

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.**

Date: Thursday, 28 October 2010

Time: 9.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for Absence.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Questions from members of the public and the press.
6. Communications

FOR MONITORING

7. Bereavement Services in Rotherham (report herewith) (Pages 1 - 8)
8. Local Lettings Policy for New Build Council Housing (report herewith) (Pages 9 - 13)

FOR DISCUSSION

9. The Comprehensive Spending Review - Update.
10. Private Rented Sector Scrutiny Review - Update.

FOR INFORMATION

11. Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods.

- [6th September](#)
- [20th September](#)
- [4th October](#)

MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

12. Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel (Pages 14 - 19)
13. Minutes of meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 10th and 24th September and 8th October, 2010 (herewith) (Pages 20 - 39)

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 9 December 2010**

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor The Mayor (Councillor McNeely)

Vice-Chairman – Councillor P. A. Russell

Councillors:-Atkin, Blair, Cutts, Ellis, Gamble, Havenhand, Hodgkiss, Nightingale and Walker
Co-optees:- Skinner, George, Andrews. Jenny, Mr. J. Carr (Environment Protection UK), Derek
Corkell (RotherFed) and Andrew Roddison (RotherFed)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:-	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:-	28 October 2010
3.	Title:-	Bereavement Services in Rotherham
4.	Directorate:-	Neighbourhood and Adult Services

5. Summary

The intention of this report is to update the Panel on the progress made with regard to Bereavement Services in Rotherham, since the inception of partnership between Dignity Funerals Ltd and Rotherham MBC in August 2008.

6. Recommendations

- **The contents of this report be noted by the Panel**
- **That the Panel give consideration to an invitation to attend East Herringthorpe Cemetery and Crematorium to view the improvements first hand**

7. Proposals and Details

In 2004, the Council commissioned a review of the Cemeteries and Crematorium Service. The purpose of this review was to identify the work necessary to position Rotherham as a provider of high quality and effective bereavement services.

Whilst the review identified some areas of strength (such as staff dedicated to delivering a high quality service), it also identified a number of weaknesses. These included:

- Office facilities not being fit for purpose
- Poor waiting facilities for families
- No parking facilities at East Herringthorpe cemetery and crematorium
- Poor facilities for family research
- Lack of computerised records

The council was unable to address these using existing resources. It was therefore decided in late 2004 that the council should investigate alternative means of securing the improvement, and at the 20th December meeting of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services it was decided that the council carry out soft market testing to establish the efficacy of a unique solution involving the transfer of the council's bereavement services function to the private sector. Following a series of negotiations with various companies, Dignity Funerals Limited were identified as the council's preferred bidder and the contract was formulated.

The partnership with Dignity Funerals Ltd began on the 1st August 2008. Under the partnership agreement, Dignity are responsible for the delivery of all aspects of bereavement services that were previously delivered by the Borough Council. The Business Regulation Manager has been nominated by the Council to act as its representative in matters related to bereavement services.

To date, the partnership with Dignity has seen the following improvements realised with regard to bereavement services in Rotherham:

- Improvements to the chapel including access to the waiting room, facilities for funeral directors and a covered canopy to the chapel exit.
- A new state of the art bereavement services administration centre including reception, interview room, records and archive section, location of an electronic Book of Remembrance and visitor parking provision.
- A new 120 space car park, with overspill provision for a further 40 vehicles, including improved arrangements for the disabled and other visitors to the crematorium.
- The development of the crematorium grounds to provide an extensive landscaped memorial garden offering increased memorial choice to the bereaved.

- A new depot for grounds maintenance staff built to modern standards, including shower and mess facilities and secure provision for plant and machinery.
- The introduction of a 24 hour telephone line that customers can use to request bereavement services 365 days a year, a dramatic improvement on the previous 9am – 5pm, Mon – Fri availability of previous years, and recognition by Dignity that our customers and their needs are increasingly diverse.
- Improved security and management of cemetery grounds to prevent crime, damage to buildings and infrastructure and to address anti-social behaviour.
- A management plan for the maintenance and development of cemetery roadways, pathways and grounds to meet vehicular access needs and the needs of pedestrians visiting the site. Much of this has already been delivered at the East Herringthorpe site.

The following work is currently ongoing:

- Upgrading of the existing cremators to meet the essential requirements of new environmental legislation effective from 31st December 2012. It anticipated that this work will be completed by the end of 2010.
- A new IT system is being developed that will permit electronic access to archived burial and cremation records.
- Work is taking place on securing land to provide future burial space for the Borough. Initially this is being concentrated at the cemetery at East Herringthorpe and will involve consultation with local communities to ensure that their needs are met wherever possible.

It is felt that Bereavement Services in Rotherham are now of significantly higher standard than those in other areas of the country. One way in which this is illustrated is in relation to the provision of funerals for particular faith groups. In Rotherham, the Funeral Director can contact Bereavement Services at any time (using the 24 hour number) and request a burial for a member of the Muslim faith (for example). This is all that is required from the Funeral Director (and the family), who can then continue making arrangements with regard to other aspects of the service in the knowledge that the burial will be arranged by Dignity according to the requirements of their faith. Contrast this with the service provided in an authority similar to Rotherham who do not offer a short notice burial facility, and would require the family to make their own arrangements with regard to the lining of the grave.

The partnership with Dignity has delivered real improvements in Bereavement Services in Rotherham. Rotherham residents can now expect a modern, high

quality, efficient service at a cost that compares favourably with those in other authorities of a similar nature. Additionally, the council continues to receive the income from bereavement services due to the payment by Dignity of the annual fixed amount (currently £400,692).

Work is ongoing with Dignity to bring about further improvements in the service, which will provide further support and assurance to bereaved individuals at this most sensitive and emotional period in their lives. Areas for future development include:

- Development of the bereavement services element of the council's website,
- Provision of technology and equipment for electronic access to services,
- Additional grounds maintenance improvements,
- Development of a strategic plan with regard to the provision of future burial space within Rotherham,
- Improve links with faith and other community groups.

In order to fully appreciate the scale and quality of the improvements at East Herringthorpe, it is strongly recommended that members make a visit to the site. Should members wish to do this, such a visit will be arranged by the Business Regulation Manager at a time and date of their preference.

8. Finance

In order to realise these improvements, Dignity have invested in excess of £3.5m in the service. This level of investment would cost the Council around £230k per annum if this money was borrowed using prudential borrowing.

