

**COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Wednesday, 12th July, 2017**

Present:- The Mayor of Rotherham (Councillor Eve Rose Keenan) (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allcock, Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Bird, Brookes, Buckley, Carter, Clark, Cooksey, Cowles, Cusworth, B. Cutts, D. Cutts, Elliot, M. Elliott, R. Elliott, Ellis, Evans, Fenwick-Green, Hague, Hoddinott, Ireland, Jarvis, Jepson, Jones, Khan, Mallinder, Marles, Napper, Pitchley, Read, Reeder, Roche, Rushforth, Russell, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Steele, Taylor, John Turner, Julie Turner, Tweed, Vjestica, Walsh, Watson, Wilson, Wyatt and Yasseen.

**25. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor welcomed all in attendance at the meeting and made special reference to the presence of members of the Rotherham Youth Cabinet.

In opening the meeting, the Mayor invited all Members to reflect in silence on the tragedies in both London and Manchester which had occurred since the previous Council meeting. The Council rose to stand in silent tribute to the victims of the terrorist attacks.

The Mayor invited Members to join with her in paying tribute to the Vicar of Rotherham, Canon David Bliss, who was shortly to retire from his ministry in the town. On behalf of the people of the town and all Members of the Council, the Mayor thanked Canon Bliss for his service and presented him with a token of thanks on behalf of the Council and the people of Rotherham. Canon Bliss responded in kind to thank the Mayor for her kind words and to thank Members and the people of Rotherham for their support for his ministry in the town.

The Mayor reported that since 19 May 2017 she had undertaken 93 engagements and was pleased to highlight the Vintage Tea Party for the Veterans which took place in June and referred to one veteran who had told her that he had buried his wife of 64 years the day before the event. The Mayor indicated that she had never felt so humble in her life and referred to the prestige in which the office of Mayor of Rotherham was held by the people of the Borough.

The Leader of the Council indicated that he had no announcements to report to the meeting.

**26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chief Executive reported that Councillors Allen, Lelliott, Marriott, McNeely, Price Sansome, Senior and Whysall had submitted apologies for the meeting.

**27. PETITIONS**

It was reported that five petitions had been received by the Council since the previous meeting. The petitions received covered the following issues:-

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Number of Signatures</b>
Access into Beech Road, Avenue Road and Sandymount Road through the removal of a pub fence to facilitate a safer walking route	313
Against residents of No. 62 Thomas Street, Swinton	17
Wales High School's request for the roads around the school site to be free from congestion and dangerous parking	1792
Action to improve road safety around Thrybergh Primary School.	304
Removal of the Heras fencing around The Meadows and The Pastures, Todwick	189

It was noted that none of the lead petitioners were present to address the meeting on the call for action in each petition. It was reported each petition would be responded to by the appropriate Strategic Director and the petition in respect for Wales High School had met the threshold to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

**Resolved:-**

That the petitions received by the Council be noted.

**28. COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor reported that a recommendation had been received from the Cabinet following its meeting on 10 July 2017 in respect of the 'Interim Review of Polling Places 2017' and would be put forward for determination later on the agenda.

**29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Monitoring Officer provided advice to all Members of the Council in respect of the agenda item concerning the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Member Allowances.

Councillor Carter declared a personal interest in respect of the Minute No. 40 (Notice of Motion – NHS) on the basis of his employment in the NHS.

Councillor Wyatt declared a personal interest respect of the Minute No. 40 (Notice of Motion – NHS) on the basis of his spouse’s employment.

**30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 19 May 2017 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

**31. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

It was reported that no questions had been received from the public.

**32. MINUTES OF CABINET AND COMMISSIONERS' DECISION MAKING MEETINGS**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting held on 15 May 2017 be noted.

**33. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting on 15 May 2017 which sought the adoption and approval of the Asset Management Policy and Strategy.

It was reported that Commissioner Kenny had recommended approval of the Asset Management and Policy Strategy to guide the use of the Council's Land and Property Assets. The proposed approach to the management, usage and development of the Council's Land and Property Assets supported the Council's Corporate Plan and the Asset Management Improvement Plan.

**Resolved:-**

That the Asset Management Policy and Strategy be approved and adopted.

**34. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - COUNCIL PLAN 2017 - 2020**

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting held on 26 June 2017 in respect of the adoption and approval of the Council Plan for the period from 2017 to 2020.

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It was reported that the Cabinet recommended the Council Plan as the core document that underpinned the Council's overall vision, setting out headline priorities, indicators and measures that would demonstrate its delivery.

In presenting the plan for approval, Cabinet Members set out the key priorities within their portfolios for the three year period covered by the plan and reflected on the achievements in the previous plan which had covered the previous year 2016-17.

### **Resolved:-**

That the Council Plan 2017-2020 be approved.

### **35. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION - STANDING ORDERS**

Consideration was given to recommendations from the Standards and Ethics Committee concerning proposed amendments to the Constitution, specifically in respect of Standing Orders governing the conduct of Council and committee meeting.

In view of the report failing to reflect two recommendations from the Constitution Working Group, the Council determined to defer consideration of the proposals at its next meeting on 13 September 2017.

Councillor Jepson referred to the proposal within the report in respect of the number of Members required to initiate a recorded vote and asked if the Leader of the Council could revisit this proposal before re-submitting to the Council meeting on 13 September 2017.

