

**THE CABINET
8th June, 2011**

Present:- Councillor Stone (in the Chair); Councillors Akhtar, Doyle, Hussain, Lakin, McNeely, Rushforth, R. S. Russell, Smith and Wyatt.

Councillor Whelbourn (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board)

C1 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

[1] A member of the public asked with regard to the Local Development Framework how were development sites chosen, why were Green Belt areas considered and what was the process for making decisions ?

Councillor Smith replied that no decisions had been taken and that there was a significant consultation exercise to take place shortly which would cover these questions. A report showing the results of the consultation would then be considered by the Cabinet and the views of everyone would be taken into account.

The Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services advised that there were criteria for considering areas for development, which included sustainability, suitability, transport links and services available locally which should lead to sensible and realistic decisions being made. He advised that the target for development had been reduced by around 40% which would be more achievable and the extensive public consultation exercise would be taken fully into account.

[2] A member of the public raised issues regarding the suitability of the site at Bassingthorpe Farm for future development.

The Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services advised that many sites in Rotherham had to be considered and emphasised that no decision had ever been taken to develop this site. This site was a significant site which if developed or partly developed would reduce the demand on numerous other sites in the borough. All sites would be considered as part of the public consultation exercise.

C2 GROUNDWORKS TRUSTS PANEL

Councillor Stone, The Leader, introduced the minutes of the Groundworks Trusts Panel held on 13th April, 2011.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the Groundworks Trusts Panel held on 13th April, 2011 be received.

C3 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK MEMBERS' STEERING GROUP

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Environment, introduced the minutes of the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group held on 15th April, 2011.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group held on 15th April, 2011 be received.

C4 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Environment, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services, which sought approval for public consultation on the Local Development Framework (LDF).

The consultation planned for Summer 2011 would cover both the LDF Strategy in terms of the broad amount and distribution of growth and the detail in terms of initial consultation on potential development sites around all the borough's communities.

The report set out in detail the consultation response, how the strategy would focus on the potential development sites in each local community and the vision for the future of Rotherham through the Draft Core Strategy.

There were no direct financial implications arising from this report although the consultation planned for Summer 2011 would increase pressure on the Forward Planning Team's budget. Corporate assistance with the consultation exercise had been approved and officers from relevant services would be assisting with the consultation.

The supplementing of media relations activity with more direct communication should be considered. Investment in channels such as direct mail may be necessary to ensure adequate levels of communication and engagement. Previous criticisms have included a perceived lack of information about the consultation.

The Localism Bill would bring in a "presumption in favour of sustainable development" should an adopted development plan not be in place by the end of 2012. This could lead to the Council having to grant planning permission for major (greenfield) development contrary to its priorities, aspirations or locational preferences.

A failure to achieve timely progress on the LDF could delay the spatial strategy which was required to guide future decision-making on planning applications and may hinder the Council's ability to mediate potentially conflicting aspirations of any neighbourhood plans that may emerge under the provisions of the Localism Bill.

The ongoing legal challenges to the Government's intention to revoke regional strategies and the targets they contain could have implications for the strategy. On the one hand the Council may be challenged for consulting on a lower housing target before regional strategies were formally revoked. On the other if there was a delay there was a risk of not having a plan in place by the end of 2012 and, therefore, being at risk of speculative development in inappropriate locations. On balance, the need to progress outweighed the risk of challenge.

To further mitigate this risk the Council would consult now on a lower target in our “draft” plan, but would not formally “submit” the Core Strategy to Government until after the Localism Bill had been passed and regional strategies were revoked.

Failure to make progress with the LDF risked delayed provision of the new homes and employment opportunities that the borough needed.

Resolved:- (1) That the Draft Core Strategy and the Sites and Policies Issues and Options documents for public consultation be approved.

(2) That the timetable at Table 1 to achieve adoption of the Core Strategy by the end of 2012 be approved.

(3) That the LDF Consultation and Engagement Action Plan Summary be endorsed.

C5 NEW HOMES BONUS

Councillor Akhtar, Deputy Leader, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, which gave an update on the New Homes Bonus, to note how it could be used to invest in urban renewal and place-making to contribute to sustainable economic growth and to set out an investment proposal for 2011/12.

Rotherham received notification that £508,364 would be the New Homes Bonus for 2011/12 and that future levels of bonus would be very dependent on the scale of new housing delivery locally, the number of long term void properties and the number of homes demolished.

