

**COUNCIL MEETING  
22nd January, 2020**

Present:- The Mayor (Councillor Jenny Andrews) (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Albiston, Allen, Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Bird, Brookes, Buckley, Carter, Clark, Cooksey, Cowles, Cusworth, B. Cutts, D. Cutts, Elliot, M. Elliott, R. Elliott, Ellis, Fenwick-Green, Hoddinott, Jarvis, Jepson, Jones, Keenan, Lelliott, McNeely, Marles, Marriott, Napper, Pitchley, Read, Reeder, Roche, Sansome, Senior, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Steele, Taylor, Julie Turner, Tweed, Vjestica, Walsh, Watson, Williams, Wyatt and Yasseen.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-  
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

**281. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor was pleased to present her activity since the last Council meeting which was attached for information to the Mayor's Letter.

**282. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allcock, Hague, Ireland, Khan, Mallinder, Price, Russell, John Turner and Whysall.

**283. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications received.

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

**Resolved:-** That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2019, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**285. PETITIONS**

The Mayor introduced the report and confirmed the receipt of five petitions received since the last Council meeting which had not met the threshold for consideration by Council.

- Containing 205 signatures calling on the Council to keep children safe to and from Oakwood School.
- Containing 26 signatures calling on the Council to summarise the effectiveness of all actions taken by Council to address Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and identify key actions to further address Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse for the next two years.

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An adult survivor of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse addressed the Council as part of the presentation of the petition.

- Containing 34 signatures calling on the Council to undertake improvements to the grass verges at Brecklands, Stag.

Mr. C. King addressed the Council as part of the presentation of the petition.

- Containing 230 signatures calling on the Council to undertake noise surveys of properties in Catcliffe to be affected by the widening of the A630 Sheffield Parkway.

Mr. Pashley addressed the Council as part of the presentation of the petition.

- Containing 229 signatures calling on the Council to use noise barriers and noise reduction tarmac on the stretch of the A630 Sheffield Parkway that passes Catcliffe.

Mr. Pashley addressed the Council as part of the presentation of the petition.

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

(2) That the relevant Strategic Directors be required to respond to the lead petitioners as set out by 5th February, 2020.

### 286. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor (Councillor J. Andrews) and Councillors R. Elliott, Fenwick-Green, McNeely and Wyatt declared personal interests on Minute No. 292 (Housing Revenue Account Rents and Service Charges for 2020-21) on the grounds that they rented or a spouse rented a garage, land or a property from the Council.

### 287. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(1) **Mr. Thirlwall** explained that at the September Council Meeting the Leader told him if he could show that a third party had authorised alterations to a Member's 'Register of Interests' he would wish to know and would take appropriate action so asked why then had he been denied access to the information that could show if that was the case?

The Leader explained it was not appropriate for Members of the public to access any internal correspondence or emails between Members and officers as some information was of a sensitive nature and personal to the Member.

In a supplementary Mr. Thirlwall referred to the response he was given back in September when the Leader said he would refer any matters should it be believed forms had been altered. He made a telephone call and was told that those whose political party was changed from UKIP to Brexit had been contacted by email and told their Register of Interest forms must be updated before the Council meeting. He knew this was not correct as one Councillor openly admitted to not using email.

On this basis a Freedom of Information request was submitted which was denied. A further review was requested indicating that redacted or anonymised information was acceptable. This request was denied and had since been forwarded for consideration by the Information Commissioner.

Mr. Thirlwall asked the Leader, therefore, if he would provide the information rather than the matter being delayed even further when it was hoped the Information Commissioner would direct the Council to release the documentation that had been requested.

The Leader advised the proper procedure was being followed and the precedent of one political leader trying to access emails of another political leader was not appropriate and was wary of becoming involved. He was confident officers had acted appropriately and followed due process.

**(2) Mr. L. Harron** referred to October, 2017 when two adult survivors of CSE addressed a petition in a Council meeting asking for a meaningful consultation about their needs. About a year later a decision was made to use an external organisation to advise about consulting with survivors and a public consultation was promised and he asked why had this not taken place and when would it take place?

The Leader had discussed this previously and agreed that this needed to be moved on quickly. He explained that as part of the consideration for a new refreshed specification for support for victims and survivors of CSE, the Council engaged an external consultant to undertake a full Needs Analysis in relation to supporting adult victims and survivors. The consultation with victims and survivors included dialogue and discussion with stakeholders including those who were working with commissioned providers and other support groups. This portion of the Needs Analysis had now concluded.

There would be a further opportunity for the public to engage in consultation via an online questionnaire and this would be developed using the key findings and other feedback. It was planned to undertake this consultation through March, 2020 for thirty days to assist in the further development of the new specification. The Council (or its partners) would then go to open tender from May, 2020 with the intention of awarding a new contract before the end of August, 2020, with a start date before the end of the year.

It was anticipated the next stage of the engagement would be undertaken sooner, but, due to a key individual having a serious illness, this had been delayed. However, this would now be progressed.

It had also been the intention of the external consultant to plan an art exhibition. This innovative proposal would provide a further opportunity to capture public views and share the voice of victims and survivors. However, plans were currently delayed by illness, but the Council was hopeful that it would be able to progress later in the year. This would be advised as soon as was practically possible.

In a supplementary question Mr. Harron confirmed he had been to Cabinet twice where the Leader had agreed with him about the need for consultation, but people did not appreciate the message this sent to adult survivors with all the delays.

He asked about the public consultation and agreed with the Leader that Members of the Chamber needed to understand a lot of adult victims and survivors who would not come forward where they could be identified. He acknowledged the bravery and courage of survivors that stood up and were prepared to speak to this Chamber. It was how the public consultation could reach the people who would not engage with the normal questionnaire preferring to be hidden away with the people they could trust. He asked the Leader, therefore, if could tell him more about that bit of the process and how it would be managed.

The Leader associated himself with the remarks about the bravery of adult survivors and victims who deserved to have their anonymity protected. This was why it had taken so long as it was important to get the process progressed and confirmed this would be an open process to allow individuals to come forward who were not necessarily engaged with services at the moment. It was the right thing to do as and when more detail was available, he was more than happy to provide further information on the detail in writing.

**(3) "T"**, following the meeting with Shokat Lal (Assistant Chief Executive) on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2018, meeting with the Leader of the Council on 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2018 and meetings with officers about Commissioning Services (with the promise of a monthly update), asked please could an update on exactly where the commissioning of service for adult survivors of CSE had reached at RMBC?

The Leader had touched on this in the question above, but confirmed a Needs Analysis for the commissioning of services for adult survivors of CSE had been completed and would be considered by the Improving Lives Select Commission in March, 2020. The Council were working with its partners, to agree the best options for re-commissioning.

It was planned to undertake this consultation through March, 2020 for thirty days to assist in the further development of the new specification.

The Council (or its partners) would then go to open tender in May, 2020 with the intention of awarding a new contract before the end of August, 2020, with a start date before the end of the year.

It was anticipated the next stage of the engagement would have been undertaken sooner but unfortunately due to the individual having a serious illness this had been delayed, but it was not the right way of taking this forward.

