

## **Commissioner and Managing Director Stella Manzie**

Report to Commissioners' Quarterly Public Meeting, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015

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As Commissioner and Managing Director, my role is on the one hand to act as the Council's lead operational manager (the functions which would normally be fulfilled by the Chief Executive), and on the other, to exercise Executive Cabinet powers in relation to Adult Social Care, Culture, Leisure and Heritage, Education, Environment, Health and Well-being and Housing Services (other than strategic regeneration). In both these roles I have worked closely with the Leader of the Council Cllr Christopher Read and Lead Commissioner Derek Myers.

Within the Commissioners' mission statement, I lead for the following areas:

- *A well-performing council. Reviewing and strengthening other services; ensuring a deliverable forward strategy; a productive working culture. (Mission outcome 6)*
- *A successful Improvement Plan. Others care about Rotherham's progress. We want to ensure credible, honest progress is recognized. (Mission outcome 7).*
- *Integrated Health and Social Care. Ensuring good care and a high quality health service within available budgets. (Mission outcome 9).*

My report is grouped under the three outcomes I lead.

### **1. A well-performing council. Reviewing and strengthening other services; ensuring a deliverable forward strategy; a productive working culture. (Mission outcome 6)**

1.1 Commissioners having been appointed with a specific role for the Managing Director Commissioner, it was important for me to establish key management routines and standards and ensure the authority continued to deliver day to day services uninterrupted, while at the same time taking steps to improve standards and practice. In doing this I was taking over from Interim Chief Executive Jan Ormondroyd who had held the authority together during a period of extreme disruption and instability. In my day to day operation, I have worked closely with the Leader of the Council, Cllr Christopher Read and the lead Commissioner Sir Derek Myers.

1.2 All the actions I have taken have been designed to create an improved working culture by:

- Establishing higher quality standards in day to day processes
- Emphasising the importance of the Council workforce together as a single organisation.
- Injecting pace and energy where required
- Reinforcing the understanding of the impact of democratic local politics on issues (even though we as commissioners are not acting party politically)

- Tackling blockages to efficient working
- Continuing to get the day to day business of the council done and make progression some strategic issues.

1.3 I have drawn attention repeatedly to the dictionary definition of the word “corporate” (acting as one body).

### **Day to day management arrangements**

1.4 I have adapted the existing Strategic Leadership Team operational arrangements to make them more effective e.g. weeks alternated with formal meeting with papers and short information exchange meetings, to ensure decent quality of papers and time to plan, manage and deliver commitments.

1.5 I have introduced arrangements for all the most senior managers (Strategic Directors and Directors) to meet together regularly to discuss the authority’s progress and how they are contributing to it.

1.6 I have adapted existing meeting arrangements for senior middle managers (known as M3s) led by me and Strategic Directors to ensure purposeful meetings linked to the day to day management and improvement and culture change agenda – key messages, all part of getting managers in different parts of the organization to see themselves as part of a single local authority.

### **Communication with the workforce**

1.7 I have either reinforced or introduced a series of mechanisms to improve communication of the Council’s objectives, in particular at a time when Commissioners are in place. In doing so I have emphasised the importance of supporting efforts to improve children’s services and the need to improve the Council’s practice overall. These mechanisms have included:

- Continuing the weekly email Management brief started by the interim Chief Executive
- Reintroducing a hard copy newsletter Take 5, directed at staff who are not “screen – based” in their day to day work
- Maintaining visibility and encouraging approachability towards the most senior manager of the Council through a series of face to face discussions – see below
- Visits - coverage of every floor of Riverside House by 19<sup>th</sup> June; Hellaby Depot drainage, green waste; Oak Lane grounds maintenance
- A rolling programme of staff briefings on the Improvement Plan, Organisational Review and staff feedback in different locations – e.g. Riverside House, Swinton, Hellaby depot,
- Face to face meetings with specific groups affected by reorganisation proposals e.g. Democratic Services, Communications and Marketing.

## **Decision-making and quality assurance**

- 1.8 I have intervened in relation to standards of complaint handling and responses sent to the public and MPs – there is a central co-ordination function in relation to complaints – through its manager I have been working to establish new quality standards both from them and from the generators of complaint responses within services. Very shortly there will be thematic reports linked to improvement of services.
- 1.9 There is a constant process of challenge of the standard of decision-making reports to myself and commissioners and as if the papers were reporting to Elected Members. Advisory Cabinet Members in the areas for which I am taking executive decisions are contributing to this process very helpfully and effectively. The standard of information and presentation of reports is improving but is still not at the right standard. This is linked to the review of report structures in the Improvement Plan.

## **Establishing a more corporate approach to the handling of the corporate budget – making process**

- 1.10 Commissioner Myers has taken the lead in the framework and approach to the budgeting process and my support to him in this has been to seek to ensure that there is a proper transparent corporate approach not just led by Finance but with proper input from services manifested in a corporate working group supporting the process and ensuring transparency of the impact overall on the organisation and facilitating better advice to Commissioners and Elected Members.

## **Principles of performance management**

- 1.11 Following the analysis in the Casey report, that in the previous year only 62% of appraisals (known as PDRs) had been completed in the authority, in conjunction with HR colleagues we have put in place a major drive towards increasing completion of individual PDRs by managers. This does not of course guarantee quality, but completing the appraisals and making them an expectation, is the first step towards high quality performance management.
- 1.12 The next important steps in this process will be the creation of a vision for Rotherham, being led by the Leader of the Council and Commissioner Myers which will provide the focus for performance and achievement, and the creation of a Corporate Performance Framework which will provide the framework of performance measures (qualitative and quantitative ) against which to measure progress.
- 1.13 While the headings set out above cover a number of key aspects of day to day working on which we have embarked, the reference in Outcome 6 to “reviewing and strengthening other services” will be picked up in the sections of the Improvement Plan described below, which relate to

“health checks” for most services across the Council, to ensure general effectiveness.

