13. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Austen, Littleboy and St. John, Martin Happs, Val Allen, Michelle Mellor (representing Tourism Officer) and Tony Clabby.

14. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER, 2004**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.

15. **MATTERS ARISING**

(a) **The Old Three Cranes, High Street**

In response to a question raised regarding the present position of ownership of these premises, the meeting was informed that the owner had now sold it on. Economic and Development Services was currently trying to ascertain the name of the purchaser.

The main issue for the Council was the need to act upon a Notice served requiring the removal of the shop front or action to tone it down. There was presently no Conservation Officer in post within Economic and Development Services.

Agreed:- That Councillor Boyes raise this matter with the Executive Director, Economic and Development Services at the next meeting of the
Property Board.

(b) St. Ann’s Swimming Pool

A question was raised regarding the completion date of 2007 for the new central swimming pool and whether this continued to be on target.

It was confirmed that this remained the case.

16. FUTURE PERFECT: ROTHERHAM’S CULTURAL STRATEGY

Quarterly update reports were given on the implementation of individual elements of the Future Perfect Action Plan, as follows:-

Museum & Arts - The official opening of the newly refurbished Museum would take place on Friday, 11th March 2005 and all members of the Consortium would receive an invitation to attend.

A “soft” opening for members of the public was planned for Saturday, 29th January 2005 and work was on target to meet this date.

It had been almost seven years since the original bid had been submitted to Heritage Lottery Council which was the usual timescale for projects of this size.

Building work was expected to be completed by Christmas 2004.

Display units were now well under way and graphic panels had arrived. Staff were moving back and the installation of objects started next week. A great deal of work was to be done in the next six weeks.

The meeting paid tribute to all staff for their efforts in achieving the completion of a massive project to schedule.

The new museum was a significant improvement and the project had dominated other work.

Members of the Consortium paid compliments to Friends Groups which it was felt had been crucial to the success of the project and looked forward to the opening of such a prestigious project.

Libraries – Excellent news was that Charter Mark status had recently been awarded for good customer focus within the Library Service.

In addition, the Authority had recently been awarded overall scores of 3 for their approach to ‘Framework for the Future’ and in relation to Public Library Standards. This compared to scores of 3 and 1 last year.

This was viewed as a good foundation to build on and was a consequence of the hard work of library staff.
Library Standards remained challenging and new challenges remained to be focused on next year. Work was ongoing to identify what those challenges were and how it was possible to meet them.

Councillor Boyes made the point that both awards were of great benefit to the Council in terms of the way it was regarded and assessed both locally and nationally. It was particularly pleasing to have a representative from the IdEA peer assessors from other Councils to look at developing excellent targets in Councils across the country who had made a request to work with Rotherham to improve Library Services in general and to learn from Rotherham’s good work. Officers from Rotherham had also been invited to Kent County Council to discuss good practice in Rotherham.

It was noted that Assessors had commented on the good relationships with Friends Groups and the whole range of support in order to achieve success in this work.

Particular reference was made to the good work carried out by the Friends of Maltby Library and Junior Cricket Club.

Questions were raised on the following areas of work:-

- purchase of books produced locally – funding initiatives
- accessing new cataloguing system on line
- future work/plans to address the physical condition of libraries and need for new build
- local funding/editorial support for local history writers

The meeting noted the new appointment of Sarah Wickham, Principal Officer to the Archives and Local Studies Service.

The meeting praised the hard work and dedication of the staff of the Archives Department, in particular to research and support recently given to the Rotherham Rep.

Agreed:- That the Manager, Libraries, Museums and Arts liaise with colleagues regarding issues raised in the discussion of this item and feed back advice to relevant members of the consortium.

**Theatre and Arts Centre** – The Pantomime had opened to the public this week. Tickets were still available but the number of seats sold and revenue from sales had increased compared to last year.

A recent visit had been made to the Brindley Theatre and Arts Centre in Runcorn (Halton) – a new impressive complex. The visit had included a Learning Centre and Sports Stadium and had been worthwhile.

One member referred to the recent success of a play performed by
Rotherham Rep and felt it should be preserved as a Rotherham play. It was further suggested that the performance be repeated in the future.

**Leisure and Green Spaces** – Friends of Parks Schemes continued to be successful.

The Green Space Audit leading to a Green Space Strategy (and the Playing Field Strategy) were both nearing completion. An additional element has been to catalogue information in terms of Areas Assemblies and attend those meetings to share information.

Green Space Unit has received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to carry out work at Clifton and Boston Parks. This is ongoing.

A new play area had been opened at Bradgate Park as a result of funding through partnership work with the Friends of the Park. A successful opening event had taken place.

