

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT

<b>1. Meeting:</b>	<b>Self-Regulation Select Commission</b>
<b>2. Date:</b>	<b>15 September 2011</b>
<b>3. Title:</b>	<b>Update from on performance reporting – feedback from Member’s working group</b>
<b>4. Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive’s All wards</b>

### **5. Summary**

At its last meeting of 21 July, 2011, this committee agreed that a Sub-Group, led by Councillor Ellis along with Councillors Atkin, Currie and J. Hamilton be established to review the format of future performance data. This report summarises the discussions and seeks the views of the Select Commission on the recommendations of the working group.

### **6. Recommendations**

#### **That the Select Commission:**

- a. Gives its views on the draft format attached as Appendices 1 and 2**
- b. Considers how it wishes to undertakes detailed scrutiny of areas for improvement.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

The working group met on four occasions to discuss how performance information is reported and how this can be used by Members to provide constructive challenge and scrutinise corporate performance effectively.

This report outlines the working group's preferred reporting format and seeks the views of the wider Select Commission on how performance issues are scrutinised.

### **7.1 Summary of discussions**

The new reporting format is based on the twenty nine priority areas outlined in the Corporate Plan. The working group discussed with officers the rationale behind each of the targets and offered suggestions where measures could be improved or where a greater level of detail was required (for example, demonstrating how levels of deprivation or inequalities are being addressed through specific initiatives in different parts of the Borough). These suggestions have been incorporated, are being considered, or have informed other pieces of work.

The Members requested that the following areas be addressed:

- Information should be in 'plain language' and accessible;
- Key areas of under-performance, length of time area had been deemed to 'red', direction of travel, trends, should be easy to identify;
- Clear timeline of when the report had been to SLT/ Cabinet Member and Cabinet and what actions and recommendations had been taken at each stage;
- Clarity about what 'success looks like' (have we achieved what we've set out to) and whether value for money has been secured;
- How members could unpick each of the priorities in terms of understanding the 'bigger picture' and what sits beneath each of the headlines.

### **7.2 Reporting Format**

On the basis of discussion with members, officers in the Performance Team have refined their performance reports. These were presented to the working group on 6 September, 2011 and received member support. Members welcomed the consistency in approach to service planning and performance reporting, linking it to the wider Corporate Plan.

- It is suggested that an overview or 'high level' performance report is submitted on a quarterly basis (with more detailed information available as necessary). A draft format is submitted for consideration as Appendix 1. Quarter 2 will be submitted to the meeting of 8 December, 2011, adopting the preferred format.
- More detailed work has been undertaken on the compilation of 'scorecards' (example attached as Appendix 2). This will provide greater detail on each of the twenty nine corporate priorities and can be used by members to look at specific areas in more depth. These will be stored on the Council's intranet and available to members to download.

- The scorecards are also linked to Service and Team Plans which detail the broader work of Directorates to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan. These, together with Directorate “Plans on a Page”, identify the key contributions and ownership within each Directorate to delivery of the high level outcomes. These documents will also be available on the intranet.
- There was a consensus among the working group that the high level report could trigger further investigation of areas of poor performance by exception. This further work could be undertaken by the full Commission or referred to a smaller sub-group to address, with support from relevant officers from the Performance Team and Directorates as appropriate. The Commission’s views are sought on these options.
- As with the previous scrutiny system, areas of concern or improvement may lead to an in-depth investigation by this body or a referral to another select commission for further scrutiny.
- Members will be aware that the Local Government Association is developing the ‘Knowledge Hub’; a website that will hold performance information on comparator authorities. This is still in development but is hoped will be a useful tool for members. Training sessions will be offered to roll this out to members in due course.

## **8. Finance**

There are no financial implications directly related to this report. However, recommendations from the Select Commission may have financial implications if adopted. This would require further exploration by the Strategic Leadership Team on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation prior to Cabinet decision.

## **9. Risks and uncertainties**

- It is recognised by the working group that the reporting format is ‘work in progress’ and may be subject to further change as appropriate.
- Failure to have a strong overview and scrutiny function which is focused on holding the local authority to account for poor performance or poor practice may undermine the Council’s credibility for self regulation.

## **10. Policy and performance information**

Overview and Scrutiny has an emerging role in the Local Government Group ‘self-regulation’ agenda, linked to self-assessment, performance improvement and facilitating wider accountability and openness. The Centre for Public Scrutiny is developing a toolkit for members.

Done well, scrutiny is not just an inward looking activity but brings a wider perspective from customers and other benchmarks. It can also ensure that the Council focuses on the priorities which the community has called on it to adopt, making the best use of resources.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Minute 5, Self Regulation Select Commission, 21 July 2011

Meetings held with

- Matt Gladstone, Director of Policy, Performance and Commissioning
- Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny and Policy Manager
- Richard Garrad, Performance And Quality Manager
- Lorna Kelly, Performance Officer
- Michael Holmes, Policy Officer

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