Whilst the bereavement services function was under the Council's control, the service returned a surplus of around £355K. In order to compensate the Council for this loss of revenue, Dignity guarantee a sum of £375K annually (linked to inflation) for the duration of the partnership (this is in addition to the capital investment). In 2010/11 Dignity will pay the council £400692.

Additionally, the Council will benefit from a share of any super profits generated by Dignity arising from higher than expected income producing in excess of a 20% internal rate of return. To date, the internal rate of return has not reached this level, largely to due to initial financial costs to Dignity during the construction phase.

The Council maintained responsibility for several redundant chapels, the approximate annual cost associated with the maintenance of these chapels is in the region of £10K. This cost is met within existing budgets.

Fees and charges for bereavement services are set by Dignity in accordance with the projections contained within the previously agreed financial model. The level

of fees reflects the costs incurred by Dignity in delivering the service. In addition to cost recovery, Dignity will of course seek to recover their investment in the service, and this will influence fees and charges to some extent.

The Council is notified of Dignity's proposed fee structure close to the start of the financial year. Along with the proposed fees, Dignity are also required to provide benchmarking information that illustrates how Rotherham's fees compare with those in other similar local authorities. The most recent benchmarking information is attached as Appendix A. As can be seen, the costs for burials compares favourable with the group average, and whilst the cremation cost for an adult is comparatively high it is felt this is offset by lack of a charge for a child cremation (aged under 16).

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Council recognises that there are significant risks associated with this partnership. In view of this, the Council held a joint workshop with representatives of Dignity on the 17th June 2010. As a result of this workshop, a number of risks to the Council and the partnership were identified and an action plan has been develop to reduce the likelihood of these risks adversely affecting the running of the contract or the delivery of the service. Measures introduced include:

- Improved scrutiny of the financial standing of Dignity Funerals Ltd, along with monthly examination of the project account. This is achieved by a monthly review of the project account by Business Regulation Manager. This information is shared with financial services who have agreed to review the account and notify the Business Regulation Manager should there be any concerns with regard to the operation of the account. In addition, quarterly credit worthiness / financial health checks are carried out on Dignity Funerals and Glendale Countryside (the grounds maintenance sub-contractor).
- Development of a Business Continuity Plan for the East Herringthorpe site, with consideration being given to service recovery in the event of a complete failure of the partnership. The business continuity plan for the site at East Herringthorpe has been developed by officers within NAS, and has been accepted by Dignity. There is now work ongoing to develop a strategy for the return of the service to council control in the event that there is a sudden loss of service provision by Dignity or Glendale's. Whilst the implications of this would be significant, the risk of it actually happening are considered to be low due to the safeguards built into the contract, and the improved monitoring of the financial standing of Dignity and Glendale's.
- Formal quarterly review meetings with Dignity to address, amongst other things, any performance and service delivery issues. These meetings will commence imminently now that management arrangements at East Herringthorpe have been confirmed. The first such meeting will take place before the end of October.

It is recognised that it is essential that the council effectively monitors the progress of Dignity towards delivering their obligations under the contract. It was agreed during the negotiation of the contract that the monitoring would take place in two phases – construction phase and service improvement phase.

In the early stages of the partnership, the construction phase was monitored in conjunction with specialist officers from the council's Environment and Development Services Directorate. This involved periodic site meetings and the production of monthly reports detailing progress with regard to the construction of the new buildings and other facilities.

The majority of the construction work has now been completed. The upgrade of the cremators remains ongoing and is scheduled for completion in late 2010, and the installation of a new boiler is expected to have been completed by mid 2011.

In order to monitor the service improvement phase, a comprehensive performance monitoring framework has been developed. This framework identifies Key Performance Indicators and provides a method by which the indicators should be monitored. The council can levy financial penalties on Dignity should they be found to be failing in the delivery of their obligations under the contract.

The performance monitoring framework (PMF) has been developed by the council and agreed with Dignity. Its implementation has been postponed however due to management changes within Dignity Funerals. The management arrangements at East Herringthorpe have now been confirmed and discussions are taking place regarding the implementation of the PMF. In addition to the PMF, Dignity and the council are in the process of agreeing timescales for the delivery of the various aspects of the contract (such as the electronic archiving of burial registers). It is expected that the PMF and the monitoring of other contractual obligations will be fully implemented by the end of October 2010.

In addition to formal performance monitoring, the council is also committed to seeking the views of service users and taking their comments into account. Unfortunately, the nature of the service does not lend itself to traditional methods of customer satisfaction testing (such as surveys / questionnaires). However, discussions have been taking place with the Service Quality team within Neighbourhoods and Adult Services with regard to alternative methods of customer testing. These will include:

- Reality checking of services such as fee enquiries, family research queries etc.
- Customer inspectors visiting the sites to check the standard of grounds maintenance, and general appearance of the cemeteries (an element of this testing was carried out in 2009 with positive results).

Additional satisfaction testing will be carried out with funeral directors, who have each been sent a postal survey. Funeral directors have been approached as it is these that have the main contact with Dignity during the funeral process, and it is

these that the service users are more likely to make comment to regarding their experiences during the funeral process. It is hoped that the results of this satisfaction testing will be available in time for the meeting.

Dignity do not carry out any formal customer satisfaction testing themselves, however the council are notified quarterly in relation to complaints about the service. The low numbers of complaints could be taken to indicate a general satisfaction with the service provided.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The partnership with Dignity to provide bereavement services contributes to the delivery of corporate priorities as outlined in Strategic Objective 6 of the Directorate Service Plan by demonstrating that we are meeting the needs of our customers by making better use of our resources. Modernisation of bereavement services also supports the Council's PROUD policy theme and enhances personal dignity and respect in this most sensitive of service areas.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

In order to ensure that the views of the public were taken into account, a consultation exercise took place early in 2007. This involved a review of the rules and regulations for bereavement services – with members of the public, staff and other interested parties (e.g. funeral directors) asked for their views on what they would like from a bereavement services function. The results of this consultation exercise were reported to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel in September 2007 and formed the basis of the preferred bidder's submission.

Customer feedback on the bereavement services provided by Dignity has been positive, with several letters / cards being received thanking Dignity for the service they provide and commenting on the professional and sensitive way in which bereaved families have been dealt with.

