

THE CABINET
9th November, 2011

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

Also in attendance Councillor Whelbourn (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hussain.

C92 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public asked how, with the chaos at the Border Agency, the Council was proposing to protect the town from the criminals that were coming in?

The Leader was of the view that a good job was being done to protect Rotherham's citizens.

In a supplementary question the member of the public asked about the apparent increase in Rotherham of immigrants and migrant workers?

The Leader pointed out that a warm welcome was afforded to all those who wanted to come to Rotherham to work and live.

C93 DIABETES SCRUTINY REVIEW

Councillor Jack, Chair of the Health Select Commission and a member of the Scrutiny Review Group, introduced a report by the Chief Executive, that detailed that as part of its 2010/11 work programme, the former Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel set up a review group to examine patient experience of care and support in relation to the diagnosis and management of diabetes in Rotherham.

The full report set out the background to the review and full recommendations for consideration and approval by Cabinet Members.

The indicative timetable for the onward consideration of the review and its recommendations were that:-

- Following ratification by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, it was proposed to forward the report and recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board to comment on and endorse before further action was taken.
- Progress on the review's recommendations would be monitored by the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update in six months to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, with further exception reporting as necessary to the Health Select Commission should further work be required

A number of the review recommendations may have financial implications, but it was considered that these would remain within existing budgets and resources in NHSR and GP commissioning once established. Costs in relation to the prevention and public health agenda were not yet certain and further guidance would be sought from NHSR as the Council moved forward to leading on public health.

There were approximately 11,600 people diagnosed with diabetes in Rotherham, with around 4,000 undiagnosed cases, which highlighted the need for awareness raising and education in relation to early symptoms in high risk groups. Obesity and unhealthy lifestyles were prevalent in Rotherham, along with high levels of deprivation; raising awareness of these risk factors and focusing on prevention was needed to reduce the rise in diabetes.

Dr. Radford also concluded that diabetes was a huge problem for Rotherham and stressed the importance of awareness raising about treatment to assist with improving life expectancy.

Cabinet Members welcomed this report, the contents of which would be considered in detail.

Resolved:- (1) That the Scrutiny Review of Diabetes and its recommendations be endorsed.

(2) That the recommendations be forwarded to the Health and Wellbeing Board for information, to ensure appropriate inclusion in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and relevant commissioning plans.

(3) That all those involved in the review be thanked for their efforts.

C94 TARGETING AND CO-ORDINATING RESOURCES TO THE MOST DEPRIVED AREAS

The Leader introduced a report by the Chief Executive, which referred to the Corporate Plan priority 'making sure no community is left behind', which was key to the work in tackling deprivation. In recent months there had been much discussion on how the Council and partners were addressing the challenges of Rotherham's most deprived areas. This had been highlighted following the recent publication of the Indices of Deprivation results which revealed that deprivation had deteriorated in many parts of Rotherham.

The report, therefore, set out a range of options to consider in helping target deprivation and highlighted the need to do things differently, whilst also building upon previous approaches, both locally and further afield, to ensure lessons were learnt.

Further information was provided on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation report, learning from local and national strategies, recommended approach for each targeted area and proposed corporate governance arrangements.

In excess of a billion pounds was spent by the public sector in Rotherham each year. The challenge was to assess how effective the Council and partners were able to redirect their resources into some of the most deprived communities. This was not about additional resources, but about exploring more cost effective solutions and challenging and changing the way things were done in Rotherham.

It would be important to identify total spending resources committed to dealing with issues in an area to see how they could be used to better effect. This was about looking at what each partner could directly resource and contribute to an area, but also where additional resources may need to be provided to deliver longer term outcomes.

The role of the third sector may also be able to provide a pivotal role in delivery. It was not clear what the sector currently offered in each area, but there was already a wealth of organisations, formal and informal organised, which could provide much needed early interventions and activities for some of the most vulnerable individuals and families.

Other revenue sources such as Lottery, European funding and voluntary sector infrastructure and advice services could also be explored and re-commissioned where needed.

One aspect to consider for each area was the creation of a small pot of money which could be accessed by community groups to help support specific initiatives. A few hundred pounds given to a community group could make a real difference and lasting impact on an area.

There was no single solution to these areas. Each one was unique, the issues were long term, deep rooted and complex. However, there were many case studies where real progress had been made. Similarly, there were a number of barriers which regularly surfaced which impeded partnership activity.

Cabinet Members welcomed this report and the opportunity to become more focused on the targeted neighbourhood approach to ensure ownership, accountability and outcome centred.

There was a clear need to explore further how Area Assemblies could support the role of the neighbourhood action groups and other associated community groups in order to build up on the success of the Local Ambition Programme with the support of a political and Strategic Leadership Team lead to ensure ownership, leadership and to assist with making things happen at a local level.