Councillor Carter asked the Leader of the Council whether it would be possible for Members Questions to be brought forward on the Council Agenda to follow Public Questions to demonstrate democratic accountability.

### **Resolved:-**

That consideration of the recommendation from the Standards and Ethics Committee be deferred until 13 September 2017.

### **36. PROPOSED AMENDMENT - MEMBER ALLOWANCES SCHEME**

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel concerning a proposed reduction in the level of allowances for Members to reflect the recent reduction in the salaries of employees of the authority.

It was reported that the Independent Remuneration Panel had expressed support for a proposed reduction of 1.15% to be applied to both the basic and special responsibility allowances paid to Members. It was recommended that the effective date for the reductions be agreed as 1 April 2017, so as to be commensurate with the reduction in staff salaries which were effective from that date.

Members expressed broad support for the proposal to reduce the level of allowances paid to Councillors in the Borough. A concern was highlighted in respect of the continuing reduction in allowances and the potential negative impact on attracting younger people to stand as a candidates for election to the Council.

**Resolved:-**

1. That the Basic Allowance for Members be reduced by 1.15% from £11,605 to £11,471, with the reduction to be effective from 1 April 2017.
2. That Special Responsibility Allowances be reduced by 1.15%, with the reduction to be effective from 1 April 2017.
3. That Appendix 8 of the Constitution, detailing the Member Allowances Scheme, be updated accordingly.

**37. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17**

Consideration was given to the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for the 2016-17 municipal year, which was presented by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

It was noted that the Annual Report provided a retrospective look over the past year in terms of work completed and outcomes achieved. It offered a look ahead for the coming municipal year in terms of future priorities through a headline work programme. Members further noted that the report provided a further opportunity to provide vital information to Members, officers, partner agencies and the general public about the role and work of Scrutiny and to formally thank the co-optees for their contributions.

The gratitude of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to all those who had been involved in the previous year and embedding the new pre-decision scrutiny arrangements was expressed and supported by Members.

**Resolved:-**

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2016-17 be approved.

**38. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO COMMITTEES, BOARDS, PANELS AND OTHER BODIES**

Consideration was given to a report which detailed a proposed change in the membership of the Standards and Ethics Committee and appointments to other bodies within the Council's governance framework.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Councillor Jeanette Mallinder replace Councillor Tajamal Khan on the Standards and Ethics Committee.
2. That the schedule of appointments to other bodies be approved.

**39. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND'S REVIEW OF WARD BOUNDARIES IN ROTHERHAM**

Consideration was given to a report detailing the recommended warding scheme for the Borough from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

It was reported that the Commission's proposals had been published on 4 July 2017 and confirmed that there should be 59 councillors in the Borough elected from 25 Wards, which would be four Wards more, but four councillors fewer than there were presently. The Commission also proposed changes to all of the current Ward boundaries in the Borough. The report detailed what would be involved in the next stage of the review and outlined a recommended approach for the Council to respond to the proposals from the LGBCE by way of delegating authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Constitution Working Group, to respond formally to the consultation.

**Resolved:-**

1. That the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Rotherham be noted.
2. That the timetable for the remainder of the Ward boundary review be noted.
3. That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Constitution Working Group, to submit a response on behalf of the Council in respect of warding arrangements to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

**40. NOTICE OF MOTION - NHS**

Proposed by Councillor Cooksey and seconded by Councillor Sheppard:-

This Council recognises that our NHS is struggling to cope. Earlier this year the Red Cross described the situation as a 'humanitarian crisis' and more than twenty hospitals in England declared 'black alert' as they faced unprecedented pressure on their services.

At present here in Rotherham 12% of patients in the area are waiting more than four hours to be seen in A&E thereby exceeding the official target of 5%. Moreover, there is a £571m funding gap for the NHS locally.

The government plans to deal with waiting times and deficits, such as the one in our area, by setting up 44 Footprint Areas across the UK including one for South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw to prepare its Sustainability and Transformation Plan which will:-

1. Contribute to cuts of at least £2.5bn nationally this year, and £22bn within the next five years, to wipe out the NHS's so-called financial deficit.
2. Achieve this by implementing 'new models of care' that are set out in NHS England's 5-Year Forward View (2014).
3. By NHS England's own admission, thus provide an "enormous opportunity" to the private sector.

We welcome the focus in the STP on prevention, mental health and primary and community care. We recognise the important proposals set out in Rotherham's Health and Adult Social Care Plan to ensure that health and social care work more closely together to better support people who need these services. However, the government's promise of investment in these areas is just not credible when the plans set to deliver such huge cuts in public spending.

Drastic underfunding and privatisation go hand in hand. Whilst the internal market of the NHS wastes at least £4.5bn a year, cuts and crisis in turn pave the way for more of our NHS to be privatised.

In view of the limitations NHS bodies have to oppose these cuts, as opposition could risk losing access to the £8bn NHS Transformation Fund, we recognise that as a local authority we are in a strong position to make clear our opposition to the proposed cuts to expenditure.

We therefore resolve to:-

- Write to the government to demand more money for the NHS and social care in Rotherham
- Lobby MPs for more money for health and social care

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- Continue to work alongside Rotherham CCG and Foundation Trust in order to deliver the joined up services that local residents deserve, in line with our Health and Adult Social Care Plan.
- Continue to support the work of the Health select Commission in holding local decision makers to account and support our local health services.
- Increase awareness of the STP amongst the Rotherham public.
- Call for more openness and transparency from the government and the NHS about STPs so that local residents can assess the true impact of government policy.
- Reserve the option of not signing the STP in the future.