Contact Name:- *Alan Pogorzelec, Business Regulation Manager*
alan.pogorzelec@rotherham.gov.uk, 01709 254955

Bereavement Services Fee Benchmark 2010

	Adult burial (based on single coffin and 99 year lease)			Child burial (based on single coffin and 99 year lease)			Cost for purchase and interment into a brick lined grave (if available)	Cremation	
	Purchase	Interment	Total	Purchase	Interment	Total		Adult	Child (age 15)
Barnsley	620.00	603.00	1223.00	620.00	253.00	873.00		489.00	246.00
Bolton	613.00	425.00	1038.00	613.00	425.00	1038.00		450.00	50.00
Doncaster	1272.00	636.00	1908.00	648.00	108.00	756.00		504.00	289.00
Dudley	1332.00	525.00	1857.00	1332.00	125.00	1457.00	2305.00	503.00	63.00
Gateshead	368.00	624.00	992.00	368.00	0.00	368.00		513.00	23.00
Halton	555.00	470.00	1025.00	555.00	250.00	805.00		450.00	205.00
Rochdale	1011.00	657.00	1668.00	1011.00	657.00	1668.00		440.00	440.00
St Helens	1132.00	513.00	1645.00	1132.00	0.00	1132.00		485.00	0.00
Stockton-on-Tees	500.00	300.00	800.00	500.00	300.00	800.00		NA	NA
Stoke-on-Trent	1516.00	770.00	2286.00	1516.00	0.00	1516.00	2730.00	485.00	0.00
Tameside	495.00	610.00	1105.00	495.00	0.00	495.00	2450.00	474.00	42.00
Telford & Wrekin	550.00	202.00	752.00	130.00	66.00	196.00	3128.80	NA	NA
Wakefield	760.00	620.00	1380.00	760.00	120.00	880.00	1880.80	554.00	106.50
Walsall	1471.00	826.00	2297.00	1471.00	254.00	1725.00		532.00	186.00
Wigan	700.00	602.00	1302.00	700.00	602.00	1302.00		420.00	235.00
Rotherham	642.00	813.00	1455.00	642.00	64.00	706.00	2406.00	587.00	0.00
Average	846.06	574.75	1420.81	780.81	201.50	982.31	2483.43	491.86	134.68
Minimum	368.00	202.00	752.00	130.00	0.00	196.00	1880.80	420.00	0.00
Maximum	1516.00	826.00	2297.00	1516.00	657.00	1725.00	3128.80	587.00	440.00

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
--

1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	28th October 2010
3.	Title:	Local Lettings for New Build Council Housing and subsequent Lettings
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

The use of Local Lettings Policies was agreed in December 2008 and these are reviewed every six months. This new Local Letting Policy has been led by the Neighbourhood Investment team in partnership with 2010 Rotherham Ltd. Consultation has been undertaken with Elected Members, Safer Neighbourhood investment team teams and residents including Community groups through the Area Assembly Coordinating groups. Consultation has also been undertaken with Legal Services which suggests that wider consultation should take place on the proposal.

6. Recommendations

Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel is part of the wider consultation on the proposed Local Lettings Policy for New Build housing, feedback from the consultation will be presented in a final report back to Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Communities before the end of November 2010.

7. Proposals and Detail

7.1 The use of Local Lettings Policies was initially agreed together with the Allocation Policy in December 2008. In 2009 the Local Authority was successful in attaining funding for the development and building of new Council Housing. The successful bid was to support the development of 127 new Council homes for rent. These included 36 properties at Wood Street/School Street in Thrybergh, 29 properties at Albert Road, West Melton, 29 properties at Rother View, Canklow, 21 properties at Albany Road, Kilnhurst, 8 properties at Newlands Avenue, Maltby, and 4 properties at Stone Park Close in Maltby. In total there are a 5 properties for disabled people on Wood Street (1) Albert Road (2) Newlands Avenue ((2). All the new homes will be available for social rent through Key Choices and will be managed and maintained by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. The properties at Wood Street are expected to be ready for letting in March 2011.

7.2 All of the new homes will meet high quality design standards and Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Housing resulting in a quality residential social housing offer. It is important to ensure that all of the schemes are looked after by the new tenants, that there is compliance with the tenancy agreement and the estate(s) do not suffer from anti social behaviour. Therefore it is proposed that any prospective tenant must comply with the local letting policy detailed in **Appendix 1**. The proposed local lettings will be closely monitored and reviewed in six months time following the date of the first lettings. i.e. If the date of the first letting is March 2011 the review date will be September 2011.

7.3 The Right to Buy for Council tenants still applies with the exception of the Disabled Persons Units. Any subsequent capital receipts are to be made available for the Local Authority to recycle, possibly for further new build.

7.4 It is proposed that all of the 127 properties will be advertised in accordance with the normal advertising quotas and be let in accordance with the proposed Local Lettings Policy as follows:

All properties will only be offered to the **existing Council tenant transfer applicants** who have held a Council tenancy in Rotherham for the past 2 years and whom have a clear rent account and no housing management issues i.e. – history of anti social behaviour, property damage or misuse etc.

For those qualifying applicants, the approach to be followed is:

- All properties initially offered to Priority Plus applicants and then 50% to the Priority Group, 30% to the General Plus Group and 20% to the General Group.
- Of these lettings, approximately 10% of the total (13 properties) will be let to people who are employed. This will be based on either the main or joint applicant whom must be employed or self employed when the offer of accommodation is made. Tenants who lose their employment status after moving in will not be expected to leave the accommodation.

7.5 The following types of households will therefore be excluded from applying:

- Housing Association tenants
- Private Rented tenants
- People who are statutory homeless
- Home owners
- Applicants on the Housing Register living with friends or relatives

The proposed policy is designed to give preference to Council tenants and release existing council properties to other applicants on the housing register.

