

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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|----|---------------------|---|
| 1. | Meeting: | Deputy Leader's Meeting |
| 2. | Date: | 10th June 2013 |
| 3. | Title: | Resources Performance Report for 2012/13 - Outturn |
| 4. | Directorate: | Resources |

5. Summary

Reports are provided to the Deputy Leader on a quarterly basis to provide updates on performance and key priorities across the areas of:

- Commissioning, Policy and Performance
- Financial Services
- Human Resources and Payroll
- Internal audit and Asset Management
- Legal and Democratic Services

6. Recommendations

- That the Performance report is received and performance noted.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Commissioning, Policy and Performance

7.1.1 Procurement

Procurement savings

| | Achieved in January | Achieved in February | Achieved in March | 2012/13 Outturn |
|--|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days (Former BVPI8) | 92.06% | 95.53% | 98.00% | 94.48% |
| Procurement Cashable Savings (exc HRA) | £315,071.68 | £244,742.23 | £261,973.81 | £3,087,725.59 |

New Initiatives

- Columns & Poles
- Road Stone, Sand and Gravel
- Free Cycle Workplace Leasing Promotion
- Rotherham Show Marquee Hire
- Rotherham Show Security Hire
- Dementia Café & Carers Support Service for Adults (supporting Commissioning)

The Procurement Service is currently leading on, or supporting, the following initiatives:

Learning & Development framework – The dynamic purchasing system is now live in YORtender and suppliers are able to submit their indicative tender, if successful they will have the opportunity to take part in mini-competitions for specific learning and development needs. Rotherham is the lead authority on this in the sub-region.

Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) – Regional, Rotherham is leading on this; the final specification has been approved by 23 authorities. The tender has been advertised via YORtender and in OJEU, PQQs have been returned and are now being evaluated.

Bailiff and debt collection services contract – RMBC now have a contract in place for the provision of Bailiff Services. Historically, RMBC engaged Bailiff Service's on a preferred provider SLA basis, however following Procurement and RMBC's Legal advice a decision was taken to tender this business. A Deed of Variation has been signed which allows other LA's across the country to call off from the RMBC Procurement let agreement. The Preston and Lancaster Shared Service for Revenues and Benefits Legal Service Director has signed and sealed RMBC's Bailiff Framework Access Deed and have sourced Bristow and Sutor's Bailiff Service's through the respective agreement. At a recent IRRV conference attended by RMBC's Revenues and Benefits Managers the profile of RMBC's Bailiff framework was highlighted. The following LA's have signed RMBC's Confidentiality Agreement: Chelmsford, Cheshire West and Chester, Doncaster, North East Lincs, Redditch, South Ribble and Wakefield with a view to participate in the contract.

Advertising framework – Rotherham is leading on this initiative across the region, scoping is currently taking place.

7.1.2 Commissioning

Commissioning Priorities for 13/14 for Adults and Children’s services - For both Adults and Children’s services it is important that the commissioning priorities meet the needs as set out in the JSNA and the Children’s Audit of Need, the corporate and service plans and that they align with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Children and Young People Service Actions - The focus for CYPS commissioning priorities is the Starting Well and Developing Well but in terms of families the work of commissioners impacts across all the four life stages.

- a) Special Educational Need and Disabilities
- b) Leaving Care
- c) Contracts for in-house services

Adult Services Actions - The focus for Adult commissioning priorities is Living and working well and Aging and dying well but the work of adult service commissioners impacts across all the four life stages and all the HWB priorities.

- d) Developing Care Market Programme
- e) Continue to disinvest in residential care and realign service delivery to assist people to remain at home with personalised support packages
- f) Review Partnership Arrangements for local authority services (Public Health and adult social care) commissioned jointly with RCCG

Cross Cutting Actions (NAS and CYPS)

g) Budget Action Challenge Plan

It is critical that Strategic Commissioning officers support the on-going work to achieve the requirement of a balanced budget and there are several current actions within the plan to which a contribution is being made.

h) Health and Wellbeing Board outcomes

The role of Strategic Commissioners contributes to achieving the outcomes for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including:

- Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA)
- Collaboration with Public Health on commissioning activities

Strategic Commissioning Work Plans - For 2013/14 all commissioning activity and reviews not included in the priorities will be set out in Strategic Commissioning work plans. The plans are dynamic and will, without doubt, grow with new activities and change as work progresses and are completed throughout the year.