In a supplementary question "T" explained she had completed some art work as part of the initial engagement, and had been fully involved in the process making her relive the trauma and abuse she had suffered without getting any answers. She asked if the artwork could be returned as the Council had provided little in return for the trauma she had encountered.

The Leader fully appreciated how difficult engagement had been and confirmed he would investigate further and come back directly.

**(4) Mr. P. Cawkwell** was unable to attend the Council Meeting so would receive a response to his question in writing.

**(5) Elizabeth** was unable to attend the Council Meeting so would receive a response to his question in writing.

**(6) Mr. Smith** was unable to attend the Council Meeting so would receive a response to his question in writing.

**(7) Mr. S. Hall** asked did the Council's Environmental Health team prepare or keep data on health trends within specific areas of Rotherham which related to significant health issues and if so what kind of data and over what period of time?

Councillor Roche, Cabinet for Adult Social Care and Health, explained the Council's Environmental Health team did not prepare or keep data on health trends within specific areas of Rotherham, however, the Council's Public Health team currently oversaw the ongoing production and development of the Rotherham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) supported by the Policy, Performance and Improvement team.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was a collaborative public online collation of data from a wide range of partners across the borough, including the NHS and voluntary sector, and was overseen by a steering group reporting up to the Health and Wellbeing Board and regularly updated.

This included not only the data on health care services and lifestyle behaviours, such as smoking, physical activity and alcohol, but also on

the wider determinants that influenced health, such as transport, housing, education, social care and community safety. Data included comparisons of Rotherham to other similar local authority areas or national averages, and some data available at Ward level.

The JSNA was currently being refreshed and full access for partners and the public would be from 20th February, 2020.

In a supplementary question Mr. Hall asked if in 1994 when a Public Health enquiry was held into Watson's Tip at Kimberworth and metal samples were taken had the Council conducted any research into cancer deaths in that area and if there was what were the findings.

Councillor Roche explained the Council did not hold any clinical information. However, having spoken to a representative of the CCG only this morning about today's question, the representative would be keen to receive any data the member of the public may have. This information was held by the CCG and all confirmed cancer diagnoses were held on the Cancer Registries Cancer and did not relate to a single diagnosis as there were many different types with different causes; some with no connection to environmental exposure.

The number of cancers in any locality would be small, with a lot of variation from year to year. There was also a lot of randomness in disease origin and clusters of disease frequently occurred by chance in different pockets of the country. Due to this it would be difficult to prove an association with any environmental site and it would require a detailed piece of research into a particular suspected cause (e.g. a large case control study which would involve retrospective look at medical records, matching cancer cases and non-cases and looking at their exposure by proximity to a tip over a defined period of time).

Carrying out this type of study would require a full research proposal and support from the CCG and quite possibly a University. It would also require access to patient records which would be the remit of the NHS.

**(8) Mr. W. Burrell** had been told that RMBC had conducted a survey of the turning circle for HGVs into and out of the Millmoor Juniors access road in 2017 so asked if the Cabinet Member could please explain what the findings were?

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, confirmed an assessment of the suitability of access into Grange Landfill site off Droppingwell Road was undertaken in July, 2016. This involved a visit to the site and the use of a computer tracking model to assess the access. This assessment concluded that vehicles of the size and type that would be used on the site could access the site via the A629 with no issues. The site access to Droppingwell Road had adequate visibility and was suitably surfaced.

However, the Council was actively monitoring activity around the site to ensure that Grange Landfill Ltd. only use the agreed access route into their site. There was no agreement for Grange Landfill Ltd. to use Council land as a turning circle.

Councillor Hoddinott thanked members of the public for contacting herself and providing evidence of Grange Landfill doing this when they should not be.

Following reports that Grange Landfill Ltd. had used Council land as a turning circle, the Council wrote to them in November, 2019 to remind them that they must stop doing so and to remind them that they must use the agreed route into the site.

Since then, further reports and observations had been received that Grange Landfill Ltd. have continued to use Council land as a turning circle. Given this, the Council would now be taking steps to prevent access to the unauthorised parts of its land through the placement of physical barriers. It was intended that the proposed barriers would be in place by mid-February, 2020.

The Council had written to Grange Landfill to inform them of this and to remind them once again that they have no permission to use anything other than the agreed access route.

However, it was pointed out that the Council was legally required to allow access to the landfill site by Grange Landfill Ltd.

In a supplementary question Mr. Burrell asked if the Council was aware that lorries were not using the A629, but coming from Sheffield up Droppingwell Road and using residential roads and the entrance to Grange Park Golf Club to turn re-approaching Droppingwell Road to turn into the site. This was without a banksman and in contrary to the highways recommendation in the 1994 enquiry entering and leaving the site by the entrance could cause significant danger to other road users and was the cornerstone of the highways objection which was upheld by enquiry not to grant planning permission for this access so would the Council look into stopping this practice before someone was killed.

Councillor Hoddinott was not aware of those specific incidents, but was more than happy to take away this information and investigate. She asked if members of the public had any evidence to share this with her and this would be looked at and she would come back. She emphasized again the Council was legally required to allow access to the landfill site by Grange Landfill Ltd. It would fall on the Council to make any alterations to make it safer.

**(9) Ms. L. Silcock** explained that over most weekends, Millmoor Juniors see 300 to 400 people attending their home games including many children. The car parks and access road were usually full of 150 plus cars,

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who all have a right of access. She asked when Grange Landfill start tipping they would also want access so how would this be possible?

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, was concerned about the safety of the football club, but reiterated the Council was legally required to allow Grange Landfill Ltd. to access the landfill site.

The Council was concerned that Grange Landfill Ltd.'s operations did not affect the safety of people accessing Millmoor Juniors Football Club and this issue had been raised with them and their response was awaited and the Council was keen to hear how this would be managed.

The 1958 planning permission was historical and was being worked to. If an application was now submitted a full transport assessment would be required and any issues followed up by the Planning Department. The Council now found itself in a unique position that it did not have this protection and safeguards and a strong letter had been written to the Secretary of State asking for special consideration and setting out the concerns about health and safety.

In a supplementary question Ms. Silcock asked, considering the access was on Council land and the Council had a duty of care to people using their land to ensure they were covered by health and safety legislation, was the Council ensuring the access was safe for both ingress and egress from a landfill site policy and if not, why not.

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed responsibility and funding for the access fell to the Council for Grange Landfill Ltd. and to ensure this was safe. Grange Landfill Ltd. had been written to on how this would be managed, but the Council was still waiting on their response.

**(10) Mrs. J. Heron** referred to how in 1958 the Council issued a planning permission for Watson's Tip, detailing landform to be reinstated after its closure and the amount of land that could be taken out of agricultural use at any one time. She asked could the Leader confirm if Grange Landfill Ltd. have been written to, to ask how they would achieve compliance?

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, explained planning permission for the tip was granted for two phases. Phase One had been completed.

Any new tipping on Phase Two would be required to comply with the conditions attached to it which stated that no more than five acres of land shall be out of cultivation at any one period and that the finished surface of Phase Two shall be levelled off. The permission had some detail about what should happen after the tipping, but this was minimal unlike what would be included in a modern application of today. It was the operator's responsibility to ensure compliance with the conditions.

