

CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS
4th July, 2011

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillor Gouly (Policy Advisor).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kaye.

J11. SERVICE REVIEW - INTEGRATION OF COMMUNITY PROTECTION ENVIRO-CRIME/ ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services presented a report setting out the Service Review that had taken place on Community Protection Enviro-Crime/Enforcement Service in order to meet the budget savings as agreed at Minute No. 169 of the 23rd February, 2011, Cabinet meeting.

The integration of Enforcement Services had been undertaken not only to achieve the required budgetary reduction but also to ensure that:-

- The Service continued to be available to those in the community most in need of them
- Maximisation of the skills and knowledge capacity of the Enforcement Team
- Fit for purpose Service in light of current and future anticipated demands.

It was widely recognised that the work of the Enviro-Crime Team had been well respected within the Council, general public and with the local media recognising regularly the success of continued enforcement action. Whilst it was a frontline customer facing service, the functions undertaken were largely discretionary. The majority of the Service costs related to staff, therefore, the outcome could only be achieved by reducing the number of posts and by the flexibility of Enforcement Officers and Neighbourhood Wardens to maintain local enforcement capacity.

The Service had been reviewed and a new operating model proposed. The Enviro-Crime Team comprised of 4 Enviro-Crime Enforcement Officer posts which formed part of a complement of 16 fte Enforcement Officers. A further 7.6 fte Environmental Health Officers took a lead professional role with respect of the functions also. The Service Review had identified that 1.5 fte supervision/service support posts could be reduced; this had already been implemented with the posts being removed from the staffing establishment for 2011/12. As far as possible front line enforcement activity had been preserved with the final implementation resulting in the loss of only 1 Enforcement Officer post in 2011/12 and a further 0.5 fte post in 2012/13. All had been accommodated by retirement, voluntary severance or vacancy management.

To compensate for the reduced number of Enforcement Officer posts it was proposed, with the roll out of the Locality Review, to widen the breadth of enforcement activity by all the Community Protection Enforcement Officers to bring a more holistic working of the Team to cover all enforcement themes.

The proposal would also need greater enforcement focus by the Rotherham Wardens, an area already identified from the outcome of the Neighbourhood Warden review and being implemented by the Warden Team. Any positive reductions in the Service would therefore have a significant impact on the delivery of environmental enforcement.

During the Review and, on consideration of consultation response, it had been determined that to ensure the effectiveness of function, Licensing Enforcement would not be integrated into a holistic enforcement role. The alignment of the Licensing Enforcement function would form part of the considerations of the management review.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Officers within the Community Protection Unit were to be considered as part of the re-integration of the Council House Management Services.

Resolved:- (1) That, following consultation, the outcome of the review of the integration of enforcement activities within the Safer Neighbourhoods Team be noted.

(2) That the consequent achievement of the efficiency savings for 2011/12 and also from 2012/13 where identified plans for the required revenue budget reductions had been made be noted.

J12. BOROUGH-WIDE DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACES ORDER

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report reviewing the need for a Borough-wide Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) following a recommendation from the Safer Rotherham Partnership's Violent Crime Priority Group.

Such Orders were made under discretionary powers given to local authorities by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 to deal with the problems of anti-social alcohol drinking in public places where alcohol-related anti-social behaviour had been experienced. Once a DPPO was adopted, it remained permanently in force for the designated area. In such designated areas, it was not an offence to consume alcohol but where such drinking was causing anti-social behaviour, a Police Officer, Police Community Support Officer or Special Constable, had the power to confiscate the alcohol, including any unopened containers. Failure to comply with an Officer's request to stop drinking and surrender alcohol without reasonable excuse could lead to arrest.

Since the report had been written, the South Yorkshire Police had stated that they would wish to see a Borough-wide Exclusion Zone. It was proposed that discussions take place requesting evidence to support their proposal.

Resolved:- (1) That discussions take place with South Yorkshire Police with regard to supporting evidence for a Borough-wide Designated Public Places Order.

(2) That further consultation take place with the Joint Action Group of the Safer Rotherham Partnership prior to submission of a revised report.

J13. 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council)).

J14. REPLACEMENT OF HOUSING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted proposals to continue the procurement exercise relating to the Integrated Housing Management Information System.

The current social housing process was managed between disparate departments over multiple systems across both 2010 Rotherham Ltd. and RMBC Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate. The lack of effective information transfer between systems had resulted in an increased administration burden to both support the individual system and to manage the consistency and transfer of data from 1 system to the other.

In order to make the current systems fit for purpose and up to modern standards, significant investment would need to be made.

The total project acquisition costs were set out on the report together with ongoing support and maintenance and cost/benefit analysis.

Resolved:- (1) That the price proposal and refined business case showing full cost benefits analysis be noted.

(2) That a project management board be established.

(3) That capital project costs amounting to no more than £860,000 be approved in line with a payment profile that would need to be agreed and discussed as part of the commercial discussions.