Children and Young People’s services

| Ongoing | New for 2013/14 |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IYSS – continued support until full implementation of new service • LAC Transport review – conclusion of policy for in-house provision • Traded Services – completion activity and contribution to improvement plan • Review of in-house residential capacity & provision – void outturn following change in statement of purpose • Quality Assurance of residential provision – contracting concerns database review of outturn • Review of quality of provision for children and Young People involved in Domestic Violence – comments and recommendations on current provision • Local Account – to be presented in June 13 • Carers Charter – on-going influence for young carers of agreed approach • Youth Restorative Justice – completion of sub | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Assurance process for independent residential placements • Speech and Language therapy joint approach with CCG • Standard contract for CYPS • Fairer Charging tool for CYPS • Apprentice for Children’s and Adults Strategic Commissioning • Implementation of LAC placement review actions |

| | |
|--|--|
| regional commissioning • Adult Safeguarded Learning-commissioning | |
|--|--|

Adult Services

| Ongoing | New for 2013/14 |
|---|--|
| Priorities extended into 2013/14 include: • Development of a joint strategy for dementia. • Complete the review and recommission the service provided for people with learning disabilities in the RDASH/South Yorkshire Homes. • Continue shift from block contracting arrangements to realign resources to purchase personalised services. • Achieve agreement with RCCG on monitoring of Funded Nursing Care and clinical practices in Care Homes. | • Feasibility study to align arrangements across RMBC and RCCG for delivery of domiciliary care and achieve agreement on fee-setting. • Scope and review services for formal adult social care advocacy and develop proposals for future commissioning. • Recommission arrangements for Direct Payment/ Personal Assistant Support. • Review and make arrangements to recommission contracted day services for people with physical disabilities. • Develop new Contracting Concerns Database. |

7.1.3 Performance and Quality

Local Assessment Protocol – Support is being given to develop a new Local Assessment Protocol in line with the governments new Working Together to Safeguarding Children guidance.

Early Help - The on-going development of services and systems for Early Help to support children, young people and their families (Integrated Youth Support Service, Family CAF, Early Help Assessment Team and Child Sexual Exploitation).

Stat Returns – Completed 100% of government statutory returns within timescales.

Service Improvement – P&Q officers are leading on various Service Improvement reviews across CYPS, NAS and EDS, to help ensure services are efficient and effective. A few examples include:

- Removing backlogs and streamlining processes in Adult Safeguarding
- Carrying out extensive business process re-engineering to reduce the timescale to relet empty properties from 49 days to 28, significantly reducing rent loss.
- Supporting the delivery and realisation of agreed budget savings and delivery of a 'modern and vibrant Library service'
- Addressing quality assurance issues and reconfiguring the RotherCare service to improve customer experience.
- Ensuring that all Council owned adult social care regulated services are fully compliant following assessment by the Care Quality Commission.
- Service review in the Education Welfare and Parenting services to encourage working in partnership and removing duplication.
- Looking at Mileage and Petty Cash processes to ensure that we are using the best and most cost effective options.

In addition, colleagues from Doncaster have approached us to help them with some of their Service Improvement work, in particular around the importance of ensuring we capture the 'Voice of the Child'.

Customer access – Access points to CYPS have been reviewed and improvements have been made to the council website and to our telephone contact points.

Peer Review - Rotherham has provided case study material for the Children's Safeguarding Peer Review following the successful review in Rotherham in October 2011.

Health and Well Being - P&Q staff have been working with colleagues in Public Health to develop a Performance Management Framework (PMF) for the presentation at the Board;

this includes targets and measures for the 6 priorities. Reporting will commence from July 2013.

Performance Management – First cut year end performance figures for NAS indicate this has been a very successful performance year. There were 34 key measures monitored during the year (13 H&N and 21 HWB – Adult Social Care), measures were subjected to stretched targets for 2012/13 and of the currently known outturns 93% (26 of 28) have reported improvement.