**2. A successful Improvement Plan. Others care about Rotherham’s progress. We want to ensure credible, honest progress is recognised. (Mission Outcome 7)**

2.1 As indicated by the Secretaries of States in their directions, the corporate Improvement Plan, a sister plan to the already existing Children and Young People’s Improvement Plan was completed and sent to the Secretaries of State for Communities and Local Government and for Education on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015, three months from the appointment of the Commissioners. This was a major piece of work. Progress on some of the tasks within the plan has already begun and now the real focus is on implementation of the whole plan against the timescales it sets out. The plan is available on the Council’s website.

2.2 The four themes under which actions are grouped, are:

- Inspirational political and managerial leadership
- Robust governance, decision-making and performance management
- Culture of excellence and outstanding implementation
- Strong, high impact partnerships.

2.3 The headline outcomes which the Plan is using for working purposes prior to the agreement of an overall vision are:

- Rotherham is a child – centred Borough where young people are supported by their families and their community and are protected from harm
- A place where there is trust and confidence in the Council and how it takes its decisions
- A well-run, aspirational and high –performing council, turning strategies into actions which make a difference
- Purposeful partnerships engaging well with Rotherham’s citizens.

2.4 The Plan sets out timescales and responsibilities and a series of mechanisms for measuring success and impact. These now need to be linked specifically to the objectives. Progress will be reported to a governance board made up of the Leader of the Council, a small group of Elected Members and Commissioners other than myself. Of course progress generally will need to be reported to the Secretaries of State on agreed timescales. It will be critical to make significant progress by the time of the all-out elections in 2016.

2.5 One of the key elements of the Improvement Plan has been the production of an organisational review to make sure sufficient senior staff, including a new Chief Executive, can be recruited to take the organisation forward. This was agreed by Rotherham’s Council on 4<sup>th</sup>

June and will now be implemented in stages as part of the Improvement Plan.

### **3. Integrated Health and Social Care. Ensuring good care and a high quality health service within available budgets (Mission Outcome 9)**

#### **Installing operational arrangements**

- 3.1 At the time of the Commissioners' arrival there no Strategic Director responsible for Adult Social Care and the key next level down postholder, Director of Adult Social Care, was moving to a promotional post in another local authority. Therefore the most urgent task was to appoint an Interim to be the most senior responsible for Adult Social Care. This was done, with an experienced senior social care and health leader and adviser arriving in April. He is reviewing the structure and operation of Adult Social Care and has already contributed his views on the high level structure to the overall Organisational Review mentioned under the Improvement Plan.

#### **Governance of the Health and Well-being Board**

- 3.2 Significant progress has been made on this by Advisory Cabinet Member Cllr Roche and myself, in conjunction with Dr Julie Kitlowski(Chair) and Chris Edwards (Chief Executive) of Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The Board itself had a very helpful session in March to look at its governance and how it operated and agreed a range of measures designed to get the balance between the Board having a governance link to the Council but with all the essential characteristics of a high – functioning partnership body. Symbolic measures of this have been the decision to vary the venues for the Board meetings away from only Council venues to having the Chair of the Board being the Cabinet Member for Health and Well-being, but the Vice – Chair working in close collaboration, being the Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group. A very helpful joint meeting has taken place to decide the detail of how this will actually work.

#### **Operation of the Health and Well-being Board including production of new strategy**

- 3.3 The Board is now working on producing a new strategy which gives the proper place and emphasis to children and young people where previously it did not. There is a lot more work to be done on this but the target date for completion is the end of September and other Commissioners and Advisory Cabinet Members will be engaged in that process.
- 3.4 An example of effective operation of the Health and Well-being Board was the practical and moving special meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May receiving an independent report on suicide and self–harm and looking at the Borough's Suicide Prevention Plan and Community Response Plan. The meeting

took place in public and involved parents whose sons had committed suicide, who contributed bravely and effectively to the discussion. There had been considerable input from local Elected Members Councillors Ellis, Hoddinott and Read who had raised the alarm a few years' ago, when a number of suicides and self-harm incidents had taken place. In more recent times there has been good collaboration between the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services and Acting Director of Public Health, and Advisory Cabinet Members Roche and Watson in preparation for the meeting.

### **Improving joint working between Adult Social Care and Health**

3.5 It has been acknowledged by both Adult Social Care and health colleagues that historically there have been tensions sometimes caused by personalities, sometimes by history and practice. There is however a committed resolve to changing that situation. There is already a scheduled session for the senior teams and Advisory Cabinet Member and Chair to discuss the longer term strategic direction of the Better Care Fund as well as a number of discussions on day to day services. This will need to be progressed further as changes take place in the management of Adult Social Care Services by the Council.

### **Conclusion**

The steps set out in this report are foundation steps after three months of Commissioner activity, in some cases very basic but important. There is extensive work which needs to be done and the length of time taken to achieve real cultural change cannot be under-estimated. However progress is being made and many staff are welcoming the changes which have been made and are committed to doing everything possible to increasing the Council's performance. I look forward to being able to report future positive progress.

**Stella Manzie CBE**  
**Commissioner Managing Director**