The report set out in detail the principles in considering how best to utilise the New Homes Bonus, the use of this year’s Allocation Infrastructure Delivery Plan, proposals for Canklow – Urban Renewal and an indicative list of how the New Homes Bonus may be used.

This year’s bonus settlement was detailed in the report along with projections of what future years bonuses may be.

As the number of new homes increased so would the amount of New Homes Bonus to be paid. Therefore, use of the New Homes Bonus to stimulate housing growth would in turn lead to more revenue for the Council, which could be re-invested.

Neighbourhood Investment Services would use the New Homes Bonus to continue key urban renewal projects in the most deprived areas. Areas such as Canklow have not yet reached the tipping point to become self sustaining. The investment that has already been made into Canklow needed to be protected and if regeneration was halted the benefit of previous investment would be lost. This was in line with the Council’s objective of ensuring that “No Community is Left Behind”.

Failure to invest in Affordable Housing would mean that the Council's waiting lists would continue to grow. As well as absolute numbers of people who could not afford to buy there would be a lack of specialist provision such as Older Persons Accommodation for people to downsize to homes that better met their needs. The knock on effect of this was that fewer family sized Council homes would become available as older people move out of them. Similarly the authority had a need for housing for people with disabilities, particularly family sized accommodation where a parent or child was disabled.

If the New Homes Bonus was used at this time to continue urban renewal and stimulate housing growth then the Council would benefit from an increased amount of New Homes Bonus in future years. The Government have only allocated additional funding to support New Homes Bonus payments until 2014/15. After this year funding for the rolling programme would come from formula grant. Therefore, to gain the maximum additional revenue there was a need to use New Homes Bonus to enable delivery of new homes quickly and before 2014/15.

Using New Homes Bonus to stimulate housing growth would create a greater pot of New Homes Bonus which could be used as cyclical investment for future projects.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan would be a key document in delivering the objectives of the LDF. If Rotherham did not undertake this piece of work then future planning objectives may be compromised.

Resolved:- (1) That the importance of the introduction of the New Homes Bonus be noted.

(2) That £50,000 of the New Homes Bonus be used to support the publication of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan for Rotherham via Planning Services.

(3) That £458,364 of the New Homes Bonus be used to invest in urban renewal in Canklow to make the area attractive for inward investment and achieve the tipping point where it would become sustainable.

C6

CHARGING FOR HOUSING ACT 2004 ENFORCEMENT

Further to Minute No. 6 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member Councillor Akhtar, Deputy Leader, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, which presented the provisions of the Housing Act, 2004 that allowed for a Local authority to make a charge for the service of enforcement notices.

It was proposed that the discretionary power be adopted with the effect of introducing a charge for specific private sector housing enforcement action carried out by the Safer Neighbourhood's Community Protection Unit.

It was important to note that the aim of the enforcement activity carried out by the Council was to improve the quality of the housing across the district and protect tenants. However, as a consequence of this proposal, there was the potential for an increase in the income generated by the team through enforcement activity.

Councils, however, were required not to use Section 49 as an income generating tool. Only justified notices which complied with the Enforcement Policy may be served and any charge made, must accurately reflect the Councils costs in preparing that notice.

Recovery of the fee would be via established sundry debtor arrangements and the charge in cases of non payment may be placed against the property as a local land charge.

In the year 2009/10, sixty-one relevant notices were served and it was anticipated that the charge itself would prompt landlords to react more quickly, reducing the number of notices required to be served. As an illustration, if it was assumed that a 50% reduction in notices served, thirty notices at an average cost of £400 would produce an income of £12,000.

Section 49 of the Housing Act 2004 gave the local authority the discretion to charge for the service of notices. There was no maximum limit to the level of the charge, however, the charge must be justifiable and reasonable. Section 49(6) provided that the appropriate national authority may impose a limit through regulation at any time. Further to this guidance recommended that consideration of the personal circumstances of the proposed recipient of the demand for payment should be considered. There may be circumstances which resulted in a reduced charge or no charge being made at all. This discretion would be embedded in approval procedures.

The recipient of the notice had a right to appeal against the notice and the charge. A tribunal may make an order to reduce, quash or require repayment of any charges made.

Charging for notices must not be seen as a potential source of generating income. Enforcement action must only be taken where it was appropriate to do so. The Council was at risk of being challenged where a disproportionate number of notices have been served inappropriately to generate income.

The current delegation of Council powers to the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services in respect to the Housing Act 2004 covered the introduction of the charging regime.