8. Finance

8.1 It is hoped that Local Lettings Policies will create more sustainable communities, which should lead to fewer empty properties (voids) on that particular estate. However there is high risk that empty properties may take longer to let due to a restrictive local lettings policy. The average cost of void repairs is £1950, with additional costs for the letting process including staff time to produce the advert, the shortlist, verify the application, undertaking the viewing, making the offer and sign up procedure.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

9.1 There are a number of risks in respect of having the proposed Local Letting Policy. There is the potential for the property to take longer to let as there will need to be some promotional activity to encourage transfer applicants to register to move to the new build areas as current information suggests the transfer rate could be low:

Area	Numbers of Transfer applications that have noted this area as their first choice	Percentage of the total Transfers %
Thrybergh	99	2.67 %
Maltby	33	0.89%
Canklow	26	0.70%
Kilnhurst	16	0.43%
West Melton	20	0.54%

The total numbers of transfers registered as at 1 August 2010 is 3,695, of these 501 are registered in the Priority group, 136 are in the General Plus group and 3,058 are in the General Group.

9.2 There is no 100% guarantee that previous Council tenants with a good tenancy record will not have housing management problems into the future. An alternative approach would be to obtain a reference for any applicant from a their current employer or landlord (not just Council transfer tenants), or even a guarantor, that could go some way to also ensuring that applicants were likely to adhere to the terms of their tenancy agreement.

9.3 The legal advice received suggests that the Council should undertake wider consultation on the Local Letting Policy being proposed given the departure from the Councils current Allocation Policy. The consultation will prevent any future challenges from applicants who are not currently Council tenants, or from those who will be excluded such as vulnerable applicants who may be represented by the local community and voluntary sector.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

10.1 The Allocation Policy is delivered at a local level and via the Key Choices Property Shop and Neighbourhood Offices, which supports the Council's commitment to providing greater accessibility to services, meeting social needs by helping to ensure a better quality of life, improving fair access and choice, protecting, keeping safe vulnerable people and specifically addresses the diversity agenda, by tailoring services to the needs of hard to reach groups.

Working to improve services for Rotherham people and to ensure more effective links to the Rotherham 'Proud' theme.

Rotherham people, businesses and pride in the borough are at the heart of our vision. Rotherham will have a positive external image and its people will be renowned for their welcome, friendliness and commitment to the values of social justice. Active citizenship and democracy will underpin how Rotherham works. Achievements and diversity will be celebrated. Rotherham will be a caring place, where the most vulnerable are supported. It will be made up of strong, sustainable and cohesive communities, both of place and interest and there will be many opportunities for people to be involved in civic life and local decision making. The means to do this will be clear, well known and accessible.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

11.1 Legal Services have been advised that the proposed policy represents a major change to the current Housing Allocation Policy and therefore wider consultation should take place to enable other Housing organizations locally to be given the opportunity to comment. It is therefore proposed that a consultation programmed is drawn up before the policy is finalized and the outcomes fed back to the Cabinet Member by the end of November 2010.

The proposed timeline will be as follows:

- **Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods** - Local Lettings Policy initially approved by mid September 10

- **Sustainable Scrutiny Panel** - Local Letting Policies distributed mid September 10
- **Equality Impact Assessment completed** - end of September 2010
- **Local Consultation with Community groups, Local Residents and Local Ward Members** Local lettings Policies distributed at Community meetings end September with a deadline of end of October to return comments/views.
- **Housing Associations** - Local lettings Policies distributed end September with a deadline of end of October to return comments/views.
- **Support Providers assisting customers who are in need of rehousing** - Local lettings Policies distributed end September with a deadline for end of October to return comments/views.
- **Advice and Advocacy agencies including Speak Up, Shelter Citizens Advice Bureau** - Local lettings Policies distributed end September with a deadline for end of October to return comments/views.
- **Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods** - Local Lettings Policy consultation findings brought back to at the end of November 10

The finding of the Local Consultation so far - Tenant organisations, members of the local community and Ward Members have already been invited to comment. Statutory consultation has also taken place as part of the planning application process. At all stages of the consultation, Members and residents have expressed concerns about the management of the properties. The need for additional support and management of the properties as well as careful allocation of new tenants was understood to be essential in settling new residents into these existing areas.

Background papers have included:

- The Allocation Policy (1st December 2008)
- Local Lettings Policies
- The Homelessness Act 2002.
- Housing Act 1996, Parts VI and VII
- The Code Of Guidance in Allocation [CLG 2007]
- The Homelessness Code of Guidance

Contact Name:

Sandra Tolley, Housing Choices Manager, ext (33) 6561,
sandra.tolley@rotherham.gov.uk

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday, 16th September, 2010

Present:- The Mayor (Councillor McNeely) (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Blair, Ellis, Havenhand, Hodgkiss, Nightingale and P. A. Russell together with Jenny Andrews (Maltby Town Council) and Andrew Roddison (RotherFed)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cutts and Walker, Jack Carr and Derek Corkell.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

27. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

There were no members of the public and press present at the meeting.

28. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair reported that there may need to be an extra meeting convened between October and December to discuss the budget. Members would be given as much notice as possible.

29. PRESENTATION BY THE NEW CHAIR OF 2010 ROTHERHAM LTD.

The Chair introduced Paul Jagger, new Chair of 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

Paul gave an overview of the huge achievements made by the ALMO during the past 5 years. The Decent Homes Programme would finish at the end of the year which would have seen 17,000 homes directly affected positively by the Programme. The ALMO had had 2 good Audit Commission inspections and achieved a 2* rating as well as Investors in People and Customer Services Excellence status. He drew attention to the following:-

- Excellent work, in partnership with the Council, during the floods
- Successful partnership approach towards anti-social behaviour in local communities
- Very good team in the ALMO that was committed to the success of the organisation and to moving it forward in the way the single shareholder (the Council) wants it to go the other side of the present arrangements
- Arrangement with the Chief Executive Officer was successful but not sustainable for the longer term. This was an issue that could

not be dealt with until there was an understanding of what the future would be

Challenges/ Future Work

- Transfer of the work to the new contractors and ensuring it was implemented quickly. It was essential that there was no dip in the standard of service
- 2010 Board - The size of the Board was being considered with a view of reducing it from 5-5-5. The size of the Board was directly related to effectiveness and sometimes a large Board could slow that process down. Alongside that, was the need to address Board member commitment as it would increase in direct proportion. Consideration had to be given to Board members' commitment, clarity, skills and profile, training and personal development
- Open Meetings – Board meetings were largely open to members of the public but the response had been poor in terms of attendance. The possibility of having the meetings live on the web was being explored
- Future of 2010 – The decision was the Council's but the ALMO would like to be engaged in the process of decision making. There was to be a Board Away Day to consider the Government's proposals around the future shape of social housing. There were opportunities for Councils, improving services and adding value but there was an assumption that Council housing was the last option which was not the case

Questions were then invited:-

- o The likely size of the Board would be 3-3-3. Discussions around the size of the Board had been ongoing before the appointment of the Chair
- o There had been no decision as yet whether membership would be taken from the existing or new. A number of the members were new which would wish to retain due to the rigorous recruitment process that had been undertaken and some were due to "retire". It would be the Council's decision as to who it would appoint
- o RotherFed had been included on the appointment panel and it was important that tenants were democratically elected onto the new Board

The Chair thanked Paul for his attendance and presentation.