If there were any breaches of the planning permission during Phase Two the Council would investigate and take necessary action. A visit had been made and no breaches had been observed as yet, but if there were any alleged breaches with reported evidence then the Council would look into this.

In a supplementary question Mrs. Heron referred to the Council agreeing in 1997 that it was in the public interest to allow MHH to relieve the over tipping of Phase One of the site. At the last Council meeting the Cabinet Member confirmed this did not mean the same agreement applied to Phase Two of the planning permission and that permission stated the site's reinstated surface had to be level. It was not believed this could be achieved with both phases being at different levels.

The same permission also indicated only five acres could be removed from agricultural use in total, yet the topsoil from an adjoining field had already been removed, which did not form part of this permission. However, according to the Planning Department this formed part of permitted development rights as part of tip site works so should be considered as part of the five acres. Unless the Council issued a retrospective variation to the permission these conditions could not be complied with so why were these questions not asked prior to the works starting.

Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, confirmed the 1994 inquiry did regularise Phase One. However, in terms of the adjoining land the question had been asked and this did not affect the permission. This had been raised with the Planning Department. With regards to the differences with land levels, the Cabinet Member would make certain of the detail and confirm this to the member of the public in writing.

**288. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved:-** That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, that should the Mayor deem it necessary the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that any items involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**289. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT**

The Leader presented his update statement and in doing so wished all present a happy new year.

Attention was drawn to:-

- (a) The flooding incidents as a result of the horrendous weather conditions and significant levels of rain fall that were experienced

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across the Borough and neighbouring areas at the beginning of November. A month's rainfall fell in just twenty-four hours resulting in widespread flooding and disruption.

The Council's emergency planning arrangements were activated and a large-scale emergency response and subsequent recovery plan was put in place to support residents and businesses.

Still today the recovery operation was still in operation in parts of Kilnhurst and Laughton which had had a devastating effect with the magnitude of:-

- 2328 flooding related contacts being received.
- 80 households evacuated with 68 people accommodated at the Town Hall, which was set up as a rest centre.
- 3,250 sandbags distributed.

Many Council staff and partners worked around the clock to protect and support households and businesses and the Chamber thanked all those that have been and continued to be involved.

- (b) Recent press coverage focused on the Government agreeing to work with the four Local Authorities to progress South Yorkshire's devolution. Only by moving quickly could the funding be secured that was available through devolution benefiting communities and helping them to create jobs and opportunities.

Rotherham had one of the fastest growing economies in Yorkshire and devolution would assist in accelerating growth and support the aim to extend prosperity and opportunity and effectively plan for the future.

- (c) National Holocaust Memorial Day would take place on Monday, 27th January, 2020 and Rotherham would be marking the occasion with a memorial event in All Saints Square at 12.30 p.m. to remember the millions of people killed during the holocaust. This year's national theme was "Stand Together" and everyone was urged to attend and give their support.

In the period where Members could ask questions of the Leader's statement, Councillor Sansome added his own thanks to the efforts and support to those involved in the recent flooding. He too was frustrated with Yorkshire Water who he believed had not helped the situation.

The Leader confirmed matters were to be followed up with Yorkshire Water.

Councillor Jepson added his own comments and in doing so asked when Elected Members would receive an update on the flooding situation and how they could have input into a review.

The Leader confirmed he would seek this information and respond to Councillor Jepson.

Councillor Cusworth wished to place on record her own thanks to Swinton Fitzwilliam and Swinton Brookfield Academies who had provided accommodation to the children from Kilnhurst Primary.

**290. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS**

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 21<sup>st</sup> October and 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2019, be received.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**291. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2020-21**

Further to Minute No. 88 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2019, consideration was given to the report in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020-21.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) recorded all expenditure and income relating to the provision of Council housing and related services, and the Council was required to produce a HRA Business Plan setting out its investment priorities over a thirty year period.

Following the introduction in 2012 of HRA self-financing, the Council was awarded control over its HRA in return for taking on a proportion of national housing debt.

Since the last update there have been no significant Government policy changes that affect the business plan. That said there were still some policies that have impacted on the plan:-

- Roll out of full service Universal Credit to all remaining working age tenants in Rotherham since July 2018 onwards.
- Ongoing Right to Buy eligibility.
- Updated Guidance on Social rents permitting increases of CPI + 1% from 2020-21 onwards.

The Business Plan, therefore, recognised the importance of continuing investment in new affordable homes, focused on the next five years and would continue to be amended and reported annually. Given the economic uncertainty the overall position remained challenging, but given the level of reserves and the previous decision to defer some investment in stock until later in the Plan the ability to divert resources to fund housing growth and contribute to the Council Plan remained.

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A detailed technical overview was provided of the current position and the reason for changes to the Business Plan and this report was to be considered alongside the proposed 2020-21 rents, service charges and budgets.

The priorities in the Housing Growth Programme over the next five years were:-

- Developing 171 new homes in the town centre.
- Piloting modern methods of construction in order to ascertain the potential to build homes at an increased pace and lower cost.
- Delivering more shared ownership homes to enable first time buyers and older people wishing to downsize, to own an affordable home.
- Continuing to build bungalows and other accessible accommodation to enable older people and people with support needs to live independently.
- Releasing HRA owned sites for development by the private sector and housing associations.

Councillor Carter supported the sentiments of the report, but asked how greenfield sites could be protected. He was advised and information shared about the strategic acquisition programme, the use of Section 106 Agreements and the development of housing with significant market discounts in order to deliver high quality homes across the Borough including a large proportion which would be added to the Council's housing stock.

Councillor Beck recapped over the town centre housing programme delivering 177 new homes across three sites for those Members that sought clarification; former Henleys Garage, Millfold House on Westage and Sheffield Road car park. This would deliver a mixture of tenures with homes for Council rent, some for shared ownership and some open market sales to sell to people to get on the housing ladder.

Councillor Sansome fully supported the proposals which had started to move young families into having their own properties or Council houses. He referred to the use of modern housing and modern methods of housing and asked about the amount of numbers for this year and any progress there would be for future years, which the Cabinet Member would respond to in writing.

**Resolved:-** (1) That the proposed 2020-21 Base Case Option 3 for the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan be approved.

(2) That the plan be reviewed annually to provide an updated financial position.

Mover:- Councillor Beck

Seconder:- Councillor Read

**292. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES FOR 2020-21**

Further to Minute No. 89 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2019, consideration was given to the report which sought approval for the proposed values of the housing rents, non-dwelling rents, District Heating and service charges and the draft Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2020/21.

In line with changes to Policy on rents for social housing it was recommended that rents were increased in line with CPI (as at September 2019) plus 1% in 2020/21, therefore an increase of 2.7%.

**Resolved:-** (1) That dwelling rents be increased by 2.7% in 2020/21 in line with the Government guidelines on rents for social housing from April 2020 which allows rents to increase by Consumer Price Index (as at September) plus 1%.

(2) That there be a 2% increase in charges for garages and parking spaces, communal facilities, cooking gas and use of laundry facilities, in line with increases being proposed for other fees and charges across the Council.