Councillor Carter proposed and Councillor Jepson seconded the following amendment:-

To insert the words:

- Write to the Government asking for more funding for health and social care in Rotherham
- Lobby MPs to stand up for more funding for health and social care in Rotherham
- Hold local decision makers to account for decisions made locally by close scrutiny of their work through the Health Select Commission
- Work with Rotherham CCG and Foundation Trust to provide better outcomes for patients to deliver more joined up local healthcare and social care
- Engage in developing the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) so it works for the people of Rotherham
- Call for more openness and transparency from the Government and NHS about STPs so that local residents can assess the true impact of government policy
- Reserve the option of not signing the STP in the future

On being put to the vote, the amendment was accepted by the Council and became the substantive motion.

On being put to the vote, the substantive motion was carried by the Council.

### **41. NOTICE OF MOTION - VOTES FOR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS**

Councillor Wilson proposed and Councillor Beck seconded:-

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council notes:-

- That currently 1.5 million 16 and 17 year olds are denied the vote in public elections in the UK.



- That the campaign to lower the voting age is supported by thousands of young people across the UK and that the following a nationwide consultation, the UK Youth Parliament voted it as their national campaign for 2017.

This Council believes:-

- 16 and 17 year olds are knowledgeable and passionate about the world in which they live and are as capable of engaging in the democratic system as any other citizen;
- Lowering the voting age to 16, combined with strong citizenship education, would empower young people to better engage in society and influence decisions that will define their future;
- People, who can consent to medical treatment, work full-time, pay taxes, get married or enter a civil partnership and join the armed forces should also have the right to vote.

This Council resolves to write to the Minister for the Constitution, local MPs and the local media to inform them of their decision to support Votes at 16 and to promote this policy through its communications.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

**42. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Roche                      Seconded:- Councillor Watson

**43. PLANNING BOARD**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Atkin                      Seconder:- Councillor Tweed

**44. STAFFING COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the Staffing Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Alam                      Seconder:- Councillor Read

**45. LICENSING BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the Licensing Board Sub-Committee be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Ellis                      Seconder:- Councillor Beaumont

**46. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS**

It was reported that no questions had been received for designated spokespersons.

**47. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN**

- (1) **Councillor B. Cutts** asked "At the 8th March, 2017 Council meeting my question 31 referred to the two demonstrations on 25th February, and asked who was responsible for the "detailed" programme and approval of the programme. Police for planning, "other" for approval, who are the others?"

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, explained that the Police took the lead in planning and responding to all demonstrations, including the demonstrations held on 25 February. The Police had the discretion to call on other partner agencies to support this. In such circumstances a multi-agency Silver (tactical) level group would develop tactical plans which require approval and ratification at a Gold (strategic) forum. Both Silver and Gold planning meetings were held for the demonstrations on 25<sup>th</sup> February. The Strategic and Tactical groups were both chaired by South Yorkshire Police, and partner agencies, including Local Authority, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and Yorkshire Ambulance Service provide support to assist in planning for, and managing the demonstrations. One of the Council's strategic leads would represent the Council at this multi-agency forum. The Council had a duty under the Crime and Disorder Act to work with Police for the prevention and detection of crime.

As a supplementary question, Councillor B. Cutts asked why the Leader was not concerned to attend a demonstration with him to view the extent of the impact of the demonstrations on the town centre. In response, the Leader of the Council indicated that, whilst he had met with numerous people who had been adversely affected by the demonstrations, he did not think it would be helpful to attend a demonstration with Councillor Cutts on that date.

- (2) **Councillor Fenwick-Green** asked “Since being an Elected Councillor for Rotherham East last year, I have seen many changes and improvements to the Ward, one of these changes being ‘the Eastwood Improvement Plan’. A year on from its introduction, can you advise whether this plan has been a success in bringing improvement to the Ward?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, explained that the Eastwood Deal was launched in July 2016 and had been running for 12 months. She had requested a full one-year review to establish what had worked well in the first year and areas for further partnership work to focus on during the year ahead. Some areas of note regarding the Plan were:

- The successful joined up multi-agency approach to tackling the issues
- The Plan being led at a local level by Ward Members
- The focus on sustainable environmental improvements, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

Key areas had included

- tackling fly-tipping, waste in gardens and litter – 128 Fixed Penalty Notices issued from 26<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and 2 successful prosecutions for the illegal disposal of waste (with a further 4 being prepared). Fly-tipping had decreased in the area
- additionally 1 prosecution for accumulations of waste in gardens and 3 prosecutions of landlords relating to Selective Licensing issues had been successful
- formal enforcement work had included 15 abatement notices served in relation to noise, 42 notices issued due to accumulations of waste in yards and gardens, and 98 formal warnings to landlords which if breached would lead to prosecution.
- A regular proactive police presence in the area which had lead to some significant arrests and disruption of crime (including drugs offences)
- Early Help services supporting vulnerable children and families
- The tackling of noise nuisance through the Council's Enforcement Teams and out-of-hours team
- Fortnightly front-line officers meetings being held in Eastwood which included officers from the Council's Regulation and Enforcement team, Early Help, Streetscene, Housing and Anti-Social Behaviour, together with partners including Clifton Learning Partnership and South Yorkshire Police.
- Excellent collaborative working with partner agencies including the schools, the Clifton Learning Partnership and the Canals and Rivers Trust

