

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LIFESTYLE, SPORT AND TOURISM**

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate  
Street, Rotherham. S60  
2TH**

**Date: Tuesday, 9th November, 2010**

**Time: 9.00 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. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th October, 2010 (Pages 1 - 2)
4. Minutes of a meeting of the Play Pathfinder Project Board held on 27th September, 2010 (Pages 3 - 5)
5. Health, Welfare and Safety Visit Report (herewith) (Pages 6 - 7)
6. Extra Item:- Proposed New Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity - Consultation (report herewith) (Pages 8 - 12)
7. Exclusion of the Press and Public  
The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006) (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular individual (including the Council)):-
8. Rotherham Rugby Club Ltd. (report herewith) (Pages 13 - 17)

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LIFESTYLE, SPORT AND TOURISM  
6th October, 2010**

Present:- Councillor St. John (in the Chair); Councillor Falvey.

**F32. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 7TH SEPTEMBER, 2010**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Lifestyle, Sport and Tourism held on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2010.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member held on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2010, be signed as a true record.

**F33. ARCHIVES AND LOCAL STUDIES SERVICE ANNUAL CLOSURE**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Christine Evans, Local Studies Librarian - Archives and Local Studies, which requested permission for the Archives and Local Studies Service to close to the public for five days at the beginning of December, to carry out essential work on its collections.

The Archives and Local Studies Service annual closure allows for staff to undertake work on the historic collections it holds which could not be completed at any other time as it required all staff to be available and the use of the space in the public search room. This was normal practice within Archive Services nationally to allow necessary collections work to be undertaken.

This year the service would like to close to the public for the week Monday, 6th December through to Saturday, 11th December inclusively. The search room was normally open from Tuesday to Saturday. December historically was one of the quietest months, which was why in past years the closure week had been scheduled for this time. If this closure was approved, this would be publicised well in advance to users, including on webpages, in the search room and through a press release.

This closure was important in ensuring that the work required would keep the Council's historic collections and documents in excellent order. This year staff would build upon the work of last year, which focused upon the Service's earlier ordnance survey map collection. It was now necessary to concentrate on the later ordnance survey map collection including the national grid series. It would also allow the Service to finalise the audit of the 220 boxes received from

Sheffield Archives in September, which had originally formed part of the South Yorkshire collections.

The impending relocation of the service also meant that a clear and careful catalogue of collections needed to be undertaken to ensure the transfer could take place with minimum risk to the integrity of the service and its collections.

Resolved:- That the closure to the public of the Archives and Local Studies Service for five days to carry out essential work on its collections be approved.

**PLAY PATHFINDER PROJECT BOARD**  
**Monday, 27th September, 2010**

Present:- Councillor St. John (in the Chair); Councillors Parker, Swift and Whysall.

**51. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillors Havenhand and Smith; Dawn Roebuck and Jenny Yates.

**52. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25TH MAY, 2010**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

**53. MATTERS ARISING**

The following issue was reported:-

**Stoney Bank**

Nick Barnes, Principal Project Development Officer, reported on the situation at Stoney Bank. Reference was made to an error in the original design of a piece of equipment which, following additional advice from Planning Services, had led to the necessity to submit a planning application for the whole site. This was because the site was linked with a previous Section 106 arrangement where land was transferred between the Parish Council and Station Road with a requirement that allotments and recreational uses were addressed.

The proposal included strengthening the gate arrangement at Stoney Bank which was locked by the Parish Council in the evening.

Reference was made to the usual initial usage pattern of similar play areas.

**54. PROJECT BOARD PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report, submitted by Nick Barnes, Principal Project Development Officer, which gave an update on the progress of the Rotherham Play Pathfinder programme to date. The report also updated Members on the progress of the Play Pathfinder Volunteering Pilot.

Reference was made to the following key points:-

- (i) **re: Rotherham Adventure Playground:-**
  - change of Government
  - 50% reduction in grant and the significant impact on the programme
  - budget implications for the remainder of the year
  - funding of the posts of the 3 members of staff for Rotherham Adventure Playground
  - sustainability of the Rotherham Adventure Playground (RAP) project in Eastwood
  - success to date of the RAP re: number, age range and ethnicity of users; reduced anti social behaviour)
  - exploration of local suppliers of materials and alternative sources of funding, including working on a Reaching Communities application to the Big Lottery Fund, and through Engaging Communities/Play England in the form of consultants to advise on sustainability
  - proposed partnership with Chantry YMCA to develop the facility as a social enterprise
  