(3) That the unit charge per Kwh for District Heating Schemes remain the same level, as agreed by the Council in December 2017.

(4) That all Affordable Rent properties be revalued in October and March each year to provide a valid rent value for when Affordable Rent properties are re-let.

(5) That the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2020/21 be agreed.

Mover:- Councillor Beck

Seconder:- Councillor Alam

(The Mayor (Councillor J. Andrews) and Councillors R. Elliott, Fenwick-Green, McNeely and Wyatt declared personal interests on the grounds that they rented or a spouse rented a garage, land or a property from the Council)

**293. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - ADOPTION OF A REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

Further to Minute No. 93 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2019, consideration was given to the report which detailed how the Local Development Scheme (LDS) set out a project plan for the preparation, adoption and review of Rotherham Local Plan documents. It also outlined the revised Local Development Scheme setting out the timescale for taking forward a partial update of the Local Plan Core Strategy (approved by the Council on 8th July, 2019).

**Resolved:-** That the revised Local Development Scheme be adopted with effect from 23rd January, 2020.

Mover:- Councillor Lelliott

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

**294. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY UPDATE**

Councillor Steele, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, introduced the latest update of the work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) and the Select Commissions - Health (HSC), Improving Lives (ILSC) and Improving Places (IPSC) during the last few months.

Although fewer scrutiny meetings took place during the autumn due to the General Election, work continued, but the scrutiny work programme for the rest of 2019-2020 needed to be reviewed to re-prioritise and reschedule items to ensure the focus remained on the key issues.

In terms of Improving Lives, service users shared their experiences of Early Help Services and Youth Offending Services respectively and the Commission was also able to undertake pre-decision scrutiny at an earlier stage when considering the emerging proposals in the review of Area Housing Panels.

Health Select continued to have a strong focus on performance and ensuring progress in Adult Social Care and Health Services looking closely at the effectiveness of multi-agency working in relation to social and emotional wellbeing and mental health.

The final version of the Youth Transport Charter was also to be launched this month with a webpage, posters and leaflets.

Reference was also made to the pre-decision scrutiny process, the progress monitoring of strategies and plans, recommendations and outcomes, sub-group activity, public involvement and other activity undertaken by Scrutiny.

In seconding the report Councillor Cowles endorsed the work of Scrutiny and in particular was grateful to those Partners and Members that supported the process.

Cabinet Members welcomed the role of Scrutiny and in particular their work in monitoring performance. Sheffield City Council had recognised the work undertaken in Rotherham and had invited the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to speak on the work undertaken on behalf of Borough.

**Resolved:-** That the report be received and the contents noted.

Mover:- Councillor Steele

Seconder:- Councillor Cowles

**295. AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Wyatt

Seconder:- Councillor Walsh

**296. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Seconder:- Councillor Keenan

**297. PLANNING BOARD**

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Sheppard

Seconder:- Councillor Williams

**298. LICENSING BOARD**

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Board Sub-Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Ellis

Seconder:- Councillor Beaumont

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

**(1) Councillor Cowles** referred to residents of South Yorkshire, including Rotherham, contributing an additional £7 million approximately in Council Tax via the increased Police precept this year so asked could the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel Representative explain how many additional Police Officers have now been recruited and were in training?

Councillor Sansome explained that from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023 the strength of the Police Force would see an increase of 743 officers of which 220 have been funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner in the precept.

In the year 2019/20 the numbers would increase by 88, which was an increase from that proposed by the Police and Crime Commissioner of 55 when he asked for an increase in the precept by 14%. The Police and Crime Panel refused on the basis that the figure be increased to 90.

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In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked about latest crime figures when knife crime and sexual offences were on the increase. He had attended the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel before Christmas, but asked when did the Panel discuss issues and held the relevant people to account. Should this not be on every agenda so that everyone could see the challenge for poor or lack of performance?

Councillor Sansome pointed out that had Councillor Cowles joined the Panel he would have seen for himself. However, whilst he regularly asked questions at Panel meetings the role of the Police and Crime Panel was to hold the Police and Crime Commissioner to account not the Police Constable. This was the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the various Boards.

**(2) Councillor Carter** asked what was the average waiting time for a 101 telephone call to be answered when the telephone call-back service was not in use and how did that compare to when the service was in use?

Councillor Sansome explained he himself had asked this question at the Police and Crime Panel and believed the service should be in operation 24/7 and not when the Force saw fit. This was not straightforward because the call back facility was not in continuous use, but was used by management when calls could not be answered within a reasonable length of time. The new IT allowed screens to be on display giving real-time information to managers about how many calls were queuing. If waiting time becomes unduly long, the call back facility was switched on.

Demand varies greatly throughout the week. During the period September-November, on an average day, Atlas Court received 2383 calls of which 1624 were 101 and 759 were 999. The average wait times were 2 minutes and 5 seconds when answered by the switchboard and 10 minutes and 25 seconds if passed to a call handler.

The Police and Crime Commissioner had arranged for Members of the Police and Crime Panel to visit Atlas Court on 10th February, 2020 to gain a better understanding of the different ways now open to the public to contact the Force and Councillor Carter was invited to join the Panel on this visit.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked at what point do managers of the 101 call answering service think it was a reasonable time waiting for a call to be answered when the average time from the switchboard was 2 mins and 5 seconds yet 10 mins from a call handler. It seemed a very long time to be kept on hold.

Councillor Sansome would have to seek further information on this, but suggested that if Councillor Carter wanted to attend Atlas Court on the 10<sup>th</sup> February he could ask the Police and Crime Commissioner or the Assistant Chief Constable himself.

**(3) Councillor Carter** understood the Pensions Authority continued to invest funds with businesses that conducted fracking and other non-renewable energy sources. As the Council had now declared a climate emergency would the Council's representatives be lobbying for changes to the scheme so that pensions no longer funded climate change and adopted a more ethical investment policy?

Councillor Atkin confirmed the Pensions Authority did lobby, but did have investments in oil and gas companies, although the volume of such investments and the overall level of carbon emissions from investments have reduced in recent years. This was shown in the Authority's Annual Report and in the Responsible Investment sections on the Authority's website and they would be discussed at the meeting tomorrow.

It was important to understand that Elected Members appointed to the Pensions Authority owed a fiduciary duty to the members of the Fund. This meant that they must act in the best interests of the members of the Fund and this was generally defined in financial terms.

The Pensions Authority recognised Climate Change as the most significant long-term risk (and opportunity) facing it in the area of investment. Its current policy was to focus on engaging with companies in order to release the capital tied up in carbon intensive businesses to fund a just transition to a low carbon economy. Collective action by shareholders in this area had had some success in recent years with Shell and BP among others, although faster progress was necessary.

The Authority did invest positively to support the low carbon transition particularly in the field of renewable energy, with approximately 1% of the Fund currently committed in this area.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter referred to 1% of the fund committed to renewable and low carbon sources so asked were there plans to increase this and as investments had reduced in oil and gas investment was there a plan and strategy to get this to zero during the next few years.

Councillor Atkin confirmed this was the case. Investments were often long term and decisions were made to look after the 160,000 members. The Pension Fund was worth £8.4 billion which made it the seventh largest pension fund in Britain.