Performance out-turn across CYPS is still to be verified and is subject to change, although initial figures indicate that 57% of 21 measures across education and social care have shown improvement.

At the end of the year 88% of EDS measures in support of Council priorities indicated good or improving levels of levels of performance.

Corporate Improvement - Performance and Quality continue to be involved in a number of transformational projects across the Council including:

- Customer access including channel shift, streamlining processes and improving standards for customers
- Connect to Support project providing an e-market place enabling customers access the support they need in one place.
- Business Support Review including streamlining processes, identifying and implementing service improvements and potential savings currently concentrating on CYPS, Transport at Hellaby, and Planning and Building Control.
- E-Post Room to implement an E-post solution, streamlining the existing service and identifying potential savings.
- Providing Support and Project Management on a number of Corporate ICT projects including Org Plus, EDRMS and the Intranet upgrade.
- CYPS Petty Cash and Mileage Claims – Reviewing current practices and procedures to identify options for potential savings and efficiencies.

Complaints - The trends in complaint handling seen over the last few years and especially in 2011-2012 have continued into 2012-13. The Council continues to improve performance in terms of complaints dealt with in target time and the number of complaints received has also been reduced. We have again reduced the number of complaints escalating through the complaint procedure continuing to improve the experience of customers.

- 147 complaints (at all levels) were received during quarter 4 of 2012-13.
- During quarter 4, 62 complaints were upheld or partially upheld.
- Only 7.5% of complaints were escalated through the process between January 13 and April 13. Of which 8 went to stage 2 and 3 went onto stage.

7.1.4 Communications and Marketing

Marketing Team - During this quarter, the profile of the corporate marketing team, and awareness of how the team can support services in delivering their business objectives, has continued to grow. The team – which were formerly focussed on marketing RMBC culture and leisure activities prior to the centralisation of communications and marketing last year – is now developing and implementing a range of marketing plans council wide, including a campaign to raise awareness and understanding of sexual exploitation, building on the success of earlier promotional material; a multi-channel campaign to support the launch of Connect to Support; tackling anti-social behaviour, and promotional activity in support of a tenants' conference. Inward investment promotions activity – including marketing of the town centre – is also now positioned alongside the corporate marketing function, with close links to the Events team.

Significant time is still devoted to marketing Rotherham Theatres, and 10 multi-channel campaigns in support of shows/productions have been completed, along with a brochure for the new season. Preparations are already underway for the launch of the 2013 panto, Beauty and the Beast, with tickets on sale from 1st April. The introduction of a new software system in the Box Office will enable, amongst other benefits, improved campaign

monitoring and greater efficiencies, and greater integration with the theatres' online presence.

Communications and Media Team - During Q4 media coverage has returned to more routine levels after the major stories encountered towards the end of 2012. Main media issues over this period included the 2013/14 budget proposals, preparation for the move of Public Health into the Council on April 1, Winter weather, future of Herringthorpe Athletics Stadium, Home Affairs Select Committee appearance, BNP Protest and libraries re-organisation. During that time period 91 press releases have been issued along with 74 written statements (nb press releases are sent out proactively, statements are agreed formal written responses to enquiries received).

In addition, the team has continued to produce video content for the RMBC website, run further media awareness sessions for Elected Members and senior staff, completed work with the Marketing Team on the new Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) information referred to above and begun to support work on a comms and marketing campaign linked to the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner on CSE.

Online Services Team - Work has been instigated to look at how the RMBC website can be improved to deliver greater efficiencies by encouraging customers, where appropriate, to transact with the Council online, rather than face-to-face, by written correspondence or telephone. Colleagues in Online Services, Customer Services and ICT are working closely to determine how savings can be maximised and the overall approach and infrastructure required to make this happen.

Events Team - The team participated – along with staff from other relevant RMBC services - in a two-day training course on Public Safety at Festivals and Mass Gatherings, run at Riverside House by the Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College. It is proposed that further customised “critical friend” sessions are run to facilitate external expert analysis of RMBC's approach to major events such as Rotherham Show and Christmas lights switch-on, to ensure continued compliance with industry standards and best practice.

