

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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| 1. | Meeting: | Cabinet |
| 2. | Date: | 21st December 2011 |
| 3. | Title: | Scrutiny review of regeneration funding and neighbourhood renewal – final report |
| 4. | Directorate: | Resources Directorate |

5. Summary

The attached report sets out the findings and recommendations of the *scrutiny review of regeneration funding and neighbourhood renewal*. The report was endorsed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) at its meeting on 2nd December 2011.

Members are asked to consider the final review report, focusing in particular on the recommendations and links with other workstreams.

6. Recommendations

- a) That Cabinet receive the report and recommendations and note the links to other workstreams and – in particular – the November 9th Cabinet report: *targeting and coordinating resources to the most deprived areas*.
- b) That Cabinet members' responses to the recommendations are fed back to OSMB within two months.

7. Proposals and Details

Background

The review was commissioned following the publication of the latest indices of multiple deprivation, which showed a deterioration for a number of areas in Rotherham.

The initial scoping and research in July and August was followed by review sessions at Dinnington Resource Centre (6th October) and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (21st October).

The main aims, as set out in the agreed scoping document, were to:

- assess the effectiveness of past neighbourhood-based regeneration programmes in Rotherham and identify good practice and key lessons
- see whether learning could be applied to the planning or delivery of existing or future projects to ensure the greatest impact is made
- analyse, in particular, the various intensive neighbourhood management schemes (i.e. Chesterhill, Local Ambition Programme) and assess the potential for further roll out.

Recommendations

The final review report (see attached) sets out a number of recommendations relating to various policy areas, which are summarised here:

Housing

- Work more proactively with private landlords and review housing allocations policy and practice.

Resource allocation

- Give area assembly teams greater flexibility to target their efforts where they are most needed and consider an overall shift to targeted rather than universal services.

Neighbourhood working

- Consider how the role of local coordinator can be created in deprived areas as part of wider local governance arrangements that incorporate a key role for members and senior officers and adapt *community budget* principles as appropriate.

Aspirations

- Ensure a renewed focus on raising aspirations through council commissioning processes, strategy development and effective partnership working (e.g. working with Jobcentre Plus to address barriers to employment.).

Strategic

- Ensure key council policies and strategies - particularly the economic plan - have an explicit focus on tackling long-term issues in the most deprived communities.

Prevention and early intervention

- Ensure that *prevention and early intervention* principles underpin the approach to targeting resources in deprived areas.

Communities of interest

- Carry out equality analyses and ongoing impact assessments and monitoring to ensure all proposed actions recognise and address the particular issues facing groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Linkages

As the final report points out, the issues covered by the review overlap with a number of ongoing initiatives that are looking at how the council and partner agencies can make a sustainable impact in the borough's most deprived areas. These include:

- *Targeting and coordinating resources to the most deprived areas* – recent report to Cabinet by the director of commissioning, policy and performance (CPP) that covered similar ground to this review and suggested a four phase approach to tackling deprivation
- *Integrated single needs assessment* – aims to identify key themes from local intelligence documents that will help us to better target resources in the most deprived communities
- *Rotherham Partnership* – mapping service provision and partner spend to identify the extent to which core agencies' resources are targeted at Rotherham's most deprived neighbourhoods.
- *Scrutiny* – review of private landlords and forthcoming sessions on housing allocations and the economic plan

The scrutiny review reinforces a number of the recommendations in the director of CPP's report (e.g. deprived area "champions", more targeted approach to resource allocation). In particular, the *critical success factors* identified in that report (e.g. community involvement and ownership; local coordination and visibility; flexible use of resources) are borne out by the evidence presented as part of the review.

The full range of actions summarised above and set out in more detail in the final review report, will underpin the council and Rotherham Partnership's renewed long-term commitment to tackling deprivation and inequalities in Rotherham.

8. Finance

The scrutiny review has highlighted the fact that establishing effective working arrangements at a local level – in genuine partnership with local people – is often as important as the level of investment provided.

Through the various recommendations outlined in the report, the council and Rotherham Partnership should aim to better coordinate and target resources at areas of greatest need, recognising that it will mean a reduction or withdrawal of services in other areas.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There is a risk that interventions will be short term and not achieve a sustainable impact. To avoid this, we will need to ensure that any new approaches are properly embedded within the council and partner agencies and become “the norm”.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Understanding and responding effectively to the issues explored by this review are central to delivering the council’s corporate plan priority: “making sure no community is left behind”. Assessing our progress in reducing inequalities will be an increasing focus of the new performance management framework.

Effective working at a local level, in partnership with communities, responds to the government’s Localism agenda and the direction of travel indicated by initiatives such as *community budgets*.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Targeting and coordinating resources to the most deprived areas – Cabinet report, 9th November 2011

A range of officers and members, who had been involved in various regeneration programmes, either attended the review sessions or were invited to provide written evidence.

All background material, including local and national evaluation reports, is either included in the report’s appendices or available on request.

Contact Name(s):

Michael Holmes, Policy Officer, x54417

Deborah Fellowes, Policy and Scrutiny Manager, x22769