**(4) Councillor Carter** asked did the Fire Authority have plans to reduce the size of its frontline workforce in the next two years?

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Councillor Taylor explained the Authority had no plans or desire to cut its frontline workforce. After a decade of continual cuts any future funding may be reduced. However, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue's financial settlement for 2020/21 meant it was unlikely the Service would have to make further reductions to its workforce within that period.

The Fire Service had recruited 24 new Fire Officers who would start training in June. However, with only receiving short term annual funding, the Authority were unable to predict any changes in the future.

The Service, Members and the Fire Brigade Union continued to lobby Government and the fire report by Sir Thomas Winder was welcomed as it stated that services were to be placed on a stable longer term footing in the future.

**(5) Councillor Atkin** asked could the spokesperson for the Fire Authority provide the result of the recent inspection of South Yorkshire Fire Service.

Councillor Taylor explained the report published in December saw Her Majesty's Inspectorate rating South Yorkshire's Fire and Rescue as 'good' across all three judgement criteria.

Inspectors found that South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue was:-

- 'Good' in effectively keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks.
- 'Good' in operating efficiently.
- 'Good' at looking after its people.

This placed South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue amongst the top rated services in the country.

The report was an excellent indication of the quality of service South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue delivered to communities and the hard work and dedication of its staff.

Of course there would also be areas for improvement and under the leadership of its new Chief Fire Officer, the Service would properly consider and put in place measures to address all of these, as it sought to continually improve its service to the people of South Yorkshire.

In a supplementary question Councillor Atkin also placed on record his own thanks to the dedication of the fire fighters and management to get this "Good" rating. He asked if there was any further good news?

Councillor Taylor explained from his involvement with the Fire Service feedback and recognition from agencies was highly positive, with very few exceptions. As part of the flooding incidents staff provided a professional service which was recognised at the highest level.

In addition, the Fire Service's Communications Department had won several awards for media campaigns and the innovative and influential ways of delivering the safety measure to the public.

The joint South Yorkshire Police and Fire Authority Community Safety Department was also voted the best emergency services collaboration project in the country. In addition, Alex Jones, Chief Fire Officer, also received the "Most Influential Woman in Fire" award recognising her individual and collective service. This highlighted and recognised the progress being made in the Fire Service moving forward.

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

**(1) Councillor Cowles** pointed out that prior to the election, residents of Whiston experienced flooded houses, evacuation and months of waiting before their properties would be dry and useable for the second time since 2000. He asked what would the Cabinet Member do to ensure adequate funding was made available to build the flood defences required in the Ward to protect dwellings, as recommended by previous engineering reports?

Councillor Hoddinott explained that this was devastating and the impact would go on for months. A number of areas around the Borough did flood and the Council wanted to put a number of schemes in place to protect those areas and to improve flood defence works.

Councillor Sheppard and the Cabinet Member, representatives on the Flooding Committee, both continued to make the case for areas that flooded.

Both the Leader and Mayor of Sheffield City Region were lobbying for Government funding and Rotherham needed £51m to undertake the work required to protect flood-hit areas. The work required to protect properties near to Whiston Brook was included in this estimate.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cowles referred to a number of issues with flooding, not just surface water, which affected Whiston. He was aware maintenance of Whiston Brook was previously managed by the Local Authority, but had since transferred to the Environment Agency. Despite requests to them he had not received any maintenance records. He had contacted the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water and they denied any spillage from the pumping station into Whiston Brook until they were shown videos that this was the case.

Whiston Brook was now in an appalling state with one of the culverts blocked under the road and rubble left causing blockages in the flow of the water. He, therefore, asked for assurance that the Council would standby the residents of Whiston to get the defences in place so that the flooding did not happen again.

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Councillor Hoddinott confirmed Whiston Brook was now managed by the Environment Agency and was not aware that Councillor Cowles' requests for information were not being adhered to. She offered to help in this regard.

Yorkshire Water also had a role to play and she and Councillor Sheppard were asking for the Environment Agency to list assets such as pumping stations etc. across the Borough so it was certain what state they were in and what investment was needed, who managed them and who was responsible.

The Council would continue to press for action. Rotherham was not alone on what had been experienced as part of the flooding. Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield were to take a River Don and Dearne approach working in partnership across South Yorkshire to pick up specifics and actions from the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water, who were slow at coming forward in dealing with residents' concerns.

**(2) This question was withdrawn.**

**(3) Councillor Simpson** asked would the Leader of the Council join him in thanking those taxi drivers who carried on working as long as they could during the recent floods.

The Leader confirmed he was happy to be associated with the Elected Member for Brinsworth and Catcliffe Ward in thanking any taxi driver and other services who supported residents and visitors during the severe weather on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.

**(4) Councillor Simpson** asked given the recent news about Scottish Water and possible connection to Dementia would the Cabinet Member join him in asking that that all Councillors let residents know about the very safe levels of Aluminium in Yorkshire water.

Councillor Roche confirmed Yorkshire Water regularly took samples for Aluminium and there have been no failures of the standard in the general Rotherham area since prior to 2005. In fact, Yorkshire Water typically expected to see concentrations so low as to be at the limit of detection.

Rotherham residents should be assured that the levels of Aluminium in their drinking water kept at levels well below standards for acceptability.

**(5) Councillor Sansome** asked could the Cabinet Member give him and his Ward residents an assurance that an impact assessment had been completed for the Swinton development that protected the local infrastructure e.g. GPs, schools, roads etc.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed the impact of the development on local infrastructure would be picked up through the planning process, before any formal permission to develop the site was given. Any planning

application submitted would be subject to public consultation and be available to view on the Council's website.

The company had agreed to work with the Council on public engagement and to engage with local Ward Members as the scheme progressed.

In a supplementary question Councillor Sansome expressed the importance and speed of the consultation in this once in a lifetime opportunity for Swinton and the need to listen to residents was massive.

Councillor Lelliott appreciated the concerns, but pointed out that due planning process must take place and that having already consulted with local residents previously, relevant officers, in conjunction with Ward Members, would consult again.

**(6) Councillor Sansome** explained the proposed Swinton development, whilst very welcome could have an economic impact on footfall whilst the development was ongoing so asked could the Cabinet Member give a commitment that she would liaise with business owners to understand any footfall issues.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed if was proposed to hold regular meetings with local retailers and this, whilst including herself and Council Officers as appropriate, would be led by the developer. These would occur at key points in the development, including at the design and planning stage.

Council Officers via Asset Management have already started discussions with local retailers.

The Council was aware that there would be an amount of disruption during the work, but it would seek to work with the developer to ensure that any disruption to retailers was minimised. It is the Council's ambition for this project to ensure that existing and new retailers could grow and thrive in Swinton with improved facilities was an excellent opportunity.

In a supplementary question Councillor Sansome asked could Councillor Lelliott please ask the developers make some regular commitment to meet.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed she would ask the developers this question.

**(7) Councillor Sansome** explained that in 2015 this Council under a Labour administration agreed a procurement policy that committed to using Rotherham Steel. Forge Island development would see Rotherham steel used so did the Leader agree with him that it was time for Boris to follow a Labour model not his populist free market rhetoric.