30. PROPOSALS AROUND THE FUTURE SHAPE OF SOCIAL HOUSING

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted a discussion paper to assist understanding and encourage debate on a number of new proposals from Government around Social Housing Policy. The report sought to put the proposals in a Rotherham context and highlighted what the potential impact of such Policy changes could be.

The report included:-

- ALMO Options Appraisal
2010 Rotherham Ltd. had been established in 2005 following extensive consultation with tenants and residents. As at 1st April, 2010, the ALMO had delivered £276M of investment and all homes (except refusals) would meet the Decent Homes Standard by the end of December, 2010. The management agreement expired in June, 2011 and the Council would need to make a decision on the most appropriate model for the future management of housing. PriceWaterhouse Cooper had been commissioned to conduct an appraisal of the options for the future management of Rotherham's Council housing. They would provide an illustration of the financial and service quality implications of the most appropriate model with a clear recommendation on which to base tenant and stakeholder consultation. They would report by the end of September.
- Change in Tenure type
It was possible that a change in tenure type could lead to a greater turn over of tenancies and an increase in costs through rent lost during the amount of time a property remained vacant between the outgoing/ incoming tenants and the repairs and maintenance works required whilst the property was void.
- Decent Homes Programme
Rotherham was on target to complete Decent Homes works across all its properties by the deadline of 31st December, 2010.
- Mobility of Social Housing Tenants
Rotherham had registered with "Home Swapper", a national mobility scheme. Tenants could register free of charge and view possible matches and contact exchange partners to explore potential moves. If a move was mutually agreed, both parties involved would need the permission of their respective landlords.
- Housing Revenue Account Reform

An All Member Seminar was held on 1st July to explore the implications for Rotherham further prior to submission of the completed consultation form. The level of debt 'offered' to Rotherham to move to self-financing was lower than the amount of debt currently being serviced. Current modelling suggested that through HRA self-financing there would be sufficient resources to invest in existing housing and build new Council houses. However, the level of resources available would be directly affected by rent levels (see next bullet point).

– Rent Convergence

Rotherham's rents was amongst the lowest in the country. Should the proposals around HRA reform be realised, achieving convergence would make more money available for Rotherham to invest in affordable housing. 26.2% of Rotherham residents were in receipt of Housing Benefit and was likely to increase when looking solely at Council tenants. Rent convergence could not be looked at without considering the proposals around the review of Housing Benefit.

– Housing Benefit Review

The reforms may result in landlords avoiding letting their properties to those in receipt of Housing Benefit and place the Authority in a difficult position. Rotherham did have a number of under occupied properties and linking Housing Benefit to the size of homes could provide a spur to free up larger under occupied properties.

– Tenant Services Authority

The future of the TSA was still unknown but the Government valued its service standards and local offer. 2010 Rotherham Ltd. had been running a task and finish group with tenants and leaseholders to agree Rotherham's service standards and the local offer. Consultation on the draft standards was imminent with plans to 'go live' in January, 2011.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following issues raised:-

- Non-traditional properties - in line to complete 108 Airey type as well as all of the non-traditional properties (approximately 700)
- Estimated 8% refusals on the Programme – the national average was approximately 10%. An issue that would emerge very shortly was whether or not to set a cut off point for the Decency Programme e.g. a property becoming vacant that had previously been refused but it would be difficult to schedule the works due to the close of the Programme being so near

- End of the Right to Buy to retain housing stock or the ability given local authorities to end all succession rights
- Leverage on under occupation
- Social housing was an active choice
- Possibility that the Housing Benefit Review might lead to some committing Benefit fraud for fear of losing their homes

Resolved:- (1) That the range of proposals coming from Government be noted.

(2) That the Scrutiny Advisor contact Members with a view to holding a Scrutiny Review on the private rented sector.

31. CHOICE BASED LETTINGS – IMPROVING THE SERVICE FROM A CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE

Further to Minute No. 55 of 10th December, 2009, the Director of Independent Living reported on progress made against the recommendations of the Sustainable Scrutiny Review into Choice Based Lettings (CBL).

The Review made 25 recommendations all of which had been actioned, a detailed analysis outlined in Appendix A.

A number of the review recommendations had incurred financial implications including the review of the Housing Register and provision of more information. This had required the Key Choices Service to carry out further exploration to identify funding streams.

Sandra Tolley, Housing Choices Manager, gave a presentation, illustrating some of the changes made as a result of the review.

The following points were highlighted:-

- Statistics showed a reduction in the number of people using the Advertiser to view properties. The adverts came out on a Wednesday and most people went to the Property Shop on that day to view available properties. Due to the expense incurred was it worthwhile continuing with the adverts in the press?
- There were not the number of properties returned to correspond with the number of people wanting properties

- The new computer system should alleviate a lot of the problems experienced when an application fell between the Council and 2010. It was a "live" system
- Consideration was being given to taking the service out to the community. Home visits were made and surgeries at Contact Centres in an attempt to reduce the volume coming into the Property Shop. Larger premises had been considered but the position of the current Shop could not be bettered
- Most authorities used the House Swapper Scheme which was a national mobility scheme

The Chair commended the thorough report and the part that Scrutiny had played in the review.

Resolved:- That it be noted that the Scrutiny Review recommendations had now been addressed by the Directorate and 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

32. CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Panel noted the decisions made under delegated powers by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods held on 5th and 19th July and 9th August, 2010.

33. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

Resolved:- The minutes of the meeting held on 11th March, 2010, be agreed with the inclusion of "Garages identified for future scrutiny reviews" under Minute No. 18 (Work Programme 2010/ 11).

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
10th September, 2010

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Austen and P. A. Russell.

D43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

D44. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

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

D45. ROTHERHAM PARTNERSHIP REVIEW

Matt Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive, presented the submitted report indicating progress on the review of the Rotherham Partnership.