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- Improved housing standards and effective enforcement action through the Council's Selective Licensing Scheme, including regular meetings with tenants and attendance at the Landlords Forum
- Effective communication with residents and a proactive approach to better community engagement
- Building community spirit and pride – particularly with the Council's Love Where You Live Campaign and the recruitment of volunteers in the area

Although there had been an increase in reported crime over the past two years from 936 incidents for July 2015 to June 2016, compared to 1013 for July 2016 to June 2017, there had been a significant decrease in the anti-social behaviour that had been reported in Eastwood with a decline from 713 incidents between July 2015 and June 2016, to 558 incidents between July 2016 and June 2017.

The second year would see the continued drive for further improvements maximising on the effective partnership working already in place.

- (3) **Councillor M. Elliott** asked "I recently raised the issue of the fire ravaged derelict buildings on Corporation Street, only to be informed that not much could be done because they are in private ownership. The recent news that attempts are being made to contact the owners is pleasing. Have you established contact yet?"

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, responded to indicate that the Council had attempted to make contact with the owners of the building on several occasions. The Cabinet had agreed measures to tackle the issue which could result in the use of compulsory purchase powers by the Council.

Councillor Elliott asked a supplementary question and referred to the objective in the Council Plan to deliver a cleaner and greener Rotherham and why it had taken 12 years to address the issues with these properties. In response, Councillor Read indicated that the Council was examining every avenue to improve the state of the buildings and stated that the owners of the building should be ashamed.

- (4) **Councillor Cowles** asked "You may recall that a couple of years ago we/RMBC provided BT £1M upfront for additional high speed broadband services. Can you provide an update on progress?"

Councillor Alam, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Finance, explained that at the Cabinet Meeting of 9 July 2014 it was agreed to underwrite the required local funding contribution of £1.596m, with an additional contingency budget of £124,000 pending a bid to the Sheffield City Region for SCRIF (Sheffield City Region Investment Fund) funding for the project. This funding bid had been successful, so therefore no payments were made to BT by the Council in respect of that contract.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Cowles referred to the lack of high speed broadband connection in his Ward and queried when it would be likely in place. Councillor Alam explained that it was hoped that this would be achieved in by the end of the 2018/19 financial year.

- (5) **Councillor Simpson** asked “Given continuing child abuse, curb crawling of young girls and residents belief that 101 isn’t working, can the Council make a special case for more Police street patrols, and more 101 staff for South Yorkshire including the expanding villages of e.g. Waverley, with the addition of local Police feedback sessions.”

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, explained that there was an acknowledgement from South Yorkshire Police that the Countywide 101 telephone service required improvement and he was aware that remedial action was being taken to address this. In particular, the local Borough Commander had confirmed that recruitment was taking place, at a county level, to increase the number of call-handlers and reduce waiting times. In addition, new technology would be introduced in March 2018 to further assist and improve and streamline the service provided to the public.

Reducing the demand on the 101 service was recognised as being key to achieving improvements. A new neighbourhood policing model, which would be implemented alongside the Council’s plans for greater locality based working would bring further prevention based problem solving at a local level. The Council was fully committed to working with the police on a locality based approach to tackle issues at the heart of communities.

With regard to Police feedback sessions, the Leader indicated that he was aware that, as part of the new neighbourhood policing model, regular local drop-in sessions would be arranged across the Borough to enable residents to have the opportunity to meet their local policing team and discuss issues that were important to them.

Finally, the Leader reiterated that any information relating to child abuse (or any crime for that matter) should continue to be reported to the police as a matter of urgency. The police would continue to prioritise all issues relating to vulnerable people across the Borough.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Simpson asked whether a special case could be made for resources to not only “cure” the problem, but prevent further issues in future. In response, Councillor Read explained that the authority was trying to improve its work with the Police and ensure that resources were targeted to deal with the issues described. However, the question of finding more police resources was a question for central government to answer.

- (6) **Councillor Cooksey** asked “Since Kingdom began providing environmental protection services to Rotherham earlier this year, how many fixed penalty notices have been issued in Eastwood Village?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, reported that 137 fixed penalty notices had been issued in Eastwood.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Cooksey enquired as to how successful the rate of recovery was on the fines. Councillor Hoddinott confirmed that the current payment rate within deadline was around 70%, which was reported as being on average for most local authorities.

- (7) **Councillor Reeder** asked “Yes or no, would this Council be willing to have houses built on Herringthorpe Playing Fields?”

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, responded to confirm that there were no plans to build on the playing fields, but there were two sites adjacent to the Playing Fields which had been earmarked for development in the Local Plan.

Councillor Reeder, as a supplementary question, asked what the two sites were known as. Councillor Read referred to comments made at a recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board by Councillor Short encouraging officers to dispose of vacant plots of land, specifically referred to the sites alluded to next to Herringthorpe Playing Fields. Councillor Read indicated that he was in agreement with Councillor Short’s comments that the land should be disposed of and developed as soon as possible.

- (8) **Councillor Carter** asked “I welcome the appointment of a sponsor for the new Waverley Primary School. What is the timescale for the next steps in the process?”