The Leader confirmed Muse had indicated they would use Rotherham steel where possible within the development. This followed on from Gulliver's where they used the local supply chains to get maximum

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benefit. Indeed, the Council's own Social Value Policy was committed to getting maximum local benefit.

In a supplementary question Councillor Sansome asked if the Leader would join with him congratulating Mr. Chris Williams on the Aldwarke site for no compulsory redundancies and the retention of agency personnel in the steel making process in light of reported job losses in the steel industry.

The Leader confirmed this was indeed welcome news as Members were concerned about the potential economic impact on the site and noted the comments from the management. The Council would continue to offer its support to the steel production and local employment.

**(8) Councillor Wyatt** referred to the Swinton Redevelopment and asked would a dedicated risk register be sorted for the project and if so, who would monitor this and when would it be compiled with.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed the Swinton Town Centre Regeneration Project would be taken forward by a private company following the procurement exercise. They would produce their own project risk registers and comply with CDM regulations to Manage Health and Safety Risks.

The Council would have a project plan with any associated risks identified for aspects relating to the library, community centre, residents and retailers.

In a supplementary question Councillor Wyatt was aware the building work would follow risk process, but the risk register was about the overall delivery of the project and local Ward Members might help to mitigate this locally. He asked, therefore, if Ward Members could have sight of this to assist locally.

Councillor Lelliott reiterated the project was being delivered by a private developer who would have own risk register. Officers would have a project plan and have all the risks identified within it. She was happy to work with Ward Members to go through this register.

**(9) Councillor Wyatt** asked, in view of the Council's agreed Social Value Policy could the Cabinet Member give the Chamber the assurance that officers would work with the developer for the Swinton redevelopment to maximise local jobs, "Buy Local", British Steel used, monitor apprenticeship benefit, considerate contractors scheme, high environmental standards and design out crime methodology.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed that in line with the developer's original submission they would commit to buying locally where possible for construction materials and as a Yorkshire based company most of the supply chain was already from within the county.

As part of the bid the consortium agreed to take on six new apprentices/ construction trainees.

Designing out crime was applicable to the new build homes and the Council would consult with the relevant local secure by design officer, however, on the existing buildings the aim would be to minimise crime through new interventions, where possible.

In a supplementary question Councillor Wyatt asked would the Cabinet Member agree with him that the demonstration why the benefits such as this ought to be publicised and celebrated as the project moved forward.

Councillor Lelliott was in full agreement.

**(10) Councillor Wyatt** explained the first public event was very well attended and many of the issues raised have been addressed. The commitment from the preferred bidder to organise further sessions was welcome in addition to the full planning requirements, but asked could he be assured that this process got underway as soon as possible?

Councillor Lelliott explained she was happy to take this back, but the next stage of the project would be a planning application involving consultation as part of this process.

The company had agreed to work with the Council on public engagement and to engage with Local Ward Members as the scheme progressed. No dates or times have been agreed yet.

**(11) Councillor Carter** asked did the Council have any imminent plans to introduce new litter bins and dog waste bins throughout the Borough.

Over the last twelve months the Council had invested £56,000 to replace damaged litter bins across the Borough and invested in twelve solar powered litter bins in the Town Centre. In addition, in consultation with Ward Councillors, the Council had installed three new litter bins in each Council Ward.

Consideration was being given to further steps, as part of the budget for the coming year, which will be reported to Council in February.

**(12) Councillor Carter** asked what were the Council's priorities regarding the bus network in the Borough and how did the Council prioritise the key destinations that the buses needed to cover?

Councillor Lelliott explained the routing and operation of bus services was determined by private, commercial bus operators.

The South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive have informed the Council that, in South Yorkshire, 87% of services were operated on this commercial basis.

Where there were gaps in the commercial network, services may be tendered by the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive.

To prioritise funding SYPTE considered: the distance to the nearest commercial/or tendered service and the cost of each journey made on each supported service.

In order to try to ensure local priorities were met, the Council, through the Rotherham Bus Partnership, sought to influence and collaborate with bus operators and the SYPTE in relation to services provided.

Ultimately the decisions on routing rested with bus operators on commercially operated services and with SYPTE in the case of tendered services.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked what this administration's intentions and priorities were in terms of key destinations and whether it wanted to prioritise the bus network that served Rotherham town centre or key hubs that residents wanted to get to like Meadowhall.

Councillor Lelliott explained SYPTE had pointed out that bus services were coming under increasing pressure, as the commercial bus service was much reduced (20% reduction). This had increased the demand for tendered services at a time when the budget to support such services was reducing and the cost of providing the services was increasing.

However, if Councillor Carter had somewhere particular in mind that could do with a tendered service happy the Cabinet Member was happy to take this up with SYPTE.

**(13) Councillor Carter** explained that two years ago the Cabinet Member told him that requiring third party sub-contractors to pay the Joseph Rowntree living wage to their staff was too expensive and could not be done legally. He asked what had changed.

Councillor Alam explained there had been no change in the law. The approach being taken by the Council was to encourage its supply base to pay the living wage rather than mandate it through the procurement process and that this was considered on a case by case basis.

The Council's Social Value Policy also encouraged local businesses to invest locally.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked what had changed the Council's mind from him first raising this two years ago supporting sub-contractors paying the Living Wage.

Councillor Alam explained the Council could not force a third party legally, but could encourage and was working with local business to invest locally and to improve their ethical policy on recruitment.

**(14) Councillor Carter** asked would the Council support proposals that would involve a Park and Ride service that connected Sheffield city centre with somewhere around the Junction 33 area of the parkway?

Councillor Lelliott confirmed that at this moment there was no proposal for a park and ride service in the area mentioned. However, if Sheffield Council wished to speak to the Council regarding this, the Council would be happy to engage.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked whether the administration would want to progress this or look into it further if it was an option.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed there were no plans at the minute, but was more than happy to speak to Sheffield if they wished to engage.

**(15) Councillor Carter** referred two years ago to an extension to the car park at the AMRC being built after Ward Councillors raised the issue of reckless parking with them and limited double yellow lines were introduced. Since then, student numbers have massively increased so asked would the Council lobby for increased parking provision and ensure that parking attendants patrolled the area.

Councillor Lelliott explained the Council recognised that there was pressure on car parking at the Advanced Manufacturing Park, including the AMRC. Officers have already met with the landowner and the University to raise the matter and would continue to press both parties to identify measures to ease the problem. This traffic had an impact locally, but also contributed to the broader problem of congestion in the area and on the Parkway. Therefore, as well as considering the extent of local restrictions and enforcement, the Council have a broader transport strategy to provide enough capacity on the network but also to manage car demand. That was why the Council was proposing a major long term investment to widen the Parkway, but also lobbying for a new Train Station at Waverley, that would provide a genuine step change in public transport at the site.

With regard to enforcement, the Transportation and Highways team was currently working on proposals to implement parking restrictions on a number of roads in the Waverley Area. This required a formal process to be followed, including statutory and public consultation, which could take up to six months to implement subject to no objection being received.

