

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1	<b>Meeting:</b>	Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel
2	<b>Date:</b>	3 September 2010
3	<b>Title:</b>	Rotherham's Imagination Library
4	<b>Directorate:</b>	Children and Young People's Services

### 5 Summary

The Imagination Library is a book-gifting scheme for Under 5s. RMBC made a decision to host the scheme in a bid to improve educational and economic opportunity for the community of Rotherham.

Children who register with the Imagination Library receive a good quality, age appropriate book each month, free of charge, which is addressed to them and posted through the family's letter-box.

### 6 Recommendations

- **That the Rotherham Imagination Library's Annual Report 2009 – 2010 be received.**
- **That members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel reaffirm their support for the Imagination Library.**

### 7 Proposals and Details

Rotherham's Imagination Library's Annual Report (2009–2010) attached.

### 8 Finance

- The Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce funded the Imagination Library activity prior to the completion of the formal procurement process (£53,183) and contributed a further £21,817 in the financial year 2008-09. A further £75,000 has been promised for the lifetime of the initial Dollywood contract (June 2012); £25,000 of which was received in 2009 – 2010.
- An allocation from the Local Authority Business Growth Initiative of £325,000 has been received and spent.
- The Payroll Deduction scheme for RMBC employees has raised £1,907.92
- Gifts and donations have been received totalling £1,231.50.
- A fundraising week has raised in excess of £1,231.13.
- NHS Rotherham has made a donation of £30,000.
- Originally an LAA Reward Grant of £250,000 was awarded to the Imagination Library (to contribute to the cost of books, postage and project work). However the award has since been reduced by £50,000 to £200,000.

## 9 Risks and Uncertainties

### Educational Attainment

The performance data for children in statutory education shows that, from the earliest ages, Rotherham's children experience difficulties in communication, language and literacy skills. This pattern of performance is then replicated throughout the later Key Stages through to GCSE and beyond. Failure to achieve functional levels in these key areas impacts negatively on the overall achievements and life chances of children and young people in the borough.

### Finance

If the success of the scheme continues, and if we succeed in reaching 75% of all under-fives in Rotherham during 2010-2011, we anticipate a shortfall of £32,000 in this financial year – due to the reduction in the LAA Reward Grant. If the number of registrations continues to grow the cost of the scheme in 2011-2012 is likely to be in the region of £300,000+. Failure to secure significant sources of income will necessitate an urgent review of the project.

## 10 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

This initiative will address the Corporate Priorities for:

- Regeneration:       - improving the image of Rotherham.  
                              - providing sustainable neighbourhoods of quality, choice and aspiration.
- Equalities:           - promoting equality.  
                              - promoting good community relations.
- Sustainability:      - improving the quality of life.  
                              - increasing employment opportunities for local people.

together with the outcomes for Enjoy and Achieve contained within the Children's Plan.

## 11 Background Papers and Consultation

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