The report covered:-

- background and context of the review
- Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Team self analysis
- LSP Board Members one to ones
- Future of the Partnership

The composition and workings of the LSP were outlined.

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

- new environment for LSP's under the Coalition Government and impact on scope of the review
- membership of, and attendance at, LSP meetings
- participation of members at LSP meetings
- responsibility for setting up the Board
- governance arrangements
- terms of office/ election arrangements

- involvement of non-executive members
- need to retain a sharper more focused, leaner partnership
- accountability of partner input and reviewing such before end of term of office
- flexibility of attendance at the Board based on topics discussed
- need to look at how wider number of members could be involved in the review process
- LSP a statutory requirement as part of the Community Strategy
- possible discussion item at the Members' Training and Development Panel

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

(2) That this matter be referred to every scrutiny panel for consideration.

(3) That Cath Saltis and Matt Gladstone liaise regarding possible discussion at the Members' Training and Development Panel.

D46. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Sarah McCall, Performance and Project Officer, presented the submitted report setting out how the Council was supporting currently the local economy through its procurement function and outlining actions being planned in order to strengthen that support including a proposal to take a town wide and public sector wide approach.

The report covered:-

- How procurement was supporting currently the local economy
 - Council Website
 - The Procurement Forward Plan
 - Supplier Contract Management System (SCMS)
 - Meet the Buyer
 - Standardised Contract Clauses
 - Assessing the Impact on the Local Economy
 - Supporting SMEs

- SME Friendly Concordat
- Prompt Payment
- Local Consortia Building

- Monitoring Performance

- Improving Performance
 - Meet the Buyer
 - YorBuild
 - Encouraging Local Consortium Bids
 - Improving Performance Measurement Tools
 - Working with Neighbouring Local Authorities
 - Reviewing Procurement Rules
 - Encouraging Local Sub-Contracting
 - Targeting Spend to Encourage Business Growth
 - Further Capacity Building
 - Increasing Promotion of Opportunities
 - Apprenticeships
 - West Midlands Procurement Framework for Jobs and Skills
 - Performance Clinic

- A Whole Area Approach

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

- comparator authorities for local spend
- costs and outcomes of Meet the Buyer events
- invitees to Meet the Buyer events
- increased business from existing suppliers
- performance clinic
- definition of local
- LSP Chief Executives' Group and nomination of representatives
- LEPs
- ongoing work with the Chamber of Commerce regarding supplier lists

Resolved:- (1) That the work to support the local economy be noted.

(2) That quarterly progress reports be submitted to this Committee.

D47. EQUALITY MONITORING OF COMPLAINTS

Matt Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive, presented the submitted report setting out the current position on equalities monitoring of complaints.

The report covered:-

- A prior internal review of the existing system reports from the CRM system
- inconsistent collection of equality data monitoring across the Council
- there was no mechanism to extract automatically the equalities monitoring data on complaints from the Siebel Customer Relationship Management System but that this had been under review and a possible solution identified.

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

- legal duty to collect the information
- need to understand the customer base
- the progress of the action plan, implemented in response to the scrutiny review of complaints
- scale of complaints received
- that Councillor surgeries were not included as complaints

Resolved:- That the information be noted and a further report be presented as appropriate.

D48. REGIONAL SCRUTINY

Further to Minute No. 148 of the meeting of this Committee held on 26th February, 2010, Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny, presented the submitted briefing note updating members on the progress made.

Particular reference was made to the Members' Regional Network Event to be held in York on 29th September, 2010 and that the agenda would include:-

- The Regional Context
- LEPs and City Regions
- The future role of scrutiny, including health scrutiny (abolition of PCT's etc.)
- Community Safety

Elected member attendance at the event was invited.

Resolved:- That details of the York event be distributed to members and anyone wishing to attend notify the Scrutiny Office.

D49. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Swift in the list of apologies.

D50. WORK IN PROGRESS

(a) Councillor Whysall reported that the next two meetings of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to be held on 6th and 20th October, 2010 were to be themed meetings on economic regeneration and transport respectively.

(b) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that the latest meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel considered:-

- Aiming High for Disabled Children – Short Breaks Services
- Rotherham Imagination Library Annual Report 2009/ 10
- Corporate Parenting Review – Cabinet response
- Inspection of Fostering Services
- Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children
- Road Safety Outside Schools – Scrutiny Review

- Children and Young People's Services – Performance Indicators Quarter 1
- Children and Young People's Services – Budget update

(c) Councillor Jack reported that the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel at its meeting yesterday had considered:-

- Presentation in respect of the Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2009/ 10
- Presentation in respect of Supporting People Programme, Contribution to Prevention
- Presentation in respect of Personalisation in Rotherham
- Shaping Our Future – Community Health Services
- Briefing on the Equity and Excellence White Paper : Implications for Rotherham
- Forward Plan of Key Decisions

Councillor Jack also reported that the final meeting of the Assistive Technology Review Group had been held and papers had been distributed in respect of the Diabetes Review.

(d) Councillor Whelbourn reported the need for every scrutiny panel to consider the budget following the comprehensive spending review.

D51. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following items to enable the necessary arrangements to be made)

D52. CARE SERVICE

The Chairman reported a request for scrutiny views in respect of the Care Service.

Resolved:- That reports be submitted to this Committee for consideration whereupon invites be extended to interested members from the relevant scrutiny panels.

D53. POLICE REFORM - CONSULTATION

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny, reported on proposals to respond to the above consultation paper, the deadline for which was 20th September, 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That the matter be considered by the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 16th September, 2010 and any views be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods.

(2) That Councillor Wright be invited to the discussions at the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel.

(3) That the finalised Council response to the consultation should be forwarded to the local M.Ps.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
24th September, 2010

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Gilding, J. Hamilton, Jack, License, G. A. Russell and Whysall.

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor McNeely); Councillors P. A. Russell, Steele and Swift.

D54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

D55. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

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

D56. EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS - WHITE PAPER AND RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

Kate Taylor, Policy Officer, presented the submitted report which set out how the Government's Health White Paper preceded legislation to be placed before Parliament in the current parliamentary session. It proposed major reforms to the NHS and also changed roles for Local Government.