In relation to parking attendants the Cabinet Member was pleased to report that she had arranged for additional parking patrols to be carried out in the Waverley area.

**(16) Councillor Carter** asked what progress had been made by the Council on its so-called “Children’s Capital of Culture” project since it was revealed in the summer.

Councillor Allen confirmed the Children’s Capital of Culture Project was not a Council project, but an initiative which was led by the Rotherham Cultural Partnership Board, a multi-agency group consisting of mainly voluntary and private sector partners, such as Magna, Places Leisure, Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance and Yorkshire Sport to name but a few.

During this time the Council had supported the creation of a steering group which was led by Julie Dalton, CEO of Gulliver’s, which included Voluntary Action Rotherham, Grimm and Co. and involved young people in an advisory capacity.

This group has appointed cultural engagement agency 64 Million Artists (funded by the WE Great Place programme) to undertake a year of research and development.

This first six months had been about establishing the foundation on which to build and ensuring that due diligence was undertaken ahead of any major announcements.

To date, activity included:-

- Testing new activities, such as the Young Roots project at Clifton Park Museum and the Children and Families Zone at Rotherham Show (independent evaluation tells us this was very popular with Rotherham Show visitors).
- Consultation with teachers, youth and social care experts through forums such as Rotherham Young People’s Partnership Board and Rotherham Education Strategic Partnership.
- Building links with other towns and cities running similar cultural initiatives in order to better understand the financial and operating model.
- Early discussions with prospective funders such as Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund about how the project supports their goals.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked what were the costs to the Council for the progress made on the Children’s Capital of Culture

Councillor Allen did not have the information to hand, but would endeavour to provide this to Councillor Carter.

**(17) Councillor Carter** pointed out that the press had recently highlighted a dramatic fall down in the regional league table for achievement at junior school level and Rotherham was now the worst in the region. He asked how did the Cabinet Member explain the fall in achievement across the Borough?

Councillor Watson explained that when exam results were received they were invalidated. In most cases they would change very little between invalidated results and the validated results that were not published until February. However, in this particular case the Key Stage 2 results the validated results would be dramatically different. The reading and mathematics results and the combined result of reading, maths and writing would be 2% higher than the figures referred to and the writing results were 1.5% higher which dragged the results down to the same as last year's figures.

The plan was to increase year on year rather than standstill but for any given primary school there was only a small number of pupils in any given year that may be different better or worse than another.

The Educational Strategic Partnership was concentrating on reading and all language skills as this would give the best foundation for secondary education. However, when the validated figures were published in February they would not be the worst in the region.

The Council would like the results to be better and there was an across authority plan involving the Educational Partnership, Local Authority, the CEOs from the larger MATS and Head Teachers in primary and secondary.

In considering the results, however, the Key Stage 4 results were better than expected this year and once again the Key Stage 5 results were improved much above the national average and of great credit to those schools.

**(18) Councillor Carter** asked what business rate relief, incentives and other support did the Council give enterprising new businesses to open in or expand in areas such as Rotherham town centre and district centres like Brinsworth and Dinnington?

Councillor Alam explained business rates reliefs gave up to 100% relief dependant on qualifying criteria and retail discount which gave 33.3% relief.

These were available to all qualifying businesses and do not specifically target new businesses or businesses setting up in specific areas.

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Additionally, the Localism Act allowed the Council to award up to 100% rate relief to any business in order to help attract firms, investment and jobs.

Any discretionary awards are made under the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy and were subject to Cabinet approval.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked about discretionary rate relief up to 100% and if there were any plans to make this available to any enterprising businesses coming into our town centre.

Councillor Alam explained advice would be given to any new businesses and if they met the qualifying criteria then they would receive the discount.

**(19) Councillor Carter** asked did the administration support or oppose the proposed closure of the Dinnington campus of Rotherham College?

Councillor Watson confirmed the Council had not yet been formally consulted to date and, of course, it was disappointed.

The issue facing the Rotherham and North Notts College Group which incorporated Dearne Valley College, Rotherham College and North Notts College had to be acknowledged.

The College Group have previously stated that they were undertaking a review of estates to identify land and property that could be released to fund investment required for the future as budgets have reduced significantly due to the real-terms cuts, while at the same time student numbers have increased.

Ultimately the two big costs in education were staffing and buildings. In the first instance there would be a bus service that would take students to the other colleges.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked if the Cabinet Member agreed with him that the Council should be lobbying that during the consultation processes there be an option whereby students for next September could apply to other further education colleges with the proviso that they could apply for the Dinnington campus as an option should the closure not be realised.

Councillor Watson believed this was already in the process and that students were being advised that during the consultation process there might be a place at Dinnington or at a different college. Realistically, it was suspected there would be a reduction in some of the provision at Dinnington.

**(20) Councillor Carter** asked after the successful trial of longer crematorium opening times for urgent burials in the summer, would this change be made permanent and would the Council lobby to remove the

additional surcharge imposed for this service, that he understand did not exist in Sheffield?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed a discussion had already been held within the Improving Places Select Commission into the evaluation of the pilot which was documented in the agenda pack at Page 187.

The pilot was largely successful and the findings would be given further consideration by the Internal Working Group at its next meeting in January, 2020 followed by a meeting with Dignity in February before any final decision was made on the future of the out of hours provision.

This pilot had been a real success and it was being recommended to be made permanent.

It was pointed out that the out of hours' fees had always been in place for Bank Holidays and weekends and had not changed. However, it had become more apparent as it applied from 5.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. The out of hours fee, however, would be looked at as part of benchmarking work with Dignity.

**(21) This question was withdrawn having already been answered.**

**(22) Councillor Marriott** asked what provision was available to insure that during periods of cold weather anyone in Rotherham who wants a bed could have one?

Councillor Beck explained that in exceptional cold weather the Council were working closely with the South Yorkshire Fire Service and in 2018 the fire service station in the Dearne was used to house the homeless. This was a good partnership and there were now facilities across the Borough for events of exceptional cold weather.

During other times of the year all people who the Council came into contact with or who have been referred in by other agencies were all offered the opportunity to go into temporary accommodation, or sometimes where temporary accommodation was full, into hotel accommodation.

The Rotherham Housing First scheme also had twenty-five dedicated self-contained units which were for people with really complex needs, such as mental health or substance misuse; there was wrap-around support with other agencies to help those people. This meant there was different provisions for different types of people at different times.

In a supplementary question Councillor Marriott herself had visited the fire station at Manvers and it was not suitable. She had been unable to gain access to put camp beds in until a meeting had finished so it would be nice for somewhere more suitable for the homeless to go.

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Councillor Beck confirmed this was the first time the fire station had been used and feedback at the time was positive and people were just thankful for the opportunity to have somewhere to stay.

Regardless of cold weather all rough sleepers were offered the opportunity of temporary accommodation either within one of the Council's fifty units or indeed within a hotel so the fire service provision was not the first offering.

As part of the wider approach there was more than one route for people to take. Rough sleepers often came with their own personal issues and not always wanted to go into a self-contained unit or a hotel. Occasionally they preferred to be around other people. This was why it was important to have as many different options available to people and the reason for the partnership.