Councillor Watson, Deputy Leader of the Council, explained that the timescale for the next steps in the process to establish the new Primary school at Waverley following the appointment of Aston Community Education Trust (ACET) as sponsor were:

- September 2017 - Commence 'consultation and design of new school' period, following release of 5% of total funding agreement in April 2017
- May 2018 - 750<sup>th</sup> dwelling occupied – leading to start of processes to the release of 45% of total funding agreement for the building of a 1 form entry primary school
- August 2018 - Design code approval
- September 2018 - Submit planning application
- December 2018 - Planning Board determination of planning application
- January 2019 - Application to discharge pre commencement conditions
- June 2019 - Commence build of school
- September 2020 - School opens

Councillor Carter asked for the response to be sent to him in writing and enquired when the waiting list would be opened. Councillor Watson indicated that he would provide that information to him in writing.

- (9) **Councillor M. Elliott** asked “The £10million allocated to this Council for essential road repairs. Has it all been spent or is there scope for further much needed resurfacing work?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, indicated that it was part of the 2020 Roads Programme, with the £10m being staggered over three years. 40 roads had been put forward for the current year and there would be an opportunity for Councillors to nominate roads for inclusion in next year's programme in the autumn.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Elliott enquired whether Streetpride had plans to extend the programme of works for the Multihog machine. Councillor Hoddinott explained that there was a programme to do larger patches, as well as a re-surfacing programme. She indicated that she was happy to link Councillor Elliott up with local highways inspector for his Ward.

- (10) **Councillor Cowles** asked “What has gone wrong at Wath School? The Ofsted report is damning in all aspects, not just leadership and why was it not being effectively monitored by the Council?”

Councillor Watson, Deputy Leader of the Council, explained that Rotherham's education service had a strong track record in ensuring children at all ages received a good education. Wath Comprehensive School was one of three remaining non academy secondary schools. The School was last inspected in 2011 when it was deemed to be a "Good" school by Ofsted. As a good school, it received a light touch monitoring approach by the Council and Ofsted. The headline data for the school had remained positive; however recently the Directorate had become aware of some dips in performance. In September 2016 a new head teacher had been appointed and at this point the Local Authority sought to strengthen the monitoring of the school. However, since becoming aware of the Ofsted outcome, officers had been working closely with the school, and they had been instrumental in getting national leaders in education and governance into the school to work on the inadequate areas, ahead of the school being taken over by an academy sponsor, which would be appointed by the Regional Schools Commissioner in due course.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Cowles asked why the report had come without warning to the Council. In response, Councillor Watson reiterated that the School Improvement Service was not linked the school and the Council did not have the power to force the governing body to use the service to improve.

- (11) Councillor John Turner** asked "Is it true that the relatively new court building is to be knocked down and the town police station is to become redundant?"

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, confirmed that it was correct that the former Magistrates Court was to be demolished. The Cabinet agreed in principle at its meeting on 13 March 2017 to the potential demolition with the decision to be delegated to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Local Economy and Commissioner Kenny. The meeting of the Asset Management Board on 18 April considered a paper on the Court buildings and agreed to the demolition (minute 15/17 refers). The demolition was scheduled to start on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017 following a tender exercise. The Council had spoken to South Yorkshire Police and no decision had been made on withdrawing from the Main Street Police Station. Officers had asked South Yorkshire Police to update the Council should any decisions be made.

As a supplementary question, Councillor John Turner queried what the cost of the building was when it was built. In response, Councillor Read confirmed that he did not know and would need to check the figure.



- (12) **Councillor Reeder** asked “Why has this Council decided to end Area Assemblies without consultation. What was the hurry? Is there a hidden agenda as usual with this Labour Council?”

Councillor Yasseen, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services, indicated that Council on 19 May 2017 had adopted a new model of citizen engagement and neighbourhood working, which arose from an action in the Rotherham Corporate Improvement Plan, ‘A Fresh Start’: Phase Two - Action Plan. The view reached by the Elected Member Working Group was that whilst the Area Assembly structure had its strengths and had undoubtedly had many successes over the years, the meetings themselves were not however the most effective way of engaging residents, citizens, partners and businesses. The previous Area Assembly structure had run for over 15 years and the time was right to adopt more innovative, flexible and modern ways of neighbourhood and locality working. Thus a series of recommendations were made to Council on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017 including replacing the requirement under the Council’s Constitution to hold a minimum of 4 Area Assembly meetings annually. Instead a new model with the 21 Wards becoming the building blocks of future neighbourhood working was recommended. Ward Councillors will have a dedicated officer resource who will work with them to develop a Ward Plan and use a Ward Budget to help implement the Plan. These Plans will be informed by engagement with local residents and stakeholders, and Officers are now in the process of talking to their Ward Councillors about local engagement opportunities.

- (13) **Councillor Napper** asked “What in-house properties does the Council own to generate revenue from these days?”

Councillor Beck, Cabinet Member for Housing, responded to indicate that the Asset Management Service - Estates Team within Regeneration and Environment administered the Councils Non Operation Commercial/Investment Estate which comprised of 137 individual retail units located throughout the Borough, 6 office units mainly located within the Town Centre and the periphery and one large industrial unit at the Advanced Manufacturing Park. These properties generate an annual income excess of £575,000.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Napper queried how much of the town centre would be owned by the Council. In response, Councillor Beck confirmed that there would be a significant amount of housing as part of the masterplan, but the stage had not yet been reached where the numbers to be financed by the Council had been determined.

