

AREA ASSEMBLIES

Area Assemblies and Area Assembly Co-ordinating Groups

Area Assemblies

- (1) The Council has approved seven Area Assemblies which between them cover the whole Borough. The area covered by each Assembly comprises three electoral wards of the Borough.
- (2) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Area Assemblies shall be appointed by the Council at its annual meeting from among the elected Members for the electoral wards within the area.
- (3) The role of the Area Assemblies shall be to:-
 - Encourage access and participation from local residents in the democratic process;
 - Develop a single Area Plan for the Area Assembly that is recognized by all agencies operating within the area;
 - Set local delivery targets and monitor progress towards these targets;
 - Review the impact and co-ordination of Council policies and services and those of other organisations who deliver services in the areas which the Assembly covers;
 - Consider issues of local concern and to submit reports to the relevant Cabinet Member, Cabinet, Scrutiny and Rotherham Partnership on these;
 - Comment on issues referred by Cabinet, the relevant Cabinet Member, Scrutiny and Rotherham Partnership;
 - Indicate views on a range of issues which require local consultation;
 - Receive and consider the report of any Task and Finish Group set up by the Co-ordinating Group and determine any appropriate action.
 - Consider funding proposals for the expenditure of devolved budgets submitted to the Area Assembly by the Co-ordinating Group.
- (4) Area Assemblies shall hold public meetings at least six times a year at publicised locations within the areas they cover. Such meetings shall be attended by the elected Members, representatives of other public bodies, voluntary and commercial organisations operating within the area (whether or not represented on the Area Assembly Co-ordinating Group) and members of the public.

Co-ordinating Groups

- (5) Each Area Assembly shall have a Co-ordinating Group which shall be a Committee of the Council.
- (6) The Co-ordinating Group shall comprise:-

- The nine elected Members for the electoral wards within the area.
 - Six representatives of partner organisations.
 - Three community representatives.
- (7) The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Area Assembly appointed by the Council shall also be the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Co-ordinating Group.
- (8) The six representatives of partner organisations shall in all cases include a representative of South Yorkshire Police, 2010 Rotherham Limited, NHS Rotherham and where applicable a Parish Council representative to be chosen by the Parish Councils within the area. These representatives and the elected Members shall jointly appoint the remaining representatives of partner organisations.
- (9) The three community representatives will be appointed by the elected Members and the representatives of partner organisations following public advertisement within the area, for a term of four years.
- (10) The Co-ordinating Group may co-opt representatives of other partner organisations or community representatives for such particular projects or periods of time as the Co-ordinating Group shall determine.
- (11) Meetings of the Co-ordinating Group shall be held at least six times a year. A quorum must include at least three of the elected Members of the Co-ordinating Group and at least three other members of the Group.
- (12) Substitute Members are not permitted at meetings of the Co-ordinating Group. If a partner representative or community representative fails to attend the Co-ordinating Group for three consecutive meetings, then the Co-ordinating Group shall consider the reasons for non-attendance and may appoint a replacement partner or community representative as the case may be.
- (13) The key roles of the Co-ordinating Group shall be as follows:-
- To report on a regular basis to the public meeting of the Area Assembly on all matters relevant to its Terms of Reference.
 - To meet on a regular basis prior to each of the public meetings of the Area Assembly and to determine and co-ordinate the agendas for those meetings.
 - To set up and co-ordinate “Task and Finish” groups (time limited) based on the priority themes to propose solutions to specific local issues which are not being dealt with elsewhere within the Council or by partner organisations.
 - To receive an annual report with updated area profiles and consider the implications for service planning and delivery.

- To agree a consultation plan for the area and ensure that information received from this consultation is made available to partner agencies to inform higher level borough wide planning.
- Agree an Area Plan for the area that is consistent with the community strategy.
- To monitor the effectiveness of collaborative working arrangements of the partners to the Area Assembly through twice-yearly performance and service reports.
- To direct any policy issues arising out of operational experience within the Council or the Rotherham Partnership.
- To consider and report to public meetings of the Area Assembly upon the effects of any policy changes affecting services being delivered in the area.
- To consider requests and deal with any issues arising from public meetings of the Area Assembly or from individual members of the public.
- To consider requests for action under the Council's "Councillor Call For Action" procedure.
- To ensure that proposals for the expenditure of any budget allocated to the Area Assembly meet the eligibility criteria.
- To submit such proposals for consideration by the Area Assembly and then make recommendations on the proposals to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods who will arrange for the recommendations to be submitted to Cabinet for ratification.
- To make quarterly reports to Scrutiny on the progress of projects approved for the expenditure of its budget allocation and the outcomes achieved.

Devolved Budgets and Delegated Powers

- (14) Either the Council or any partner may devolve budgets to the Area Assembly. However these budgets will remain the respective responsibility of the Council or the individual partners as regards their own statutory responsibility.
- (15) The Co-ordinating Group shall receive and may themselves make proposals for expending the budget which are consistent with the Area Plan for the Area Assembly.
- (16) Where the proposal relates to a function which is the statutory responsibility of the Council, the Co-ordinating Group shall ensure that it is in accordance with criteria agreed by the Council and that any other procedures required by the Council, such as consultation with relevant Directorates, are complied with.
- (17) Having satisfied themselves that a proposal complies with all relevant criteria and procedures, the Co-ordinating Group shall submit it to the Area Assembly for consideration.

- (18) The Co-ordinating Group shall then reconsider all the proposals in the light of the views of the Area Assembly and shall submit to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods those proposals which they are recommending for approval by Cabinet.
- (19) Where the proposal relates to a matter which is the statutory responsibility of a partner organisation, following its consideration by the Area Assembly and recommendation by the Co-ordinating Group, the Co-ordinating Group shall submit the proposal to that organisation for approval, unless there is a representative of that organisation on the Co-ordinating Group who has the authority to approve the proposal.
- (20) Where a proposal relates to pooled budgeting which has been made available by the Council and one or more partner organisations, then the procedures set out at (16) to (19) above shall apply in order to obtain the approvals respectively of the elected Members and the relevant partner or partners.
- (21) Should Cabinet or any partner organisation decide not to approve any spending proposal referred to it following approval at an Area Assembly meeting, then the reasons for the decision shall be reported to the Co-ordinating Group who in turn shall report these to the Area Assembly.
- (22) Decisions at meetings of the Co-ordinating Group shall wherever possible be by consensus. Should any powers be formally delegated to the Co-ordinating Group by Cabinet or by Council, then the decision shall be by a majority of those elected Members present and voting, with the Chairman having a casting vote in accordance with the Council's procedures.

Area Chairs Meeting

- (23) The Area Chairs shall meet at least six times a year together with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods who shall chair each meeting.
- (24) The key roles of the meeting shall be as follows:-
- To consider and advise the Council and Cabinet on the arrangements for involvement and consultation of local communities through Area Assemblies.
 - To consider issues which are common to all of the Area Assemblies and agree a preferred approach.
 - To share best practice.
 - To discuss the progress being made by Area Assemblies on the implementation of Area Plans.
 - To monitor the expenditure of devolved budgets and the outcomes achieved.
 - To discuss issues referred to the meeting by individual Area Assemblies.

- To discuss issues referred to the meeting by Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members or Scrutiny.
- (25) The meeting may submit reports and recommendations to public meetings of Area Assemblies, Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members and Scrutiny.