**(23) Councillor B. Cutts** asked were there to be "Christmas Carols" in the town centre as normal this year and if not, why not.

Councillor Allen confirmed carols were played from the Markets Building from week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2019.

Four live performances of Christmas carols were also organised and two performances of Christmas music by local brass bands took place.

The Council's Events Team were now already developing plans for the Christmas programme for 2020 and as Cabinet Member, Councillor Allen, would ensure that Christmas Carols were taken into consideration.

**(24) Councillor B. Cutts** confirmed he was advised in the 2016 local plan that a 'local list of heritage assets' would be produced by 2018 and he asked if he could have a copy as of that date and any update since.

Councillor Allen explained that since the completion of the Sites and Policies Document in 2018, work had started on the production of a Listed Buildings at Risk Strategy and Register. This was the priority advised by Historic England, as these registers could help focus resources to save listed buildings at risk of loss. This work was scheduled to be completed by June, 2020, when the Council could then move on to other Heritage work including producing a local heritage list.

Locally listed buildings were of considerable local importance, whilst not being "statutorily listed" heritage assets. The Council's Local Plan indicated that a list of locally listed buildings would be produced and maintained by the Council.

In a supplementary question Councillor B. Cutts confirmed this request for a copy had been made for some time so if there was a list he would appreciate a copy.

Councillor Allen again explained the list was not yet complete, but once it was a copy would be provided to Councillor B. Cutts.

**(25) Councillor B. Cutts** asked was the Council trying to blot out the Grade 2 Listed Wellgate Hall with:-

- Moving building line from back to front.
- Can see trees on painting.
- Can see letter 19.11.19 – no reply to date.

and did the Council not have a duty and responsibility to the town's future?

Councillor Beck confirmed no the Council was not trying to blot out the Grade 2 Listed Wellgate Hall. Councillor Cutts had raised concerns in writing to the Council on 19th November, 2019 about the impact on the Old Hall, following the Planning Board and a response was sent to him on 21st November, 2019. However, if needed a further copy could be provided.

The application for the development of the Former Henley's site went through the proper process and went to Planning Board on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2019. At that meeting details were shared at the location of the Hall and how the development would be stepped back in order to not block out the Hall in any way.

In a supplementary comment Councillor Cutts thanked Councillor Beck for his answer and confirmed he had received the letter. He pointed out his concerns about the painted hoarding around the site and how the intended development would look. On these paintings trees were in the location where the Hall was, hence his question.

**(26) This question was withdrawn.**

**(27) Councillor Napper** asked did the Planning Department take into account Tree Preservation Orders before granting permission for construction of houses.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed they were protected through the planning process to ensure that the amenity that they provided was not lost due to the unregulated removal of them.

This did not mean that a protected tree could not be considered for removal as part of a planning application, if the benefits of the development would outweigh the loss of the tree(s), together with any mitigation to offset that loss if it was considered necessary.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper referred to the authorised and unauthorised removal of trees from the woodland at the side of the Woodlathes development. Again another six trees had recently been

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taken down. None of the trees had been left for wildlife, but removed. In total approximately fifty trees have been removed so he asked would the Cabinet Member look into this before more were taken down.

Councillor Lelliott explained that any trees that have Tree Preservation Orders require permission before any works, unless the tree was illegally removed. However, this would be followed up and investigated by the Planning Department.

**(28) Councillor Napper** asked what pressure could R.M.B.C. put on Thrybergh Academy to re-open the leisure centre gymnasium to the public.

Councillor Watson explained Councils have a very limited role and limited influence in relation to academies as they were independent of the Local Authority and operated in accordance with their funding agreements with the Secretary of State for Education.

The academy was also a school requiring "Special Measures" and the Regional Schools Commissioner had appointed the Wickersley Partnership Trust as Sponsor with a remit to focus on:-

- Raising school standards.
- Improve educational outcomes for pupils.
- Ensuring a balanced school budget via Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) notice.

The Academy advised that the closure of the gym facilities to the public was due to the increased costs of supervisory staffing, costs of maintaining and replacing equipment and consumables and also other on costs incurred by the Academy meaning that the gym was placing an ever increasing financial burden on the school budget. This was an untenable position when schools spending per pupil had dropped by 8% in real terms since 2010. The Academy could simply not afford to run the leisure centre whilst improving the educational standards in the school.

In a supplementary question Councillor Napper referred to the vast array of community groups using the facilities for football, cricket, rugby, basketball, badminton, archery, table tennis, climbing etc. and believed the sum in question was around £5k. Surely this could easily be achieved with a small charge to raise these funds. He believed it was wrong that the facility could not be used following the hard work in turning this wet area into a vegetable garden and then subsequently into a leisure centre.

Councillor Watson had been advised that all other lettings to community groups at the school in relation to the sports hall and sports facilities would remain unaffected. It was just the gym facilities. If that was not the case he would investigate further.

**(29) Councillor Napper** asked would R.M.B.C. double the amount of trees to be planted on R.M.B.C. land in the future to help fight climate change.

Councillor Allen confirmed the Council was hoping to take a more calculated approach and the Council would seek to actively plant trees as part of development, regeneration and transport projects. An example of this was the College Road Roundabout scheme currently on site which would see replacement tree planting as part of the highway improvements at a ratio of 6:1.

As a result of the Council's recent motion on the Climate Change on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2019 a Carbon Action Plan would be coming to Council in March, 2020 and this would outline the intended approach to trees and the affects on carbon emissions.

**(30) Councillor Jarvis asked** how would the social values contract starting in April effect Adult Social Care contracts and were there any tenders/contracts meeting the Social Value Policy.

Councillor Roche confirmed this good news story saw the Social Value Policy being introduced in December 2019. Cabinet also approved the new approach to Home Care and Support in December, with new arrangements starting from 1st April, 2020.

For the first time when awarding the Home Care contracts, the bidders have had to demonstrate how they could provide wider social value to Rotherham, as well as delivering good services. Frontline care workers in Rotherham were set to get a pay rise as a result. This was a major victory for Rotherham Council's new Social Value Policy - giving a boost to the local economy and nearly 800 low paid workers.

Following a comprehensive tendering process and negotiations, it had been confirmed that all 970 care workers would be paid the Living Wage Foundation hourly rate of £9.30 per hour or above. In addition, the contracts have guaranteed training, use of apprentices and the ending of the fifteen minute slots at no extra cost to the tender. A contract relating to providing accommodation of vulnerable children also guaranteed a wide range of social value benefits with the voluntary tender approved by the policy. Adult Social Care was fully committed to the Council's to the Social Value Policy.

**301. URGENT ITEMS**

The Mayor agreed for the following item of business to be considered as an urgent item at today's meeting following the request by the Brexit Party for changes to the membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

**302. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES**

Consideration was given to the request by the Brexit Party Group to nominate Councillor Alan Napper to replace Councillor Allen Cowles on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and in addition to be appointed as Vice-Chair of that Board.

**Resolved:-** That the replacement of Councillor Napper for Councillor Cowles as Vice-Chair and Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be approved.

Mover:- Councillor Cowles

Seconder:- Councillor Napper