- (14) Councillor Carter** asked “In the event of a catastrophic event in the borough, such as the recent tragedy of Grenfell Tower, does the Council have contingency plans in place for dealing with such major incidents?”

Councillor Alam, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Finance, confirmed that the Council had a Major Incident Plan that had recently been refreshed and updated. This outlined amongst other things, activation processes, command and control arrangements and roles and responsibilities of different departments and stakeholders in responding to a Major Incident. Training on this plan took place every month. Additionally, the Council had a corporate framework for recovery that outlined, again command and control in a recovery phase, links with multi-agency partners, roles and responsibilities and highlighted areas for consideration and return to normality, such as Human Aspects, Infrastructure and Economic impacts and potential aspects for consideration.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Carter queried whether the plans had been practiced and if there had been in-house simulation of an exercise and if there had been collaboration with other authorities. In response, Councillor Alam confirmed that exercises had been carried out and referenced the Emergency Planning Shared Service with Sheffield City and work with other public agencies.

- (15) Councillor M. Elliott** asked “In Holderness Ward a limited number of footpaths have been top dressed with microasphalt or as I am informed “slurry sealing”. Whilst this vastly enhances the appearance of the footpaths, how many more footpaths is the Council intending to treat with this process?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, confirmed there had been 24 footpaths improved using footway micro asphalt during the current financial year (2017/18). There were no further footways to be improved using this process in year. The process was the Council’s preferred method of extending the life of footways and would continue next summer. It was further explained that Micro Asphalt was not constructional but was a thin surface treatment. Pre-patching was undertaken to small areas prior to the process being carried out, before being over-laid with the Micro Asphalt material. Micro Asphalt was used throughout the Borough and was a nationally recognised footway treatment. It was used to repair imperfections and seal surfaces. Micro Asphalt provided a protective layer against water ingress, helped to prevent deterioration caused by loss, or ageing and helped to extend the life of the footway.

Councillor Elliott queried whether the Council were prepared to pursue Virgin to remedy paths after installing fibre optic cables. Councillor Hoddinott indicated that she shared similar concerns on the quality of work in the Borough and asked all Members to contact officers if any problems were being experienced so that this could be tackled and fines potentially issued.

- (16) **Councillor Cowles** asked “It is roughly the anniversary of the much vaunted Eastwood deal, excluding the successes the police had had, could you provide an update on the costs of the plan to date to the taxpayer and a measure of the progress made?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, explained that the Eastwood Deal recognised the need to ensure that improvements were affordable and sustainable. As such, it was designed to support the community and strengthen the projects in place to provide the sustainability required. It was focused on activity to encourage and nurture effective community engagement; working with new and established community groups to jointly deliver sustainable solutions. This included working with schools, young people and families to develop and encourage pride in the area. The costs of street cleansing and enforcement activity in Eastwood were not easily identifiable as budgets were not broken down into ward areas, however when information was requested in December 2016, the costs for the 4 month period of June to September 2016 was £69k. This comprised of £21k for street cleansing and £48k for enforcement activity. From October 2016 to end of June 2017, the estimated cost of regulation and enforcement equated to approximately £136K, whilst the street cleansing costs amounted to £64k. Councillor Hoddinott confirmed that the costs of ongoing work in the area remained stable on a monthly basis. The cleansing work carried out was on the same basis/same type of work as that carried out throughout the Borough and the type/costs of activity was similar to that of any heavily populated part of the Borough. For enforcement, the estimated costs related to litter and fly tipping investigations, statutory nuisance work around noise and accumulations of waste in yards, selective licensing, inspections and regular meetings with the police.

In relation to progress, the Eastwood Deal was launched in July 2016 and has been running for 12 months. Councillor Hoddinott had therefore requested that a full one-year review took place to establish what had worked well in the first year and areas for further partnership work to focus on during the year ahead. Some areas of note regarding the Plan were highlighted:

- The successful joined up multi-agency approach to tackling the issues
- The Plan being led at a local level by Ward Members
- The focus on sustainable environmental improvements,

- tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
- Key areas have included
  - tackling fly-tipping, waste in gardens and litter – 128 Fixed Penalty Notices issued from 26<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and 2 successful prosecutions for the illegal disposal of waste (with a further 4 being prepared). Fly-tipping has decreased in the area
  - A regular proactive police presence in the area leading to some significant arrests and disruption of crime (including drugs offences)
  - Early Help services supporting vulnerable children and families
  - The tackling of noise nuisance through the Council's Enforcement Teams and out-of-hours team
  - Fortnightly front-line officers meetings taking place in Eastwood
  - Excellent collaborative working with partner agencies including the schools, the Clifton Learning Partnership and the Canals and Rivers Trust
  - Improved housing standards and effective enforcement action through the Council's Selective Licensing Scheme, including regular meetings with tenants and attendance at the Landlords Forum
  - Effective communication with residents and a proactive approach to better community engagement
  - Building community spirit and pride – particularly with the Council's Love Where You Live Campaign and the recruitment of volunteers in the area

The second year would see the continued drive for further improvements maximising on the effective partnership working already in place.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Cowles queried how soon the Council's approach to tackling issues in Eastwood would become proactive, rather than reactive. In response, Councillor Hoddinott confirmed that being proactive was exactly the point of plan and noted that some things could be achieved quickly, whilst other matters required longer term projects, such as work with schools and 'Love Where You Live'.