It was also noted that the Localism Bill would be central to the work by providing greater powers to local authorities and communities to focus attention at more local issues and to challenge service delivery at a local level.

Resolved:- (1) That the approach to targeting and co-ordinating resources into the most deprived areas be approved.

(2) That an assessment be made of the number of targeted areas which required a sustained, long term partnership approach.

(3) That a Cabinet Member and a Strategic Leadership Team lead officer be assigned to each targeted area to ensure ownership, leadership and to make things happen at a local level.

(4) That the potential future implications on area assembly and partnership working be noted and consideration be given as to whether it was timely to move away from a standard borough wide approach to a more targeted approach for allocating resources to areas of greatest need.

(5) That finance be commissioned to identify a baseline position of total spend and resources in each of the areas, including partner contributions.

(6) That a further report be presented to the Local Strategic Partnership Chief Executive Group setting out areas where partners were able to influence services in the targeted areas.

C95 CHILDREN'S PEER CHALLENGE OCTOBER 2011

Councillor Lakin, Cabinet Member for Safeguarding Children and Adults, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services, which detailed how the Directorate had undergone a Peer Challenge facilitated by Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) from the 3rd to 7th October, 2011. The key focus of the challenge was safeguarding, an additional focus of looked after children was added as one of the Peers had experience in other local authorities of working with looked after children. Four additional discretionary themes were included at Rotherham's request to provide an independent view on progress around these particular areas.

The week concluded with a feedback and prioritisation conference on Friday, 7th October, 2011 where the Peer Challenge Team summarised their findings, identified what they perceived as strengths and areas for consideration.

The actions and recommendations arising from the Peer Challenge were being fed into the existing Improvement Panel action plan that continued to be monitored following removal of the intervention notice in January, 2011.

Further summary information was also provided on:-

- Overall Strengths.
- Areas for Overall Consideration.
- Looked After Children.
- The four additional themes.

The LGID now carried out the peer challenges free of charge. There was, however, some costs associated with ICT set up, refreshments and room bookings for the reviewers during the on site week. It was anticipated that the total cost of this has been in the region of £2,000.

The completed report would be shared with partners involved in the challenge as well as the Department for Education, but would not feed into any formal OFSTED Children's Services Assessments ratings. However, it could be shared as evidence with OFSTED to demonstrate the continued direction of travel.

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

(2) That the actions be included in the monitoring arrangements of the Improvement Panel.

(3) That all staff involved in the improvements be thanked for their efforts.

C96 MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS MONITORING REPORT 2011/12

Further to Minute No. 23 of the Audit Committee held on 19th October, 2011 Councillor Akhtar, Deputy Leader, introduced a report by the Strategic Director of Finance, which provided a mid-year Treasury Review, as required in the Regulatory Framework of Treasury Management (2009). The report also fulfilled the requirement of the Prudential Code to ensure adequate monitoring of capital expenditure plans and activity. It also encompassed economic outlook and actual and proposed borrowing and investment.

The assumptions supporting the capital financing budget for 2011/12 and for future years covered by the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy were reviewed in light of economic and financial conditions and the future years' capital programme.

The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy was not forecast to have any further revenue consequences other than those identified and planned for in both the Council's 2011/12 Revenue Budget and approved Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Regular monitoring would ensure that risks and uncertainties were addressed at an early stage and hence kept to a minimum.

Cabinet Members noted that the actual expenditure in 2010/11 was less than anticipated and thus the increase in borrowing needed for 2011/12 reflected the re-profiling of projects within the approved capital programme, together with new approvals.

(1) Resolved:- That treasury activity be noted.

(2) Recommended:- That the changes to prudential indicators be approved.

C97 MANAGEMENT REVIEW CONSULTATION

Councillor Akhtar, Deputy Leader, introduced a report by the Chief Executive, which provides an update on the progress made in reviewing the Council's management arrangements to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. These proposals were designed to help achieve better outcomes for citizens while being flexible and robust enough to respond to the changing national policy agenda.

The Council had already taken a proactive stance to minimise the impact of the reductions in central government funding. Through careful stewardship and the support of Elected Members, colleagues and Trades Unions major employee relations issues evident in some Councils have managed to be avoided and minimised the need for compulsory redundancies.

Consultation had taken place with the management cohort on the proposals set out in this report and a headline structure has been drafted following extensive consideration by the Strategic Leadership Team, individually and as a group.

This report provided an update at the end of the consultation period and gave the latest position in respect of interest shown in the short term opportunity to apply for the Voluntary Redundancy programme which closed on the 19th August, 2011.

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

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

(2) That the actions from this first phase of implementation, up to and including M3 manager and senior professional level appointments be approved.