

**SELF REGULATION SELECT COMMISSION**  
**8th March, 2012**

Present:- Councillor Hughes (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Beck, Currie, Ellis, J. Hamilton, N. Hamilton, Mannion, Sharman and Swift.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Donaldson, Parker and Tweed.

**60. COMMUNICATIONS.**

Information was provided relating to the Budget Sub-Group.

**61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest to report.

**62. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.**

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

**63. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 26TH JANUARY AND 28TH FEBRUARY, 2012**

Resolved:- (1) That the minutes of the meeting of the Self Regulation Select Commission held on 26th January, and 28th February, 2012 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

(2) That a report on the Budget Consultation be submitted to the next meeting.

**64. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Stuart Purcell, Performance Officer, Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, which gave information about complaints made between 1st April, 2010 and 31st March 2011 under the complaints and representations procedures established through the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 (Making Experiences Count).

The report explained the details and trends in complaints experienced by the Directorate over the year and the improvements that had been made both in the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Complaints service and the Directorate as a whole.

The figures in the report included details of the number of customers and the number of complaints they had made. The information was presented by Service Area, by resolution category and by escalation stage, including Local Government Ombudsman.

**100%** of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales, the number of complaints received had reduced from **169** to **113** and the number of complaint escalating from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the complaint procedure had reduced from **26** in 2009/10 to **9** in 2010/11.

Although positive management of complaints could be achieved, the number and type of complaints received was determined by circumstances beyond the control of the service. Regardless of any external factors the service was required to maintain a high level of performance and excellent customer care.

The current financial decisions the Authority was making would also affect the number of complaints received, changes to services drive the level of complaints received.

Reports relating to Children and Young People's Services and Environment and Development Services were submitted by Sue Wilson, Performance and Quality Manager.

The report for Children and Young People's Services outlined performance for complaints in Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) for the period April to September, 2011, along with comparison to 2007/2008, 2008/2009 and 2009/2010.

Between 1st April, 2011 and 30th September 2011, 38 people made 217 complaint points which were dealt with at Stage 1, 2 people made 27 complaint points which were dealt with at Stage 2. No complaints were escalated to Stage 3.

The report for Environment and Development Services detailed performance statistics against the Environment and Development Services Customer First Charter and suggested recommendations for improvement where necessary for the period 1st July – 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011

Each report was considered section by section and Members made a number of comments and suggestions.

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

(2) That the comments and suggestions made by Members be fed back to the appropriate officers for action.

## 65. CORPORATE PLAN OUTCOMES

Consideration was given to a report submitted by Sue Wilson, Performance and Quality Manager, which provided an analysis of the Council's current performance against the 29 key delivery outcomes contained within the Corporate Plan. It was a position statement based on available performance measures together with an analysis of progress on key projects and activities which contribute to delivery of the plan.

The current position was:

Red	<b>3</b> outcomes requiring major intervention at SLT level
Amber	<b>17</b> outcomes requiring intervention at Directorate level
Green	<b>9</b> outcomes requiring no intervention at this time

The report aimed to highlight the various economic and political influences including changes in national policy and funding which were already, or could potentially impact, on the performance of the corporate plan outcomes.

In light of the extreme financial situation and ongoing budget savings the Council's performance in delivering corporate outcomes was holding up well. There was always the risk that Government changes in policy and further cuts in funding would have a further impact. However, in Rotherham we have identified a number of corporate priority outcomes which matter at a local level.

More work was recommended in terms of assessing and delivering improvements in some of the most deprived communities. Further work was also recommended to assess the full impact of changes in the welfare reform area to understand how it will impact on vulnerable communities and families.

The report was considered section by section and Members made a number of comments and suggestions.

Resolved:- (1) That the current position against each of the Corporate Plan outcomes, to ensure implementation of the proposed interventions and corrective actions, be noted.

(2) That the change in ownership of Outcome 21 *"More people are physically active and have a healthy way of life"* as proposed in the report be noted.

(3) That the work which had commenced to provide high level monitoring of *"the way we do business"* principles and *"are we making a difference"* outlined in the report be noted.

(4) That the performance issues outlined in Appendix 2 be kept under close review to prevent amber outcomes becoming rated red.

(5) That a review similar to that of Barnsley MBC be undertaken within Rotherham to help identify the potential impact the welfare reform would have on the local economy.

(6) That work be undertaken to assess performance of the eleven communities identified as part of the "Targeting resources to our most deprived neighbourhoods" project.

(7) That the comments and suggestions made by Members be fed back to the appropriate officers for action.

## **66. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2011**

Pete Hudson, Chief Finance Manager, presented the submitted report which stated that, in setting the 2011/12 Revenue Budget the Council had to manage an unprecedented level of savings (£30.3m) resulting from the withdrawal of Central Government funding and grant allocations.

Details were provided of progress on the delivery of the Revenue Budget for 2011/12 based on performance for the first nine months of the 2011/12 financial year. It was currently forecasted that the Council would overspend against its Budget by £3.066m (+1.4%). This showed a decrease in the forecast overspend of £4.271m compared to the budget monitoring report for the first eight months of 2011/12. The main reasons for the forecast overspend were:-

- The continuing service demand and cost pressures in looking after vulnerable children across the Borough;
- Additional, one-off property costs relating to the continued rationalisation of the Council's asset portfolio as part of the efficiency drive to reduce operational costs; and
- The extended timescale for realising the full forecast management and business support savings target of £1.45m and slippage in delivering the savings target for Shared Services (£500k).

In arriving at the revised forecast overspend of £3.066 m, the above pressures were mitigated through the proposed closure of some reserves, additional income, use of contingency and in-year slippage against the Riverside House budget.

Management actions had been put in place to address some of the issues identified to date and work was being undertaken to identify further actions. As these took effect they would be monitored to enable the impact of the actions to be assessed. Careful scrutiny of expenditure and income across all services and close budget monitoring therefore remained essential.

Members asked a number of questions which were answered.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress made to date in delivering the significant financial challenges presented in the Council's Revenue Budget be noted.

(2) That further actions be taken by Directorates so as to minimise the impact on the Council's medium term financial position.

(3) That the use, and where appropriate closure of the reserves included in Appendix 2, to mitigate the forecast overspend, be noted.

## **67. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

Consideration was given to a report submitted by Colin Earl, Director of Audit and Governance, which showed the risks associated with the Council's most significant priorities and projects, and actions being taken to mitigate these risks.

The Council's key current risks continued to relate to the financial pressures faced by the Council. The report summarised the management actions that were being taken to mitigate these and other risks in the register.

It was important to review corporate risks on an ongoing basis, to ensure risks relating to the Council's key projects and priorities were effectively monitored and managed by the Strategic Leadership Team and Members.

Resolved:- (1) That the corporate risk register summary be noted.

(2) That the Council's top four corporate risks current assessment be noted.

(3) That any further risks identified be added to the risk register.

(4) That an update on Digital Region be given at the next meeting.

**68. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That the next scheduled meeting take place on Thursday, 19th April, 2012 at 3.30 p.m.