A suite of consultation documents had subsequently been published, which required a response by 11th October, 2010. This report set out the key proposals within the White Paper and the implications these would have for the Council and Partners, as well as making recommendations for responding effectively to the consultation and next steps for public health in Rotherham.

The report set out clearly:-

- The Key Proposals.
- Implications for Rotherham.
- Consultation Process.
- Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health.
- Commissioning for Patients.
- Transparency in Outcomes – A Framework for the NHS.
- Regulating Healthcare Providers.
- Responding to the Consultation.
- Rotherham Joint Public Health Strategy.

A ring-fenced health improvement budget, which included a bonus for outcomes, would be provided to all Directors of Public Health.

Further detail regarding the amount of this budget and how it would be ring-fenced was not yet known. It was expected that the Public Health White paper, out in the autumn, would provide more information.

Implementation of some White Paper proposals could be influenced by the Spending Review expected from the Treasury in October, 2010 and the Localism and Decentralisation Bill expected from CLG in December, 2010. For example, what the Bill said about the governance arrangements for Councils and what the Review said about placed-based budgets.

There was also uncertainty with regards to the proposals in relation to the new health improvement roles and responsibilities for local authorities; including details of the ring-fenced budget and Director of Public Health and staff. Further clarity on such proposals would be provided by the publication of the Public Health White Paper due in autumn.

The Council needed to consider all proposals and implications of this and future health related White Papers to ensure it was fully equipped to take on the new role. The risk of not looking at this immediately could be ineffective partnership and integrated working with the new arrangements and, therefore, poor outcomes for services.

The report had been received by Cabinet at its meeting on 8th September, 2010.

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

- scrutiny arrangements : concerns executive scrutinising itself
- children and safeguarding issues
- Health and Wellbeing Board establishment and representation
- monitoring of target waiting days
- implications of cross boundary issues
- appropriate reporting line for consultation papers

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

(2) That a working group of this Committee meet on Tuesday, 28th September, 2010, to consider the consultation paper questions in detail and feed into the formal consultation response.

(3) That Cabinet be requested to consider the appropriate route for consideration of consultation papers and this Committee's view that scrutiny should be the first port of call.

D57. 11 MILLION TAKEOVER DAY

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented the submitted report indicating that "11 Million Takeover Day 2010" was to be held on Friday, 12th November, 2010.

The Committee noted the success of the event in previous years and welcomed the opportunity to participate again in 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That "11 Million Takeover Day 2010" be supported.

(2) That the Youth Cabinet and Looked After Children's Council be invited to take over this Committee's meeting on 12th November, 2010 (re-scheduled from 19th November, 2010).

(3) That members of the Cabinet be invited to attend the event.

(4) That further reports be submitted as appropriate.

D58. POLICE REFORM CONSULTATION : FEEDBACK

Further to Minute No. 53 of the meeting of this Committee held on 10th September, 2010, it was reported that the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel considered the draft consultation response on 16th September, 2010. Taking account of the comments made by the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods considered the matter at his delegated powers meeting on 20th September, 2010. The response was approved with the first part of the consultation draft being amended to read "Rotherham Borough Council are opposed to the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners".

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

D59. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

D60. WORK IN PROGRESS

(a) Councillor J. Hamilton reported that the latest meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel had considered:-

- presentation from Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods, on his priorities under the Safe Theme Board
- policing in the 21st Century
- Community Leadership Fund
- combined parliamentary and local elections May, 2010
- Rotherham election turnout analysis

The next meeting would be considering running a referendum at the same time as an election.

(b) Councillor Jack reported that the Assistive Technology Review was nearing completion.

(c) Councillor Whysall reported that the next meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to be held on 6th October, 2010 at MAGNA was an economic regeneration themed meeting to which members were invited to attend.

(d) Councillor G. A. Russell reported

- scrutiny review group looking at incidences of autism was being set up
- review of the temporary closure of Rotherham schools during periods of inclement weather would be reported to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel in October
- an invitation had been received to participate in the Health consultation on children's cardiac services
- the October meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel would also be considering Building Schools for the Future

(e) Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, reported - on behalf of the Mayor (Councillor McNeely), that the review group looking at the housing private renting sector had been set up and the first meeting was scheduled for 1st October, 2010

- the latest meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel had considered proposals around the future shape of social housing

(f) Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, reported an invite from the Centre for Public Scrutiny to be part of a reference group looking at corporate parenting. A productive meeting had been held last week.

(g) Councillor Whelbourn reported:

- Cabinet had welcomed the breastfeeding review and recommendations would be implemented finance permitting
- Financial Services were carrying out a review of central establishment charges

Resolved:- That the potential to feed into the review be discussed further at the next meeting.

D61. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.

D62. BEN KNIGHT

The Committee placed on record its thanks to Ben for his services to the Committee and scrutiny and wished him every success in his new appointment at Warrington.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

8th October, 2010

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor McNeely), Austen, Gilding, J. Hamilton, Jack, License, G. A. Russell, Steele, Swift and Whysall.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P. A. Russell.

D63. COUNCILLOR P. A. RUSSELL

The Members wished Councillor Russell a speedy recovery following her recent operation.

D64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

D65. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

D66. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE

Julie Slatter, Head of Policy and Performance, presented the submitted report which provided analysis of the Council's performance as at the end of June, 2010.

Recently there had been significant change in Central Government's reporting requirements and councils would no longer be required to report against the vast majority of centrally driven indicators, targets and regulation. Government had signalled a move towards localism with less top down control. Authorities could now focus performance management arrangements on local improvement and accountability to their communities rather than upward reporting to government. The report suggested how the format of future quarterly reporting could change to accommodate the changes.

Julie gave a presentation detailing the following:-

- Focus of presentation
- National Context : Performance
- Rotherham's Response – strengthen focus of performance management

- Areas of Good Performance
- Areas for concern
- Performance Clinics

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

- scrutiny involvement in the improvement agenda
- greater public involvement in both planning and reporting
- LGA consultation on sector self regulation and improvement
- reaching traditional non-engagers
- arrangements for the Transparency Agenda reporting/ monitoring/ publishing £500 + spend
- accuracy and use of the Council's website data : monitoring of Council data on open websites
- social care clients receiving self direct support and monitoring arrangements for those not capable of managing money
- domestic abuse trends
- planning application statistics
- child protection cases and plans
- schools in special measures and impact of changes to inspection regimes
- people supported to live independently through Social Services

Resolved:- (1) That the position and direction of travel on key indicators and the corrective action required, as identified, be noted.