7.1.5 Policy and Partnerships

Carers - The Rotherham Carers Charter and Action Plan have been developed by RMBC and Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). These have now been formally approved by the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, the Health and Wellbeing Board and CCG Governance Board. A small, multi-agency steering group will monitor implementation and report to the relevant boards.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy - The Strategy is now being implemented with 6 workstream leads who have produced plans to implement the key actions outlined in the strategy. A steering group is overseeing the work streams and ensures regular reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Health and Wellbeing Board has agreed 6 locally determined priorities (obesity, smoking, alcohol, NEETS, dementia and fuel poverty) and a performance management framework will monitor progress.

Sheffield city region combined authority - Sheffield city region local authorities have now formally agreed to become members of the SCR combined authority and it is expected that parliament will ratify the proposal by April 2014. Until then, SCR leaders' group will act as a shadow authority. SCR Authority will take on transport powers and will have a role in economic development. The Authority will enable us to access powers and funding from central government (e.g. major transport scheme funding).

Local Welfare Provision - The new scheme – the *Fund for Change* – went live in April and we are working with the customer contact team, DWP and other council departments to ensure the smooth running of the scheme. The first governance group will meet on 14th May, after which monthly performance reports will go to the deputy leader meeting.

Wider Welfare Reforms - A Fact Sheet and Useful Contacts has been produced and is being circulated to Members and relevant staff across the Partnership. A new booklet detailing the benefit changes is also being designed. A new partnership to support people

affected by the introduction of Universal Credit is planned although there is little or no funding to support this.

Festive Food Fund - Vouchers were redeemable until 31st January. Amount spent: £11,500. 133 families/single people were helped and 36 new accounts opened at LASER credit union. An evaluation report on the scheme, including lessons learnt has been produced. Early indications are that 90% of people are repaying the loans back through LASER. Letters have gone out to all major supermarkets for the 2013 scheme requesting their support to widen the scheme.

2011 Census data - Results of the 2011 Census have been reported to the LSP Board and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. Analysis is on-going and Ward Profiles are currently being pulled together to be available in May.

8.1 **Financial Services** (for further statistical information please read Appendix A)

Council Tax

Collection - Although performance (97.5%) was 0.2% down on 2011/2012 (97.7%), performance was still 0.5% above target which was very pleasing in the current economic climate and with the government's welfare reform agenda starting to take effect.

National performance figures will not be released until later in the year however anecdotally most authorities are reporting declines in collection performance greater than those experienced by Rotherham.

Despite a slight fall in the in year collection percentage we saw the total collectable debt rise by £1.3m which was in part due to the Single Person Discount Review which resulted in the cancellation of £563k of incorrectly claimed discount.

This increase in collectable debt resulted in £1.1m more Council Tax being collected in 2012/2013 compared with the previous year.

Recovery Procedures - The service has expanded the use of SMS to warn tax payers in advance of recovery action being taken.

The result of this has been to reduce the amounts of reminders and maintain the number of summonses and liability orders issued. This is despite the current difficult economic climate and helps in reducing costs for the authority and as well as preventing tax payers getting into more serious financial problems.

| Documents Issued | At 31/3/2013 | At 31/3/2012 |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Reminders | 37,515 | 41,538 |
| Summonses | 12,210 | 12,141 |
| Liability Orders | 8,845 | 8,963 |

The number of bailiff referrals fell by 214 from the previous year as a result of the increase in pre action SMS and the hard work of the teams in increasing the engagement with tax payers to resolve debts before bailiff referral. Also 62.06% of payers now pay by direct debit.

Changes of address – At 7.49 day's performance is well within the target of 10 days however this has come down from March 2012 (3.84 days) as a result of the increase in customer contact.

The introduction of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) and changes to the Council Tax discounts resulted in an 11% increase in telephone calls to the service during March 2013.

NNDR

Collection - Despite the same percentage (98.1%) of in year collection we saw the total collectable debt rise by £3.6m meaning £3.2m more Non Domestic Rates being collected in 2012/2013 than in the previous year.