- (ii) **Play Pathfinder Volunteering Pilot – 2<sup>nd</sup> year**
  - benefits to the local communities in Eastwood and Kimberworth
  - requirement for an end of project report re: lessons learned

Members present raised and discussed the following:-

- specific issues re: Flanderwell park; Hellaby; Dalton; location of other play areas close to housing
- problems with grass establishment
- condition of sites at hand over
- security (i.e. provision of gates, and involvement of the Parish Councils)
- the need for flexibility in the scheme re: target dates
- age range criteria too strict
- the need to consider the area's requirements and include facilities for the older end age range e.g. a MUGA
- continuation of care and maintenance of sites and the need for help from a partner organisation

**It was agreed:-** (1) That the Project Board supports the investigation of the possibility of a partnership with Chantry YMCA in respect of the Rotherham Adventure Playground and a report be submitted to a future meeting.

(2) That the evaluation/lessons learned report be submitted to a future meeting of the Project Board.

## 55. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other items were raised at the meeting.

56. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING

**It was agreed:-** That the next meeting of the Play Pathfinder Project Board be held on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 at 2.00 p.m. in the Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010

**Present:**

**Councillors:** John Swift, Barry Dodson

**Union representatives:** S. Brook (NASUWT), K. Moore (Unite), J. Clay (ATL)

**Officers:** Mark Burkitt, (Health and Safety Officer),

**Kiveton Community Library, - Wales Road**

Present during the visit: - Janet Cosgrave (Library Assistant)  
& Daniel Baker (Building Manager).

FFE is fully tested and in good order.

Electrical Equipment - Portable Appliance testing is in order and is due next month.

Staff Room.

There is a significant fire risk around the boiler, as this area has been used for storage of furniture and boxes. Remove all items and keep the area clear.

Public Areas.

No issues identified, this area is clean & tidy.

**Grayson Road, Green Spaces Depot**

Present during the visit: - Peter Cunningham

No issues were raised by the Panel.

**Aston Leisure Centre, Aughton Road.**

Present during the visit: - Dave Burns (Duty Manager).

Order raised 6/10/10 through Connaught Electrical contractors for PAT testing to be completed next month.

The staff have been instructed to have a clear out and tidy up of this area.

## Health, Welfare and Safety Panel Visit

### External Areas:

The pedestrian passage way between the School and the Leisure Centre has large 'Lock boxes' on the gates. These boxes have sharp edges that may injure pedestrians that come into contact with them. It is recommended that the edges are covered to mask the sharp edges.

In the Car Park area the 'blister' tactile slabs are loose on the dropped crossing point close to the main entrance. – This is a trip hazard and needs attention.

### Internal Areas:

Entrance – On the external door the threshold poses a minor trip hazard.

Pool side – A slip test has been done by an external party and the results are awaiting the official results, - The initial comments suggest that there is no cause for concern.

Wet Changing Rooms – the disabled shower and changing room has a sanity bin with a broken lid. - This bin is due to be changed today. - No further action to be taken.

FFE – The testing of the equipment is over due. Arrange as soon as possible.

Electrical Equipment - Portable Appliance testing is required throughout the building.

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Dry Changing Rooms: The disabled shower and changing door opens into the corridor offering a hazard to anyone walking by. – It is suggested that a warning sign in the corridor be positioned to warn of the hazard.

General – The Panel agreed that the premises is very well managed and the housekeeping was in good order.



<b>ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL</b>
---

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Culture, Lifestyle, Sport and Tourism</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup> November 2010</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Proposed New Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity: Consultation</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's</b>

### **5. Summary**

This report summarises the key issues raised in a consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government on the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, and recommends a number of responses to specific questions raised in the consultation.

The consultation ends on 12 November 2010.

### **6. Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- a) Consider the report and accept the recommended responses to the consultation set out at **Appendix 1**.

## 7. Proposals and Details

### a) The Rationale for Consultation

The Coalition Government is consulting on a new Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, intended to replace the existing codes for local authorities in England.

Section 6 of the Local Government Act 1986 defines publicity as *“any communication in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or a section of the public”*.

The code therefore applies in relation to all paid advertising, leaflet campaigns, publication of free newspapers and maintenance of websites – including the hosting of material which is created by third parties.