(2) That the position regarding future performance clinics and assessment of progress made from recently held clinics be noted.

(3) That the suggested changes to the report, to help provide a clear overview of performance, delivery against strategic priorities and

improvement activity and impact, be supported.

(4) That the additional monies obtained through the successful delivery of Local Area Agreement targets be noted.

(5) That it be noted that the LGA consultation paper 'Sector Self Regulation and Improvement' would be considered by this Committee on 22nd October, 2010 prior to a response being submitted by 1st November, 2010.

(6) That a report on proposals for the Transparency Agenda around the publishing of £500 + spend level items be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

(7) That chairs of scrutiny panels, in consultation with scrutiny advisers, pick up any areas of concern for consideration at their respective scrutiny panel.

D67. CORPORATE PLAN

Julie Slatter, Head of Policy and Performance, presented the submitted report providing an overview of progress to date in producing the Corporate Plan and plans for future development. A draft detailed plan was also submitted. It was noted that the draft plan was a working document.

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

- plan should be based on priorities that drive local targets
- consultation arrangements in relation to 'what our customers tell us'
- linkage of Corporate Plan to elected members
- need to ensure balance of any survey/ consultation conducted on the website

Resolved:- (1) That the format and content of the detailed plan be noted.

(2) That the timeline for approval of the plan be noted.

(3) That the proposals for internal communication of the plan be

noted.

(4) That a report on the interim findings of the responses made on the website be submitted to a future meeting.

(5) That the Corporate Plan be referred for consideration to the Members' Training and Development Panel to ensure member development/ training is linked to the Plan.

D68. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented the submitted report setting out details of the purpose of the Procurement Strategy which was to set out how the Council intended to procure its goods, works and services in order to support the Authority's overall aims and objectives over the life span of the Strategy. It outlined the Council's current position and clearly pointed to areas where we needed to improve, with a supporting action plan to deliver those areas. The action plan would be managed by the Council's Procurement Panel,

The Strategy was aligned with the Council's Corporate Commissioning Framework which examined how the Council could strategically pull together all commissioning activity to ensure maximum gain from any efficiencies that may be generated.

If the actions in the above plan were not met the refreshed Corporate Procurement Strategy may not be fully implemented and embedded across the Council which could impact on the Council's ability to evidence value for money.

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

- procurer's guide to dealing with the third sector
- definition of the third sector

Resolved:- That the current position in respect of the action plan be noted.

D69. PROCUREMENT LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented the submitted report setting out details of the local indicators developed in 2007 to measure the Council's procurement function in terms of delivery of the Procurement Strategy and day-to-day management of the procurement function. The suite of indicators was updated in 2009

to ensure effective monitoring.

The report set out details of the indicators, targets and performance for quarter one of the financial year 2010/ 11.

Performance against these LPs would reflect how the Corporate Procurement Strategy was being implemented and embedded across the Council which could impact on the Council's ability to evidence value for money.

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

- statistics not reflecting sub-contracting to SMEs
- core trade spend

Resolved:- That current performance be noted.

D70. PAYMENT OF INVOICES WITHIN THIRTY DAYS

Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented the submitted report setting out details of the former Best Value Performance Indicator 8 which measured the payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days. The Council had agreed an average annual target of 96% for performance BVPI8 for 2010/ 11.

Outturn performance for recent years had achieved:-

2006/ 07	91%
2007/ 08	94%
2008/ 09	92%
2009/ 10	94.65%

Performance against BVPI8 was not as consistent as it should be and it had been recognised that the Council should act to instil and embed good practice in this area and work was ongoing to that effect.

If the Council under performed on BVPI8 then this may have an effect on our CPA score. Vulnerable smaller suppliers may also experience financial difficulties due to delayed payment which goes against our commitment to the SME Friendly Concordat.

Making late payments to suppliers could damage relationships between the Council and suppliers and could potentially cause cash

47D PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - 08/ 10/ 10

flow difficulties for suppliers, dependant on invoice values and suppliers' turnover. It was possible that late payments could result in suppliers putting our account 'on stop' which could cause delays to Council projects. Ultimately late payment could result in the matter being referred to court.

Resolved:- That the current position in respect of BVPI8 be noted.

D71. RBT QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE

Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented the submitted report summarising the performance of RBT against contractual measures for April, May and June, 2010 and key areas of work for the year 2010/ 11 across the areas of Customer Access, Human Resources and Payroll, ICT, Procurement and Revenues and Benefits.

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

- Procurement : penalties in respect of PO6 (catalogue orders)
- Procurement Savings : background to construction of the figures
- NNDR recovery

Resolved:- (1) That RBT's performance against contractual measures for April, May and June, 2010 be noted.

(2) That a report be submitted to Audit Committee on the background to the construction of the reported procurement savings figures.

D72. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th September, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman and arising therefrom:

(a) CONSULTATION PAPERS

It was noted that a report was to be submitted to the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel with a view to formalising a process for the consideration of received consultation papers.

(b) CENTRAL ESTABLISHMENT CHARGES

Resolved:- That a scrutiny review group, comprising Councillors J. Hamilton, Jack and Whelbourn, be established to review central establishment charges.

(Councillor Whelbourn left the meeting at this point in the proceedings and Councillor Austen assumed the Chair)

D73. WORK IN PROGRESS

(a) Councillor Jack reported that the latest meeting of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had considered:-

- presentation on Pharmaceutical Need Assessment Consultation
- 'Equity and Excellence : Liberating the NHS' consultation on the Health White Paper
- Breastfeeding Review : Cabinet response
- Assistive Technology Review : presentation on findings, conclusions and recommendations

Councillor Jack also reported:-

- the review of Diabetes started on 4th October, 2010
- review of the Women's Strategy was held on 6th October, 2010

(b) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that the Autism review had started.

(c) The Mayor (Councillor McNeely) reported that the first meeting of the housing private renting sector review had taken place.

(d) Cath Saltis reported :-

- feedback from the regional scrutiny event held in York on 29th September, 2010
- feedback from a conference held in London on 5th October, 2010 regarding the future of overview and scrutiny
- on the roll out of information from the headlines of the Comprehensive Spending Review scheduled for 20th October,

2010

D74. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.