With the financial risk of collection being shared with the government from 1/4/2013 the continued excellent performance in this area will have increasing importance for the Council Budget situation.

Recovery - As with Council Tax we have seen reducing numbers of reminders and summonses while bailiff referrals have dropped 24 from 2012.

Revenues & Payments

Number of Residential Visits offered within 7 days - Due to process improvements on the team we have managed to exceed the service target of 90%. As a service we seek to constantly improve our own performance and we have therefore increased our local target for 2013/2014 to 95%

Non-residential visits were offered within 7 calendar days - Achieved 93% exceeding the service target of 90% resulting in the service also increasing the local target for this measure for 2013/2014 to 93%.

Non-residential service users were informed of charges at the time of visit - Target achieved with 90% of users informed of charges at the time of the visit.

Benefits Assessment

Time taken to process new HB/CTB claims – Year end performance was 23.96 days, which is within the target of 24 days however it was slightly down from previous year's results due to the large increase in customer contact experienced by the service as a result of the introduction of CTRS and the various welfare reform changes.

Time taken to process HB/CTB changes - Again performance (9.02 days) was slightly down from the previous year (8.96 days), as a result of increased customer contact, but within the 12 day target.

New benefit claims decided within 14 days of receipt of all necessary information - Performance (93%) fell slightly from the previous year (93.74%), as a result of increased customer contact, but was above the 92.5% service target.

Housing benefit overpayments collection - Performance fell by 2.71% but remained above the service target of 45%.

However despite this fall in percentage collection the actual recovery amount was up £246k on the previous year with £1.645m collected in 2012/2013.

Revenues & Benefits

Percentage of telephone calls abandoned - Performance improved against this measure by 0.51% which is particularly pleasing considering a 14% increase in calls received over the year. From a total of 181,932 calls to the service in 2012/2013 we had a call abandonment of just 1%.

Percentage of telephone calls answered within 21 seconds - Although performance (93.88%) fell by 0.34% in 2012/2013 it was still above the 90% target, which considering the increase in call levels was excellent. Overall call answering performance was also impressive with 97.86% of calls being answered within 100 seconds.

Sundry Accounts

| | 2012-13 | 2011-12 |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| No. of invoices raised in Qtr 4 | 7,517 | 5,739 |
| Value of invoice raised in Qtr 4 | £19,747,502 | £17,668,767 |

| | 2012-13 (YTD – Mar 13) | 2011-12 (YTD – Mar 13) |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| No. of invoices raised on the Sundry Accounts System | 24,881 | 23,322 |
| Value of invoices raised on the Sundry Accounts System | £56,490,498 | £75,056,375 |
| % of invoices raised and collected | 83.2% | 92.5% |

The reduction in the percentage of first year invoices collected in the year is attributable to large amounts being raised in the last month, therefore not having chance to be paid before the end of the year, and a sustained targeting of older debt by the team in this quarter.

The main rolling indicator of collection performance is the DRO or Days Revenue Outstanding which gives an estimated average number of days an invoice remains outstanding. A figure under 60 days is considered excellent for local authority sundry accounts. A good performance in the private sector would be one under 40 days.

The slight deterioration in this quarter's DRO, shows the first signs of the effects of the economic downturn on the debtor's ledger. There are also several older uncollectible debts awaiting write off, and others subject to long term payment plans due to the customer's financial circumstances.

| | As at end January | As at end February | As at end March |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Days of Revenue Outstanding | 56.8 days | 55.6 days | 57.8 days |
| Balance of outstanding debt | £13,160,874 | £9,022,234 | £10,956,661 |

9.1 Human Resources

Key Performance Measures

| | Jan 13 | Feb 13 | Mar 13 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Accuracy of contracts | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Accuracy of Pay | 99.92% | 99.87% | 99.86% |
| Percentage of enquiries resolved by first line HR advisors | 99.58% | 98.38% | 98.75% |

Completed Projects

- Advised at two Member Appeals (one grievance, one dismissal)
- Required to deliver presentation on equalities to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
- Commenced weight management programme for employees (all places filled)
- Continued discussions with Trade Unions at JCC and additional meetings on budget proposals concerning workforce flexibilities
- Presentation to Deprived Neighbourhoods Strategic Group focusing employability initiatives on the Deprived Neighbourhoods
- Scoped sample management data reports for DMBC
- Successful showcase event promoting Riverside House and the Worksmart Project to delegates from organisations across the UK
- National Minimum Data Set compilation and bulk uploads for NAS
- Public Health establishment entry & DD analysis, pensions set up
- Agreement of liP management plan for CX sign off
- Finalising workforce planning position statements
- Arranged CSE sessions for senior management
- 1:1 support sessions for Members on iPad pilot
- First year completed of Doncaster Shared Service, savings target exceeded.

Current/Upcoming Projects

- Continue to progress discussions with Trade Unions on workforce flexibilities with objective of reaching a collective agreement
- Hold showcase event in partnership with E-Nomads promoting the Worksmart Project and Riverside House
- Meeting with Jobcentre Plus and CYPs/Connexions Service to scope potential to further assist people from deprived communities with employability activity
- Development of resilience e-learning package
- Reporting to SLT on Mobile Phone/Tablet salary sacrifice scheme
- Joint Consultative Committee
- Promotion of pennies from heaven, credit unions and pension Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC's)
- Confirm SLA arrangements with Rotherham Hospital in respect of Occupational Health Services
- Final union meeting re public health transfer, once scheme received
- Refresh of Corporate Workforce Strategy & Service Plan
- Updating of liP Position Statement
- Closing of DPS and commencement of tendering
- Meeting to discuss future BACS process with the potential for Rotherham to set up a shared service agreement with Barnsley Council.
- Application to MJ Awards made on the basis of the Shared Service arrangement with Doncaster.
- Consultation commenced on the proposed HRSC review with TU and staff briefings scheduled for 22 and 25 February.
- Budget Challenge meeting held – follow up session agreed, awaiting contact from Rachel O'Neill.
- Preparation for auto-enrolment of opted out teachers from 1 March.

10.1 Internal Audit and Asset Management

ICT

IHMS - The migration to the new Integrated Housing Management Project is progressing well. The new system will replace a variety of legacy housing systems, consolidate all our housing related information in one database and allow for online citizen self-service.

We will begin testing the first module (Rents, Arrears and Direct Debits) in June with go live in autumn 2013. The remaining modules will then be phased in with a view to the system being fully operational by autumn 2014.

Citizen Self Service - We continue to make increasing amounts of customers' data available to them online in a secure way, beginning with the processes that have the highest number of transactions. This improves customer service and realises efficiencies by moving transactions away from expensive contact channels (face to face and telephone) to much cheaper online interactions.

By the end of 2013 we will have deployed new technology to allow Revenues and Benefits customers to self-serve online. In 2013 and 2014 we will expand self-service to other high-volume transaction areas including licencing and application for services.

EDRMS and Intranet Upgrades - The Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS) project is progressing well. The upgraded platform will be ready for use by the end of July to allow RMBC employees to begin migrating documents away from G:\ and H:\ drives. EDRMS has many benefits, including:

- An end to 'G:\ drive full' problems
- Automatic de-duplication of records
- Automatic retention policies
- Version control
- A single RMBC repository (no Directorate silos)
- Links between digital and paper records in the record store

Also nearing completion is the project to replace our current Intranet with a more modern system. The new Intranet will go live in July and this will bring a range of improvements, including:

- Easier to use editing tools
- Better search engine
- New phone book functionality (with employee photos)
- Introduction of new features:
 - Blogs
 - Wikis
 - Workflow
 - Recycle bin

PSN Connection - The Government Connect service is being phased out to make way for a new Public Services Network (PSN). Remaining accredited and connected to PSN is essential as many of our key services are delivered using the GC\PSN network. RMBC was subject to an on-site assessment in May – the formal report of the assessment's findings has yet to be issued but the auditor's initial verbal assessment was extremely complimentary and we expect to be notified of our continued accreditation soon.

We have placed the order with Virgin Media for the network link which will connect us to the PSN network and allow for the disconnection of the old Government Connect link.

Mobile Working - We continue to investigate ways to realise efficiencies through the use of devices which allow for more mobile working. Officers in Planning and Building Control are now trialling tablet computers to access data in the field whilst staff in NAS use mobile phones to receive client visit information. New software and hardware has been identified which will allow Environmental Health staff to complete many tasks in the field.

Windows 7 and Office 2010 Upgrade - The upgrade of council computers continues with good progress. Windows 7 and Office 2010 bring improved functionality and hard-disk encryption. This means that lost equipment doesn't pose an information security risk. 1500 of our computers (or 30%) are now using Windows 7 and Office 2010 with the remainder to be upgraded by the end of the year. Machines which are yet to be upgraded to Windows 7 are protected by separate encryption software.

Internet Access for All - In recognition of the Internet's importance as a business and reference tool SLT has agreed that all RMBC's computer users should be given Internet

access by default – this is a change to current practice under which only some employees are allowed Internet access. This change was made in May.

11.1 Legal & Democratic Services

Legal Services - Following staff departures under voluntary severance the Legal Services section has undergone a restructure to better align it to the needs of its client departments. The new managers are to review their teams and current working arrangements to ensure that the service is proactive in supporting the Council meeting its aims. In addition the use of the case management system is to be further exploited to drive additional efficiencies.

The South Yorkshire Directors of Legal Services have recently entered into an agreement to provide Shared Legal Services throughout the area. This builds upon the current collaborative arrangements under which Rotherham has both provided and obtained legal advice. This agreement will then be enhanced so that sharing resources and working together in other areas, such as practice management, can be explored.

Electoral Services - In the statutory 6 week period commencing on 31 January 2013, the Electoral Services team collected fresh signatures from postal voters whose signatures had been held for 5 years or more. Relevant statistics are in the table below:

| Total no of postal voters at 31 Jan 2013 | Postal voters contacted for fresh signature | Fresh signatures received | Postal votes cancelled – no fresh signature provided | Total no of postal voters remaining at 14 Mar 2013 |
|--|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| 52,254 | 12,978 | 10,407 | 2,571 | 49,683 |

During this quarter the team also delivered a by-election for the North ward of Maltby Town Council and developed initial preparation plans for the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration.

Records Management - The transfer of records from town centre buildings to the new records centre in Bailey House is completed. Approximately 16 000 boxes are now stored at Bailey House. We also have approximately 11 000 boxes stored at the Station Road facility. We therefore need space for approximately another 5 000 boxes to be allocated at Bailey House before we can close down the Station Road facility. Additional space has been identified with Facilities Management and a plan to move all boxes to one Bailey House has been developed.

Since Riverside has been fully operational Records Management has seen more than a threefold increase in the number of retrievals and collections. This is obviously due to the reduced storage facilities to store active records at Riverside House.

Access to Information - In the last financial year, the team have responded to 953 FOI requests and 89 subject access requests (where individuals access their own records, generally social care files), as well as ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act and the required information security standards. We respond to approximately 90% of FOI request within the statutory time limit and 60% of subject access requests.

Scrutiny Services - Scrutiny Services have almost completed their annual work programme for the year with only 3 reviews outstanding. These will have been completed by the end of June. The target of 10 reviews will then have been achieved. They are now in the process of developing their work programme for the new municipal year and this will finally be agreed at their meeting on the 24th May 2013. It is intended that this work programme will begin in the July round of meetings which will put them on track for completion again in the year 2013/14.

12 **Finance**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

13 **Risks and Uncertainties**

We proactively manage risks to prevent negative impacts on performance against delivery of services and any associated key performance indicators.

14 **Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The services above are responsible for key areas of service delivery and therefore have a significant role in the delivery of key national and local performance indicators. These services also support all Council Directorates enabling them to deliver against Corporate Plan outcomes.

15 **Background Papers and Consultation**

The Financial Services section to be read in conjunction with Appendix A.

Contact Name:

Anne Hawke
Performance and Improvement Officer
Extension 23246
anne.hawke@rotherham.gov.uk