

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL
Thursday, 10th March, 2011

Present:- Councillor Austen (in the Chair); Councillors J. Hamilton, Johnston, Pickering and Sims.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hughes and Littleboy and Joanna Jones (Community Representative).

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest to report.

55. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

56. UPDATE ON CONNECTING COMMUNITIES (2009-2010) AND THE 'GOLDEN 7' PROJECT

Consideration was given to a report presented by Asim Munir, Community Engagement Officer, which provided an update on the Connecting Communities Programme and the 'Golden 7' Project to sustain the work.

The programme focused on:-

- Leadership – investment in Councillors, other leaders and front-line staff to build the confidence and skills to listen to communities and address problems head on.
- Voice – giving people the chance to have an honest and open debate about the issues that matter most to them, even if those issues were difficult and uncomfortable and encouraging community champions to have a say in local decisions.
- Opportunities – raising awareness of the opportunities available to local people.

Rotherham's NI1 and NI4 scores were low against the Place Survey (now discontinued) and, therefore, had been identified by GOYH (Government Office Yorkshire and Humber) as an area which needed resources and support. The focus was on the neighbourhoods who were suffering particularly sharply from the recession and where residents felt that no one spoke for them or were responding to their needs. The areas that were identified as priority areas for interventions were East Maltby and Dinnington.

East Maltby and Dinnington were selected as the two areas, because they were unlikely to benefit from related initiatives such as Neighbourhood Management Intensive Schemes and they were deprived communities and these were also areas which suffered from high worklessness, high crime and anti-social behaviour, low educational attainment and low adult skills. Close working took place with the Area Partnership Managers from Wentworth Valley Area Assemblies and Rother Valley South and Rother Fed (Rotherham Federation of Tenants and Residents) to identify interventions and what support was needed.

To sustain the successful Connecting Communities work done in Maltby and Dinnington and in meeting the recommendations from the Connecting Communities Research report, Rother Fed working in association with 2010 and the Council successfully secured a funding bid from HACT (Housing Action Charity Trust) aimed at bringing communities, workers and service users together. It was pleasing and proud to announce that the project bid had been taken through to the final twelve of this prestigious competition and was now in receipt of £5,000 to start what was called the 'Golden 7' Project. This project was successfully launched on 17th February, 2011 by the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Equality and Young People's Issues with 120 people in attendance made up of volunteers, Area Housing Panels, Councillors and relevant service providers.

Golden 7 was a new community involvement project linking Area Housing Panels, Tenants and Residents Associations, tenants, residents and volunteers together with vulnerable groups around Rotherham, getting everyone to work together and learn from one another. The aim was to bring together seven projects in seven areas to produce seven portfolios for each area producing a seven year sustainable project. Community volunteers were at the heart of this project and through this communities would develop skills and experience around each of the seven categories. These were black and ethnic minority communities, disability, homelessness, young people, young families, community spaces and the elderly. Each Area Housing Panel was to be presented with their golden envelope at the Golden 7 Launch Event where the categories each area would be working on during the next year were announced. A residential weekend at Northern College, funded by various sources including the TSF, had been planned for 25th - 27th March, 2011 to train the volunteers in project development to enable them to effectively develop projects in their area.

A discussion and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and subsequently clarified:-

- How many members of the communities had expressed an interest to be involved with the Golden 7 Project.
- The confidence in sustaining funding for this project to continue.
- Opportunities for Members to be involved as Community Leaders.
- Sustainability of the projects and the need for well prepared exit strategies as and when funding ceased.
- Provision of links with the Golden 7 Project, Area Assemblies and the Co-ordinating Groups.
- Timings of activities.
- Themes of the seven projects and whether these were interchangeable between the different localities.

Resolved:- (1) That the update on the Connecting Communities (2009-2010) and the current 'Golden 7' Project be received.

(2) That an update report be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel in six months time along with some examples of good practice.

57. ONE TOWN ONE COMMUNITY PROGRESS AND FORWARD PLAN

The Scrutiny Panel offered a warm welcome to Carol Adamson and Ruth Bastin, Community Engagement Officers, who gave a presentation on the progress of One Town One Community initiative, which also incorporate presentations from Rotherham United Sports Trust, Rotherham Yemeni Association and Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance about their own projects.