Recreation ground at Canklow – the new playing/changing facilities was now complete and available for use.

Valley Park – There are plans to build a new play area over the next few months, and a Friends of Valley Park Group had recently been formed.

**Events Programme** – This had been extended in Green Space this year, and also included sports events organised by Urban Park Rangers. This had been well received and successful.

**The Urban Park Ranger Scheme** continued to be successful. The Service continued to be temporary but every effort was being made to secure sustained funding so that the scheme would continue into the next financial year.

**Clifton Park** – A successful partnership had been formed with a private operator which had allowed investment into the park. There were new rides at reduced costs. It was hoped this would be well received and well used.

Councillor Wyatt raised an issue regarding Highfield Park, Swinton. The park was a priority 4(a) deemed by the European Commission to be one of the most deprived areas. The Highfield Park Action Group had tried to obtain funding from various sources over the years. The Group had been given support to write bids by Groundwork but had failed every time.

Steve Hallsworth undertook to look into this matter and pointed out that the long term view of RMBC, through the work of the Green Space audit and strategy, was to establish a plan to enable more decisions to be made and be more successful in terms of accessing funding.

**Thrybergh and Rother Valley Country Parks** – The management of
cafes has now transferred back to RMBC which had been seen by Managers as a good opportunity to develop facilities and offer a quality service to the users of the parks.

**Grange Park Golf Course** – RMBC was to work with the successful partner to maintain a municipal golf course and to create the required investment. A great deal of interest had been shown in the invitation to bid from which a shortlist would be drawn up on 21st December. It was hoped that in early January the parties will be invited to make presentations, with a final partner being chosen who then had a reasonable lead into the new season to start making long term improvements.

**Sport and Leisure** – The Council had recently secured a partnership with the All Pakistani Women’s Association to establish a community coaching initiative.

This had secured further funding for the delivery of target sports in communities. There was a great deal of interest and funding was available to make it happen but the biggest problem was finding people qualified to deliver – the object of this initiative being to fill that gap. Partnership work was ongoing with Rotherham Rugby Club.

The Council had secured funding for a Football Development Officer from the Football Foundation. This is a 5 year full time and a two year part-time post. The Football Foundation had recently approved the person specification and adverts would be published in the New Year. It was hoped to have an Officer in post by 1st April, 2005.

**Rotherham Rugby Club** – RMBC were working in partnership with Kimberworth partnership/Rawmarsh Sports College and the All Pakistani Women’s Association in Ferham with plans for the next Panel in the New Year for a multi-sports coach (north and south of the Borough) to have a disability and gymnastic coach working across the borough. In working together with communities it was possible to demonstrate a strategic approach to delivering initiatives.

**Disability** – A Disability Sport and Activity Forum had been established in October. The next meeting was in January, 2005. This consisted of members from SCOPE (a Disability Group) who had advised the Council on ways of establishing sport and leisure facilities for disabled.

**Sport** – A regular programme of events had been established throughout the year.

**Health and Fitness Open Day (April, 2005)**- Girls Football Festival (May) – and Rotherham Schools Sports Centenary Year in 2005, a grand day was planned using the fields and athletic track and which would involve lots of children in a host of activities.
There was also a regular programme of swimming activities.

**Street Sports** – A mobile unit was touring the borough with skateboarding facilities.

**Herringthorpe Leisure Centre** – A good festival of gymnastics was to take place. Several groups and organisations would be participating, including disability groups.

A question was raised regarding an update on the development of indoor sports facilities and re-development at HLC. The meeting was informed that the whole programme was scheduled to be complete by the end of 2007.

There was no further progress in terms of the detail of the build but a selection process was ongoing. Members of the Consortium would be updated once further information was available.

Plans were still progressing in terms of the Maltby Leisure Centre development.

Members of the Consortium raised issues concerning the following aspects:-

- Walking Festival
- Footpaths/Disability Access Forum – corporate links
- Health Benefits
- Community Data
  - Minority Sports – i.e. Yoga
- List of Speakers

The meeting was informed that a team of Sports Development Officers had recently been established to form a physical activity group and that work was taking place with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and others in order to re-address the need for a joined up approach to the promotion of physical activity – which included walking and cycling. Services organised by Economic and Development Services (which included the Walking Festival) and meetings of Boston Park and Clifton Park and heritage landscape formed part of those discussions.

Agreed:- That consideration be given to placing an advertisement in Rotherham Matters regarding the availability of the Helping Hands Directory – a data base on the Council’s website containing information on Groups/Organisations.