- (17) Councillor John Turner** asked "Does the Labour Group acknowledge that we are creating a concrete jungle in Rotherham by way of the excessive hedonistic programme? Congestion is ascending and pollution accelerating and amenity disappearing."

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, explained that without sufficient new homes and jobs Rotherham would not prosper and would not provide the new homes and jobs that residents needed. To meet those needs the Council had adopted the Local Plan Core

Strategy setting targets for new homes and jobs over the next 15 years. The Council fought hard at the public inquiry into the Core Strategy to secure an appropriate housing target. We achieved a growth target that was significantly less than the development lobby wanted and the government Inspector initially proposed. Developers wanted the previous regional plan target of 24,000 new homes for Rotherham. The inspector proposed 17,000. The Council had successfully argued for a target of 14,000 new homes. This had given a challenging but achievable target for growth that minimised the loss of Green Belt and greenfield land.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Turner queried whether the Council would make representations to central government to challenge the intrusion into green space. Councillor Read, in response, confirmed that the Council had made numerous representations to central government on this subject, as well as taking measures to protect greenfield sites. However, the annual housing need for the borough was 900 dwellings and presently only half that figure were being delivered. The priority would continue to be providing homes and jobs.

- (18) Councillor Carter** asked “How is the new Brinsworth Library business case progressing?”

Councillor Yasseen, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services, explained that the Brinsworth Library business case was progressing well. The Council and Brinsworth Parish Council were working together positively to identify opportunities to improve service provision, to work through the detailed capital and revenue costs associated with current and potential future delivery and to draw up joint proposals for further discussion and consideration. Council officers had been invited to a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 July 2017 to discuss current progress with attendees. Briefings would be given to Members, senior officers and appropriate decision making bodies in the coming weeks, once there was a clear proposition on the table.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Carter asked “Have we been successful in finding additional funding arrangements for Brinsworth Library, after the recent unsuccessful grant application?” In response, Councillor Yasseen, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services, responded to state that the potential for further bids for external and additional funding would be considered once the future service model had been determined.

- (19) **Councillor Jepson** asked “Following the National Audit Office report on the Sheffield-Rotherham Tram Train project and its predicted £60million increase in costs, can he confirm that none of this will have to be met by the local authority and does he agree that as a result of this failure heads should roll?”

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, stated that the Sheffield – Rotherham Tram Train project was a Department for Transport led pilot scheme, funded by central government in partnership with Network Rail. The costs associated with the construction of the scheme had been met by the Department for Transport without any contribution from the Council.

- (20) **Councillor Reeder** asked “Why does this Council charge for using a credit card to pay for a parking fine and do we charge for other services?”

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, stated that the authority did not charge a credit card fee for payment of a Penalty Charge Notice. The Traffic Management Act 2004 did not allow charges to be levied for card payments for PCNs. All other services had a charge of 1.75% for payments made by credit card, but there was no fee for paying by debit card, by Paypoint or at a Post Office.

- (21) **Councillor Cowles** asked “Whiston residents decided to take a proactive approach to fly-tipping on Doles Lane, are you aware of this? We are hoping to ‘Stop Up’ Doles Lane to prevent vehicle access, court hearing 25/07, is there any likelihood that Whiston residents will be required to contribute further towards the costs?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, stated that the Council had worked closely with the Whiston Action Group to seek to stop-up Doles Lane to prevent access to vehicles and mitigate against the risk of fly-tipping. Consultation had been undertaken on the proposed order to stop up Doles Lane, but no objections had been received. The consultation had included adverts being placed in both local and national press. Prior to the Court hearing on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017, the Council intended to submit a file to the Court to enable an assessment to take place. If on 25th July a number of objectors attended the hearing, the hearing would be re-scheduled so that both the supporters and objectors to the order could make their cases. The total costs to Whiston Action Group relating to the stopping up of Doles Lane, amount to £3,205 which could be broken down into £3,000 for the legal order and £205 for the Magistrates Court application fee. Those costs were above and beyond the associated costs to the Council and it was understood that the outstanding balance due from Whiston Action Group remained at £2,205. The Whiston Action Group had signed the Council’s “Procedure for Stopping up and downgrading orders (under section 116 of the Highways Act 1980)”. Appendix B had

clearly outlined all costs the Whiston Action Group were responsible for. The Whiston Action Group had also agreed to fund the vehicular barriers (a gate) associated with the stopping up order.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Cowles asked if it was considered reasonable to spend £200,000 in Eastwood, would it be acceptable to spend £2,000 for residents of Whiston. In response, Councillor Hoddinott indicated that Councillor Cowles could choose to use some of the devolved ward budget for this purpose.

- (22) Councillor Jepson** asked “Further to the new enforcement team beginning work in Rotherham can she give details as to when their remit will be extended to include fly tipping and parking offences?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, explained that, as part of the ‘Time for Action’ initiative to deliver additional capacity to the Council’s enforcement functions, the fixed penalty pilot for additional parking enforcement started on 10 July 2017. Similarly, additional capacity to tackle fly-tipping offences would begin delivery for the week beginning 17 July 2017.