The presentation by Carol Adamson drew specific attention to:-

- Rotherham One Town One Community Project.
- Proud Theme Board – Cohesion Priorities.
- Partners Working Together.
- Key Initiatives.
- Living in my Community Courses for New Migrants.
- Young People’s Services.
- Young People’s Conference.
- Crowden Visit – Residential Trip.
- “Our Choices” – New Careers for Women Roadshow – 3rd November, 2009.
- LGBT Community Engagement.
- Safe Spaces Discussion.
- Rotherham School Linking Project.
- Schools Taking Part – 17 on the Programme.
- Community Base Projects:-
 - ♣ Roma Khamoro.
 - ♣ One Town One Community Diversity Festival.
 - ♣ Activities/Events.
 - ♣ St. George’s Day and Armed Forces Day.
 - ♣ Ramadan Event Raising Funding for Flood Victims in Pakistan.
 - ♣ Rotherham Council of Mosques.
 - ♣ BME Women’s Leadership Programme.
 - ♣ “Have Your Say” Small Grants Scheme.
 - ♣ United 4 Communities.

Rotherham United Community Sports Trust

Mike Cummins from Rotherham United Community Sports Trust reported that the Trust was a community football programme that worked across the borough in disadvantaged areas with different communities and age groups, delivering under the four main themes of the Football League Trust of education, participation, inclusion and cohesion. Through football the Trust aimed to promote physical and emotional wellbeing, healthy eating, healthy lifestyle, learning, confidence building, social integration and community cohesion.

Further information was provided on the projects taking place which included:-

- Then and Now (Inspire Rotherham).
- Future Jobs.
- Duke of Edinburgh scheme.
- Soccer Schools.
- After School Club.
- School Development Programme.
- Breakfast Clubs/Wake Up Shake Up.
- School Packages.
- Penalty Shoot Outs.
- Children and Young People's Festival at Magna.
- Magna Event.
- Rotherham Ambassador Awards.
- Maltings Youth Centre – Sports Leaders.
- Mowbray Gardens.
- Sports Unlimited.
- Rotherham North Sports Festival.
- Fun in the Park Ferham.
- Youth Forum.
- Eastwood Funfest.

The project was eighteen months into its three years of funding and would continue its work in areas where there were high levels of community tension.

Rotherham United Community Sports Trust were thanked for the excellent work carried out in the Rotherham North area.

Rotherham Yemeni Association

The presentation by representatives drew specific attention to:-

- "One Extreme to Another" Event – Wingfield Comprehensive School.
- Young People's Community Engagement Event.
- Young People's Realising Aspirations Event.
- Young People's Confidence Building and Assertiveness Event.
- Second Adult Community Engagement Event.
- Young People's visit to Parliament and the House of Lords.
- Young People's Second Confidence Building and Assertiveness Event.
- Celebrating Achievements Event.
- Community Engagement/Eid Event.
- Understanding Extremism Event.
- Third Adult Community Engagement Event.

A question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Sustainability of the projects and whether any further funding post March, 2011 had been secured.

Rotherham Minority Ethnic Alliance

The presentation by Taiba Yasseen drew specific attention to:-

- Engaging and Strengthening Rotherham's Diverse Communities.
- Review and Key Objectives.
- Future of One Town One Community Initiative.
- Key Themes.
- Objective 4 – Increasing the Capacity of Communities to Resist Violent Extremism.
- Objective 5 – Addressing Grievances.
- Highlighted Areas Relevant to Each Objective.
- The Future – Future Policy informed by Local Communities.

A question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- The need for community cohesion education in schools with a lower diverse population to prevent problems surfacing in the future.

The presentation by Ruth Bastin drew specific attention to:-

- Commissioning, Policy and Performance – Structure of the Community Engagement Team.
- Community Engagement Team Priorities.
- Strategic and Regulatory Compliance.
- Community Cohesion.
- Community Engagement
- Voluntary and Community Sector.

A question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- The need to recognise and acknowledge when there was a community tension problem.
- Links between the Engagement Team and the seven Area Assemblies.
- Priorities for the voluntary and community sector.
- Mapping tension hotspots.

Resolved:- That Carol Adamson, Ruth Bastin and all the representatives from the various organisations be thanked for their very informative presentations.

58. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 27TH JANUARY AND 3RD FEBRUARY, 2011

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meetings held on 27th January and 3rd February, 2011.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel held on 27th January and 3rd February, 2011 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

59. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 28TH JANUARY AND 11TH FEBRUARY, 2011

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 28th January and 11th February, 2011.

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

60. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL HELD ON 17TH FEBRUARY, 2011

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of the Members' Training and Development Panel held on 17th February, 2011.

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