Recommended:- (1) That the introduction of a charging system be adopted under Section 49 of the Housing Act, 2004 with respect of the service of Improvement Notices, Prohibition Orders, Emergency Remedial Action, Emergency Prohibition Orders and Demolition Orders.

(2) That the relevant Notices only be served in accordance with the principles of the Enforcement Concordat and the Council's General Enforcement Policy.

(3) That the General Enforcement Policy be amended with the introduction of Section 3.7.

(4) That owner occupiers be exempt from the proposed charging regime.

(5) That the introduction of the charging system be with effect from 1st August, 2011.

C7 MOORGATE CEMETERY LODGE, WORKSHOPS AND GARAGES

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Environment, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services, which set out details with regards to 22 Boston Castle Grove which was a vacant three bedroom cemetery lodge located in the Moorgate area.

The property was previously utilised as tied tenancy accommodation for the cemetery caretaker and was vacated in September, 2009 upon the externalisation of the Cemetery and Crematorium service to Dignity Funerals Limited.

Dignity have confirmed that they do not require accommodation for an on-site caretaker, therefore, options were currently being explored for its future use.

The cemetery workshops and garages were located to the rear of the property and were under utilised.

A number of options have been considered for the future use of the property which involved:-

- Option 1 - Retain and re-let as a Council property.
- Option 2 - Sale to a Registered Provider.
- Option 3 - Open Market Sale of 22 Boston Castle Grove and retention of garages and workshops.
- Option 4 - Open Market Sale of 22 Boston Castle Grove, Cemetery Workshops and Garages.

This report set out the details of the consultation with Ward Members, Friends of Boston Castle and Moorgate Cemetery and the Rotherham Family History Society, but recommended that the lodge, workshops and garages be sold together on the open market as detailed in Option 4. This option would generate a significant capital receipt to support the corporate programme and relieve the Council from ongoing maintenance and running costs. It would also increase the marketability and value of the lodge.

If the property was retained, the Council would need to identify funding to undertake works to enable it to be re-let. The property was not currently accounted for within the Decent Homes Programme and the budget was fully committed. The £13,750 funding requirement to support Decent Homes investment in this property was not available within the One Off Properties Budget 2010/11. Therefore, the Council would have to wait until 2011/12 for funding to become available to undertake works.

As the property was not currently within the Housing Revenue Account housing portfolio managed by 2010 Ltd, it would be subject to an additional annual management fee and maintenance cost.

As the properties were classified as general fund, the sale would generate an approximate £190,000 capital receipt to support the corporate capital programme.

If the workshops were retained then the Council would need to identify funding from the cemeteries budget to enable significant repairs to be undertaken. Currently, there was no money within the budget to support this work.

At a time of fiscal constraint and growing pressures upon capital investment budgets, the effective management of empty homes was paramount, in both financial and service delivery terms.

The presence of empty homes produced a negative perception of neighbourhoods and a negative reaction from customers.

The recovery in the housing market was still fragile and there was no guarantee of a successful sale, should properties be presented to the market for disposal. However, the recent successful disposal of similar properties by the Council, such as 28 Nelson Street, Clifton, suggested an active market interest in acquiring such properties for investment and the property was in an exclusive well sought after area.

If the properties were retained then the Council would need to identify funding to undertake urgent works to prevent health and safety risks.

There was no funding within the cemeteries budget to support approximately £10,000 repairs which were required within the workshops and garages if they were retained.

Councillors Hussain and McNeely fully supported the concerns of Councillor Wootton regarding the need to maintain the workshops in good order.

Resolved:- That Option 4 be approved for the proposed sale on the open market of 22 Boston Castle Grove, Moorgate Cemetery Workshops and Garages.

(Councillor Wyatt declared a personal interest in this item relating to his employment)

C8 ASSET TRANSFER PROPOSAL FOR ROTHERHAM ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND, EASTWOOD

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Environment, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services, which set out details of the proposed transfer of the Rotherham Adventure Playground asset to YMCA White Rose in order to secure the long term sustainability of the facility and remove future budget pressures.

If a transfer of the capital asset was made to the voluntary sector this would create the opportunity for the adventure playground to become sustainable and prevent future Council budgetary pressures. There was a requirement to publicise any proposed disposal and consider objections if they arose. The board of YMCA White Rose (formerly Chantry YMCA) was keen to take on the facility if the asset could be transferred to them.