The proposals in the consultation document are based around a number of key issues:-

- i) The consultation paper recognises the importance of effective communication to inform the public and encourage greater involvement. However, the stated underlying objective of the consultation is to ensure the proper use of public funds for publicity, and it also provides guidance on content, dissemination and timing.
- ii) The Coalition Government, in its agreement *Our Programme for Government*, commits to imposing *“tougher rules to stop unfair competition by local authority newspapers”*. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has expressed a view that less council resources should be invested in such publications.
- iii) The Secretary of State has indicated that while commercial newspapers should expect less public sector advertising with the growth of online capability and capacity, the free press should not face competition from *“a local authority publication passing itself off as a newspaper”*.
- iv) Concern is also expressed at councils’ use of lobbyists with no public accountability. The Secretary of State is quoted as saying: *“If local authorities want to change the way Government operates, they can write or pick up the phone. In addition, councillors can campaign for change at a personal or party political level. There is no need for lobbyists.”* Similarly, local authorities who take stalls at political party conferences with the aim of lobbying Government – as opposed to promoting a specific service or function - are also criticised

### b) Proposals for a New Code

The proposed new code will be grouped into seven key principles, requiring local authority publicity to be:-

- lawful

- cost effective
- objective
- even-handed
- appropriate
- take due account of equality and diversity
- issued with care during times of heightened sensitivity
- 

The unified single code will replace the two previous instruments which addressed different tiers of local government.

## **8. Finance**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The Publicity Code is an important reference point for elected members, council officers and communications professionals. Any changes to the code following consultation will need to be widely communicated across the council.

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

A clear and credible Publicity Code will support Rotherham MBC to deliver its policy commitment to promoting local democracy, value for money and transparent local decision-making.

The key concerns which the Coalition Government has stated it seeks to address through this consultation – ie extensive use of lobbyists and major diversion of advertising spend away from local independent newspapers – have not been significant issues for RMBC.

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

Department of Communities and Local Government, *Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity*. 2010

**Contact Name:** Tracy Holmes, Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing, extension (2)2735, [tracy.holmes@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.holmes@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity  
Consultation questions and recommended responses**

**Question 1.**

**Do the seven principles of local authority publicity as laid down in the Code encompass the full scope of the guidance required by local authorities?**

The Code as proposed appears to be sufficiently comprehensive, and the specific headings are helpful. However, the main thrust of the proposals are articulated as relating to paid-for publicity and appropriate use of public funding, more than the principles of probity and transparency.

It is therefore recommended that specific acknowledgement is given that the principles referred to in the code also relate to cost-neutral elements of the communications mix, such as media relations.

Also, the code references Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986 with regard to the management of publicity which may contain or have links to party political material. It is recommended that for ease of reference, the key points of Section 2 are incorporated into the code.

As a general comment, the code should take account of any issues raised by the transfer of the public health function – with its associated social marketing and campaign requirements – on local authority publicity requirements.

In addition, a number of specific comments are made as follows:-

- Under the heading of Cost effectiveness: Point 14. makes reference to seeking the advice of a number of different professionals, including public relations experts, on campaigns involving significant expenditure. It is recommended that the Code specifically references such expertise available in-house as the initial default position, as the commissioning of external advice could in itself prove unnecessarily costly.
- Under the heading of Appropriate use of publicity, Point 28. states that local authority communications should not seek to emulate commercial newspapers in style or content. This could be interpreted as counter-productive. Research has shown that local people are far more likely to read a publication which appears user-friendly and easy-to-read, rather than an “official” document. Tabloid newspaper format and style can help with this, for example. It is therefore recommended that the wording of this bullet point is amended to clarify what “style and content” means in this context.

- Point 29 suggests that local authority communications should be available in any format or language on demand. The cost of this would be prohibitive, and such a statement within the Code would be raising expectations that could not be delivered.
- At Point 34, it would be helpful if the Code could clarify that publicity supporting the day-to-day business of the council in the run-up to an election IS permissible, given that it does not breach other areas of the Local Government Act previously referred-to.

**Question 2.**

**Do you believe that the proposed revised Code will impose sufficiently tough rules to stop unfair competition by local authority newspapers?**

In challenging economic times, it may be appropriate and indeed necessary for a local council to seek sponsorship or advertising to supplement its resources and to enable it to deliver effective communication and public information. This does not necessarily constitute unfair competition. The code is unclear about whether such support would be acceptable to any extent. Greater clarity is needed.

**Question 3.**

**Does the proposed Code enable local authorities to provide their communities with the information local people need at any time?**

Linked to the response above, total restrictions on the use of income generation to support local authority publications could seriously impact on the provision of information to local communities in challenging economic times.

**Question 4.**

**Is the proposed Code sufficiently clear to ensure that any inappropriate use of lobbyists, or stalls at party conferences, is clearly laid out?**

This issue appears to be sufficiently covered.

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted