training and Development Panel. A small sub-group of the Panel lead the project.

Timescales outlined in the original report changed in order to avoid the pre-election/election period and as a result the DVD would now be completed and made public in late May, 2010 subject to endorsement by Members' Training and Development Panel and approval by Cabinet.

It was envisaged the DVD would run for approximately 20 - 25 minutes starting with Mags Evers, Chief Elections and Registration Officer, followed by Councillors Gosling and Fenoughty discussing the changing role of the locally elected Member.

There would then be three short films about local councillors. Councillors Fenoughty, Falvey and Hussain have been identified as the three Members to provide this, but a host of elected members, officers and

residents would also feature in the DVD as part of the various meetings and activities that the three main members would attend.

The DVD would be a valuable resource, alongside existing materials such as the leaflet "So you want to be a Councillor," in supporting the Council's duty to promote democracy.

Discussion ensued on the script and content of the DVD and whilst it was noted that this was not about individuals, but about the role of a Councillor, it was suggested that this Panel's Members have sight of the proposed script and detail with some discussion about what could be covered.

Agreed:- (1) That the contents of the report and the progress made by noted.

(2) That the key content of each Day in the Life of nominated Elected Members be noted and the proposed "script" be shared with Members of the Training and Development Panel.

(3) That the proposed project timescales be agreed.

(4) That this report be referred to Cabinet for approval.

46. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Consideration was given to a report circulated by Sioned-Mair Richards, Scrutiny Adviser, which proposed training around the issues of safeguarding and corporate parenting of looked after children in order to support the improvements for its Children and Young People's Services.

To assist Members in developing their knowledge further of Children and Young People's Services, in particular with regard to their safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities, training was suggested with the aid of:-

(a) A toolkit "Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice", identifying three levels of responsibility, with a session being arranged around Universal Responsibility – Level 1, allowing for Councillors with specific roles and responsibilities having additional development events specific to their needs.

(b) IDeA training programme in conjunction with the NSPCC delivery jointly and tailored to suit local need. The first session would be for Members and co-optees of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel and seven Locality Champions. This would be open to any Member to attend, but would be rolled out to all Members, co-optees and parish councillors in due course.

Reference was made to the Scrutiny Review "Corporate Parenting", which

was to be submitted to the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee and Cabinet shortly.

Discussion ensued on the criteria and requirements for CRB checks and the need for exact details to be clarified. It was, therefore, suggested that the Council's Assistant Chief Executive for Legal and Democratic Services be contacted, guidance sought and the requirements made clear.

Agreed:- (1) That a training and development programme for all Members be set up around the issues of corporate parenting and safeguarding in order to support the Council's work towards improving Children and Young People's Services.

(2) That the requirements for CRB checks for Councillors be investigated and a report be submitted to this Panel.

47. MEMBERS' INDUCTION

Consideration was given to the draft Members' Induction Programme circulated by Sioned-Mair Richards, Scrutiny Adviser, which would commence from Monday, 10th May, 2010.

Reference was made to the need to include a session with the new Mayor who would introduce a guide to the way the special Council meeting worked, what the rules were, etiquette and how to understand Standing Orders. It was anticipated that this would take place on a day or two before the Annual Council Meeting.

Some suggestions were already included in the programme, but a session on Local Authority Finance would form part of the Autumn programme, with consideration to some sessions during August.

Agreed:- That the information be noted and the draft programme be approved.

48. COMMUNITY COHESION WORKSHOPS (ICOCO)

Sioned-Mair Richards, Scrutiny Adviser, reported that the recent Community Cohesion Workshops had been well received by those who attended.

One further session was to be arranged during June, 2010 to facilitate attendance of newly elected Members and those Members who were unable to attend previously.

49. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting scheduled to take place on Thursday, 22nd April, 2010 be cancelled and Members informed accordingly.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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