It would be necessary to have covenants in place that ensured that the facility continued to be used for the purposes that it had been created and that if the YMCA defaults on this clause, then the facility would be returned to the Council at zero cost (other than associated legal costs).

The YMCA had advised that they would work to raise sufficient grant against the capital asset to run the facility sustainably. The YMCA had indicated that it was not willing to take on the facility on a lease arrangement even if it were to be on a long term lease of ninety-nine years. The facility would have a synergy with the Myplace facility on St Ann's roundabout which was currently under development and which was also run by the YMCA.

A funding application for the facility was currently being considered by the Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Communities Programme. This would be determined at their June Board meeting, but the Stage II application was not guaranteed to be successful. If it was successful, it provided funding for two years. The success of this bid could not be counted on and movement towards a transfer was needed as soon as possible as time was required for the legal and other associated work to be completed.

Reasonable in house costs for legal and valuation work would be met by the YMCA.

Until the asset was transferred to the YMCA there was uncertainty about the future of the adventure playground and it remained a potential budget pressure for the Council. The responsibility to deliver the facility transferred with the asset to the YMCA which undertook to deliver it beyond the transfer date. In the event that the YMCA defaulted on this commitment then the facility would revert into Council ownership at zero cost to the authority.

Resolved:- [1] That the Rotherham Adventure Playground be legally transferred to the YMCA White Rose and that appropriate covenants be put in place to ensure the continued delivery of play at the facility or the return of the asset at no cost to the Council.

[2] That an exemption be made to the general decision to defer all transfers because of the risk that the Council would lose the opportunity and indeed the facility if it were not to take place.

(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING THREE ITEMS IN ORDER TO PROGRESS URGENTLY THE MATTERS REFERRED TO.)

C9 LONG TERM LOAN FINANCE IN SUPPORT OF ROTHERHAM UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB NEW COMMUNITY STADIUM

The Leader introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Finance which set out details of a formal request of Rotherham United Football Club (RUFC) for a £5m long term capital finance loan from the Council to assist the Club in delivering a new £17.3m Community Stadium in the Town Centre, on the former Guest and Chrimes Foundry Site.

The report set out in detail the reason for the request and what the loan agreement would contain.

The Council would be making a £5m long term loan to RUFC on a Maturity basis. The Club would be required to make six monthly repayments that will equate to the annual revenue cost of servicing the loan. At the end of the five year loan term, the Club would be required to repay the balance of the principal outstanding. The interest rate charged would be determined by the date the loan facility was drawn down by the Club as it would reflect the Maturity PWLB rate at that time, including relevant Arrangement, Management and Administration fees incurred by the Council. The Club was currently anticipating that it would need to draw down the loan funding in June, 2011.

The provision of this capital loan facility did not have any revenue consequences for the Council's Annual (2011/12) and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011-15.

In order to protect the Council's interest, the Council was looking to secure its financial commitment in the form of a legal charge over assets owned by ASD Lighting PLC. ASD was a well established, profitable, cash rich business with no long term liabilities.

Cabinet Members considered the risks involved and the advice of the Strategic Director of Finance. The view was taken that the extensive re-generation of the area to be achieved and the value to the Borough of having a high quality resource such as a Community Stadium was of significant benefit to Rotherham.

Resolved:- That the provision of a capital loan facility of £5m to RUFC for the proposed investment in provision of a new Community Stadium on the former Guest and Chrimes Foundry Site in the Town Centre, subject to the terms and conditions of the loan agreement being to the satisfaction of the Strategic Director of Finance and Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic) Services, be approved.

C10 LEASES OF MILLMOOR STADIUM

The Leader introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services, which sought authority to negotiate and conclude leases of Millmoor Stadium.

The Town Centre Renaissance Strategy was to create beneficial developments and activities in and around the Guest and Chrimes site. Riverside House was a tangible example of the Council investing to initiate that strategy, together with the proposals to create a new Community Stadium alongside.

An opportunity had now arisen to add a third component to the strategy, namely for the Council to take a lease of the Millmoor site (including car parking). This would enable Rotherham Rugby Union Football Club ("RRUFC") to take an underlease of the stadium, leaving the car parking area within the Council.

This had obvious benefits in relation to the sporting offer in Rotherham whether as a spectator or senior or junior player and, in addition, improved the Council's car parking provisions which would, in turn, benefit the town centre as a whole.

The Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services would negotiate appropriate terms and conditions. It was envisaged that RRUFC would make the majority contribution to the rental liability and that the Council ameliorate its costs through car parking charges and other arrangements.