As a supplementary question Councillor Jepson queried whether this would be a seven day per week service and Councillor Hoddinott confirmed this to be the case.

- (23) Councillor Cowles** asked “Would you kindly inform me as to the costs incurred to date and/or budgeted figure for the involvement of RMBC re the sacking of David Crompton?”

Councillor Alam, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Finance, stated that costs incurred in 2016/17 in relation to the Police and Crime Panel would be reimbursed by the Home Office, it was anticipated that the element of the total costs incurred in 2017/18, which totalled £9244.40 was also expected to be reimbursed. As of 1 April, 2017, the host authority for the Police and Crime Panel was now South Yorkshire Joint Secretariat at Barnsley MBC.

Councillor Cowles, as a supplementary question, queried whether the Council would condemn the actions of the Police and Crime Commissioner and demand that he spend no more on legal action. In response, Councillor Alam confirmed that it was a matter for the Police and Crime Commissioner to determine how to proceed, but that the Council would not incur any costs.

- (24) Councillor Carter** asked “How does the tram-train project fit in with the latest town centre masterplan?”

Councillor Read, Leader of the Council, stated that the Town Centre Masterplan recognised that improving connectivity to and from the town centre was a key component to unlocking its economic and recreational potential. Enhancement to the current transport offer, such as the Tram Train project, had been highlighted as a mechanism to improve the vibrancy, investment proposition and attractiveness of the town centre as a destination to live and do business.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Carter queried whether the development of Parkgate would be supported at the expense of the Town Centre. In response, Councillor Read explained that Parkgate was a private development and the challenge was to find complimentary ways for the Town Centre to link with this facility.

- (25) Councillor Napper** asked “With the news that South Yorkshire is the fifth worst place in the UK for crimes, including sexual and drug offences, has Rotherham seen a rise or drop in offence reporting in the last year?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, stated that enquiries had been made with South Yorkshire Police in respect of the reference to South Yorkshire being the fifth worst place in the UK for crime, but they had no knowledge of that claim and had been unable to find any such claim in their records.

In respect of overall crime, a total of 22,000 crimes were reported in Rotherham in the last financial year. This was an increase of 15% (2,881 offences) compared to the previous financial year when 19,119 crimes were recorded. During the same period, South Yorkshire Police recorded 121,445 across South Yorkshire. This was an increase of 19% (19,452 offences) compared to the previous financial year when 101,993 crimes were recorded. Over the last 3 years overall reported crime in Rotherham had increased steadily. Some of the increases in reported crime, particularly sexual offences, could be attributed to an increased reporting of historic offences, plus a reported increased willingness and confidence of victims to come forward to report offences to the Police due to national publicity and improved local practice and procedures.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Napper queried what the Council and partners were doing to keep children away from drugs and other substances. Councillor Hoddinott confirmed that she did not have the information to hand, but would report back to Councillor Napper on this important issue.



- (26) **Councillor Cowles** asked “Reported figures show that there is already a budget problem, projected £6.9m overspend already. We raised concerns in March around the ability to achieve reported savings together with the need for stringent controls. What action will be taken to bring the overspend under control?”

Councillor Alam, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Finance, stated that Members would be aware that towards the end of the previous financial year a variety of spending controls were put in place. These had proved to be effective and through a variety of measures the Council ended the year drawing down £2.7m less from reserves than planned. The stringent spending controls that were in place at the end of last year were still in place across the Council. The services that were overspending were working through financial recovery plans and identifying actions to try to bring their budgets back on track.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Cowles queried whether the plan was to use reserves to bridge the budget gap. In response, Councillor Alam confirmed that plans were in place with the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People’s Services and Adult Social Care to get the budget back on track

- (27) **Councillor Carter** asked “Residents are concerned about speeding and dangerous driving on Sheffield Lane in Catcliffe. Does the council have any plans to address this?”

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, explained that, as a general rule, traffic calming was introduced where vehicle speeding was a known contributory factor to recurring traffic accidents on a particular section of highway. An examination of the accident record for Sheffield Lane at Catcliffe indicated that there had not been any accidents in the last three years. For that reason the Council did not have any plans to introduce traffic calming at the location. However, as the residents were concerned about speeding and dangerous driving, they could discuss speed enforcement with South Yorkshire Police (SYP). SYP also operated an initiative called Community Speed Watch whereby local residents can be trained in the use of a hand held radar speed gun and with a uniformed Police Officer present undertake speed awareness on local roads.

#### 48. URGENT ITEMS

As reported under minute 28, the Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to introduce an urgent recommendation from the Cabinet to give authority to commence an interim review of polling places.

## COUNCIL MEETING - 12/07/17

The Leader of the Council referred to the recent General Election which had deferred the planned review of polling places in the borough. Following feedback received on polling day on 8 June 2017 and having regard to the likelihood of another General Election in the calendar year, it was recommended that a review of polling places be undertaken.

### **Resolved:-**

1. That approval be granted to undertake an interim review of polling places in 2017 following the process described in this report.
2. That the scope of the review and the proposals for changes be noted.
3. That the outline timetable for the review, as set out in Appendix 1, be agreed.
4. That the power to designate polling places in accordance with section 18B of the Representation of the People Act 1983 be delegated to the Chief Executive, such power to be exercised only in circumstances where a decision is required at short notice and it is not possible to await a decision of Council.