17. **CULTURAL CONSORTIUM ADVISORY PANELS**

**Green Spaces** - Limited progress had been made due to the non-availability of members at the last meeting.
It may be more suitable to merge this Panel with Sport and Leisure in view of some members attending both forums.

The Urban Park Ranger Team had given a presentation at the last meeting of the Panel and discussion had taken place regarding the value of this service and the need to sustain it.

The Panel had also noted all areas of work contained within the Green Space Strategy and other work which included Heritage Park Schemes, and Green Flag Award, and officers were looking forward to raising the profile of green space and awareness of Local Strategic Plans of corporate objectives.

Agreed:- That a letter be sent to all Panel Members on suggestions for the future makeup and business of these groups.

Sport and Leisure – This was a very worthwhile group who met on a regular basis and throughout the year specific sessions would take place.

The Panel was currently reviewing sport and recreation strategies and members of the group were involved. A Service Plan was currently being drafted which would be shared with members of the Advisory Group. As part of this work site visits would be made to staff.

18. FUTURE OF THE HERITAGE, ARCHIVES & TOURISM AND THEATRE, LIBRARIES, WRITING AND THE ARTS PANELS

Heritage, Archives & Tourism/Theatre, Libraries, Writing and the Arts – In view of poor attendance at meetings, it was felt appropriate to merge both Panels.

A letter would be sent to members of both Panels inviting expressions of interest in the two merged groups, which will include times and details of the proposed dates for 2004/05.

It will be suggested that in order to ensure consistency of membership, a specific day throughout the twelve month period must be adhered to.

A question was raised regarding the future of Kimberworth Manor House.

The meeting was informed that it was presently intended to move Education staff out of the building as it was not suitable for office use. A decision on the most suitable way to dispose of the building would then be determined by the Property Board. The Planning Service would control any planning proposals on its future use in view of its Grade II listed building status.

19. THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE VISION AND KEY PRIORITIES. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ROTHERHAM PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY
The meeting considered the contents of a document outlining the way the Council will work in delivering the Borough Vision, the main themes of which were:

- Rotherham Learning
- Rotherham Achieving
- Rotherham Alive
- Rotherham Safe
- Rotherham Proud

The topics had been agreed in partnership with Rotherham Partnership and the Council in ensuring the aims of both were integrated, both parties having signed up to the same priorities.

These priorities will be reflected in the Community Strategy next year and work was presently being developed within those priorities. Officers would ensure that the cultural centre is well represented and support all schemes. Members of the Cultural Consortium will be given an opportunity to discuss their views.

Agreed: That a further update report be submitted to the next meeting.

20. **3RD ROTHERHAM CULTURAL CONFERENCE, 2005**

The meeting considered a draft timetable for the next Cultural Conference to be held on 6th May, 2005.

The topic is Built and Landscape Heritage.

Discussion took place on the membership of the Cultural Consortium with a suggestion being made that it should be expanded.

Officers reported that it was intended to focus future meetings on specific issues and invite relevant specialists to attend certain meetings.

Consortium members felt the conference offered an exciting timetable of events and was an appropriate topic to coincide with the newly refurbished museum.

An appropriate publication would be included in the next issue of Rotherham Matters and invitations sent to Heritage Groups within the Borough nearer the time of the Conference.

21. **THE SOUTH YORKSHIRE CULTURAL PROSPECTUS**

Consideration was given to a document on South Yorkshire Culture (a spoke of Yorkshire Culture, the Regional Cultural Consortium) and their role in continuing to work to promote the cultural sector as a key element of the regeneration agenda.
The paper set out the following:-

- The Vision
- The vision expressed in four strategic themes
- South Yorkshire Spatial Strategy Group: Vision for Rotherham

It was pointed out to members of the consortium that both Guy Kilminster and Tony Preston are attending meetings to represent this Consortium.

It was the intention to promote the cultural aspect at the South Yorkshire level and to identify good projects which work sub-regionally.

Further details of this work was made available to members of the Consortium.

A further update would be given on this matter at the next meeting.

22. LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

The meeting considered a request to nominate up to three co-optees to the Lifelong Learning Opportunities Scrutiny Panel from this forum.

Agreed:- That Christine Cox, Joyce Williams and Roy Newman be appointed to serve on the Lifelong Learning Opportunities Scrutiny Panel as co-optees for a further year.

23. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting welcomed the recent award of the Turner prize to Jeremy Deller.

Jeremy was known to this Authority through his work and involvement in the reconstruction of the Battle of Orgreave at Rother Valley Country Park and was held in high regard for the work he had carried out.

Agreed:- That Guy Kilminster send a letter of congratulations to Jeremy on behalf of this Consortium.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting of this Consortium be held on 16th February, 2005 at 2.00 p.m.