Financial risks were to be mitigated through complementary annual break clauses in both the lease and underlease which would form part of the documentation.

Cabinet Members considered the risks involved and the financial arrangements. The view was taken that the use of Millmoor for a sport and the increased use of the area would benefit Rotherham. The Council would also be able to use the land adjacent to Millmoor and the area would benefit from some regeneration.

Resolved:- That the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services be authorised to negotiate and conclude leases of Millmoor Stadium, subject to the approval of the Strategic Director of Finance and the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services).

C11

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIOS

The Leader reported that he had approved revised Cabinet Member Portfolios, as follow:-

- Leader – Councillor Stone
- Deputy Leader – Councillor Akhtar
- Town Centres, Economic Growth and Prosperity – Councillor Smith
- Community Development, Equality and Young Peoples Issues – Councillor Hussain
- Safeguarding Children and Adults – Councillor Lakin
- Adult Social Care – Councillor Doyle
- Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods – Councillor McNeely
- Waste and Emergency Planning – Councillor R. S. Russell
- Lifelong Learning and Culture – Councillor Rushforth
- Health and Wellbeing – Councillor Wyatt

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

(2) That the new portfolios become effective from the Cabinet Meeting on 22nd June 2011.

C12 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved, that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in those paragraphs listed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act (as amended March, 2006).

C13 THE FUTURE OF THE SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS SERVICE

Councillor Lakin, Cabinet Member for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services, which set out details of how the School Effectiveness Service (SES) had been restructured in the context of changes in Government policy relating to school improvement and significant reductions in funding to the Local Authority.

The report outlined the details of the restructure and its impact on the Service from September, 2011 and as to how school improvement would be led and managed in the future by the Rotherham School Improvement Partnership.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with this restructure were set out in detail as part of the report.

It was noted that staffing numbers had reduced from 83 to 32 and that the Service would be more of a commissioning body rather than a direct provider. This would cover all services, including support for ethnic minorities and would enable a wide range of experts and suitable organisations to be used to benefit children but at lower cost to the Council.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That the extent and impact of the changes in the School Effectiveness Service on the workforce and on the school system be noted.

(3) That plans to implement the School Improvement Partnership Model from September, 2011 be approved.

(4) That the School Effectiveness Service have more of a commissioning role, rather than a provider/delivery role.

(5) That the impact of the changes to the arrangements for School Improvement provision on schools and the community continue to be monitored and evaluated by the Cabinet.

(6) That the effect of these changes be considered by the Improving Lives Select Commission.

(Exempt under Paragraph 1 of the Act – information relating to an individual)

C14 CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CAPITAL RECEIPTS UPDATE

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Environment, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services, which highlighted changes to the forecast of capital receipts resulting in a revision of the Council's capital programme.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with the capital receipts were set out in detail as part of the report.

Resolved:- That the position on the current status of the capital receipts which supports the capital programme be noted and a report be submitted to the Cabinet on the possible reduction in the target income to reflect the economic downturn and changes to the financial arrangements to meet any costs of retaining property.

[Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – information relates to finance and business affairs]

C15 FORMER GARAGE SITE, OFF KIMBERWORTH PARK ROAD, KIMBERWORTH PARK

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Environment, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services, which sought approval to appropriate the above-mentioned asset to the Department of Schools and Lifelong Learning, Children and Young Peoples Service in accordance with Item 76, Appendix C of the Council's Financial Regulations.

The asset was a former garage site which became redundant over a number of years and was now partially overgrown. It was now being used as an ad hoc parking area to enable parents to pick up/drop off their children attending the nearby Redscope Primary School and also for visitors to the adjacent Chislett Youth Centre. The site also provided the only viable vehicular access to maintain the school grounds.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with the appropriation were set out in detail as part of the report.

Resolved:- That consideration of this matter be deferred to enable further information to be obtained.

[Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – information relates to finance and business affairs]

C16 SECTION 49 DISCRETIONARY HARDSHIP RATE RELIEF

Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Resources and Commissioning, introduced a report by the Team Leader, RBT (Connect) Ltd, which provided details of an application for relief from business rates under Section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and consideration given as to what level of rate relief, if any, that should be awarded.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with this application were set out in detail as part of the report.

Resolved:- That the application for Section 49 Discretionary Hardship Rate Relief be granted.

[Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – information relates to finance and business affairs]

C17 THE RE-INTEGRATION OF HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Further to Minute No. 176 of the Cabinet held on 23rd February, 2011, Councillor Akhtar, Deputy Leader, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, which detailed the decision to return housing management functions to the direct control of the Council, which commence on the 1st July, 2011.

The report described the proposed future operating structures for housing services, ancillary issues and the consultation process which would take place with staff and unions, prior to a final report being presented to the Cabinet Member's delegated powers meeting to confirm the future operating structures.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with the return of housing management functions to the Council were set out in detail as part of the report.

Cabinet Members proposed that the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Adult Services provide all Members of the Council with contact details regarding the changed arrangements from July, 2011.

Resolved:- (1) That the implementation of the termination agreement be approved.

(2) That a new board of directors be appointed from the 1st July, 2011, subject to any necessary changes to the Articles of Association.

(3) That consultation commence on the proposed structures as set out in the report at Section 8.2.

[Exempt under Paragraph 1 of the Act – information relates to an individual]

C18 FINANCIAL SERVICES REVIEW

Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Resources and Commissioning, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Finance, which summarised the progress made in reviewing the Council's financial services functions and puts forward proposals to establish a new operating model.

The proposals contained within the report involved a reconfiguration of resources. The new arrangements emphasised the need to focus on helping to drive the Council's business forward at a time of severe financial challenge, whilst maintaining the highest standards of stewardship of public monies.

The proposals have been aligned with those coming forward from the Council-wide Management Review.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with the structural changes were set out in detail as part of the report.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report, the staffing implications arising from the proposal and the timescales for implementation be noted.

(2) That the structural changes as set out in the report be approved.

[Exempt under Paragraph 1 of the Act – information relates to an individual]

C19 SHARED SERVICES AND STRATEGIC PARTNERING JUNE 2011

Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Resources and Commissioning, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Finance, which provided an update on progress towards the development of Shared Services and provided information of key issues that needed to be addressed in order to deliver improved Value-for-Money (VfM) for the Council from a range of business development opportunities, all of which would require changes to current strategic partnering arrangements.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with the development of shared services were set out in detail as part of the report.

Resolved:- (1) That the progression of Shared Services initiatives, subject to developments as appropriate be approved.

(2) That officers be asked to progress work with the aim of completing early current strategic partnering arrangements.

(3) That further reports be received on a timely basis to ensure the Cabinet were kept fully informed of progress on shared services and strategic partnering issues.

[Exempt under Paragraphs 1 and 3 of the Act – information relates to an individual and finance and business affairs]

C20 TRANSFORMING THE CASH COLLECTION FUNCTION

Further to Minute No. 143 of the Cabinet held on 15th December, 2010, Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Resources and Commissioning, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Finance, which provided an update on the final proposals following consultation with staff and customers.

The proposals were that the current cash collection function would be transformed to extend payment options for customers. This would realise cashable savings, in addition to supporting the Council's Customer Access Strategy and Customer Consolidation Strategy and recommendations from the Locality Review. These proposals would also enable the Council to support a number of voluntary severance requests received from secondees within the current service.

The financial information and risks and uncertainties associated with the transformation to extend payment options for customers were set out in detail as part of the report.

Cabinet Members considered a petition from some users of the service objecting to the end of the cashiering service in Wath, Rawmarsh, Kimberworth Park and Munsbrough.

The petitioners indicated they would like to:-

- Retain the front line cashiering service and offices that were the hub of the community.
- Phase in and monitor Pay Point in tandem with the front line cashiering service.
- Meaningfully involve UNISON throughout the monitoring process.

Cabinet Members reviewed the overall position.

It was emphasised that the 'PAYPOINT' Network proposed was extensively used, including by the Department of Works and Pensions to pay out benefits and would be easily accessible to every user throughout the Borough in their own locality. It would also help to retain Post Offices.

There was to be extensive staff protection and the promotion of a career grade structure.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposal to implement a payment network provider and the proposed roll out arrangements with the new service going live in August, 2011 be approved.

(2) That the proposed transformation of cash collection arrangements including changes to the provision at neighbourhood offices be approved.

(3) That the benefits that would be realised from the improvements to the service be noted.

(4) That the estimated cashable savings generated by the improved cash collection arrangements as set out in this report be noted.

[Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – information relates to finance and business affairs]

C21

CATH SALTIS

Cabinet Members referred to the retirement of Cath Saltis and thanked her for her support.

Resolved:- That Cath be wished a long and happy retirement.