

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the City of Sheffield held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH, on Wednesday 7 January 2015, at 2.00 pm, pursuant to notice duly given and Summonses duly served.

PRESENT

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor Peter Rippon)
THE DEPUTY LORD MAYOR (Councillor Talib Hussain)

1	<i>Arbourthorne Ward</i> Julie Dore Mike Drabble Jack Scott	10	<i>Dore & Totley Ward</i> Joe Otten Colin Ross Martin Smith	19	<i>Mosborough Ward</i> David Barker Isobel Bowler Tony Downing
2	<i>Beauchief & Greenhill Ward</i> Simon Clement-Jones Roy Munn Richard Shaw	11	<i>East Ecclesfield Ward</i> Pauline Andrews Steve Wilson Joyce Wright	20	<i>Nether Edge Ward</i> Nasima Akther Nikki Bond Qurban Hussain
3	<i>Beighton Ward</i> Helen Mirfin-Boukouris Chris Rosling-Josephs Ian Saunders	12	<i>Ecclesall Ward</i> Penny Baker Roger Davison Diana Stimely	21	<i>Richmond Ward</i> John Campbell Lynn Rooney Paul Wood
4	<i>Birley Ward</i> Denise Fox Bryan Lodge Karen McGowan	13	<i>Firth Park Ward</i> Sheila Constance Alan Law Chris Weldon	22	<i>Shiregreen & Brightside Ward</i> Peter Price Sioned-Mair Richards Peter Rippon
5	<i>Broomhill Ward</i> Jayne Dunn Stuart Wattam Brian Webster	14	<i>Fulwood Ward</i> Sue Alston Andrew Sangar Cliff Woodcraft	23	<i>Southey Ward</i> Leigh Bramall Tony Damms Gill Furniss
6	<i>Burngreave Ward</i> Jackie Drayton Ibrar Hussain Talib Hussain	15	<i>Gleadless Valley Ward</i> Steve Jones Cate McDonald Tim Rippon	24	<i>Stannington Ward</i> David Baker Katie Condliffe Vickie Priestley
7	<i>Central Ward</i> Jillian Creasy Robert Murphy Sarah Jane Smalley	16	<i>Graves Park Ward</i> Ian Auckland Steve Ayris Denise Reaney	25	<i>Stocksbridge & Upper Don Ward</i> Jack Clarkson Richard Crowther Philip Wood
8	<i>Crookes Ward</i> Rob Frost Anne Murphy Geoff Smith	17	<i>Hillsborough Ward</i> Bob Johnson George Lindars-Hammond Josie Paszek	26	<i>Walkley Ward</i> Olivia Blake Ben Curran Neale Gibson
9	<i>Darnall Ward</i> Harry Harpham Mazher Iqbal Mary Lea	18	<i>Manor Castle Ward</i> Jenny Armstrong Terry Fox Pat Midgley	27	<i>West Ecclesfield Ward</i> John Booker Adam Hurst Alf Meade
				28	<i>Woodhouse Ward</i> Mick Rooney Jackie Satur Ray Satur

1. FORMER COUNCILLOR JOHN SENIOR

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Peter Rippon) reported the death of former Councillor John Senior, who had passed away on 27th June, 2014. Mr. Senior served on the City Council for ten years between 1973 and 1983, as a Labour Councillor, representing the former Heeley Ward. Later in the meeting, Members paid tribute to him. The meeting observed a minute's silence in memory of Mr Senior.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence from Members of the Council.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Jackie Drayton and Colin Ross declared personal interests in the item concerning the Assessment of the Child Sexual Exploitation Service in Sheffield because they had been interviewees during the process of Assessment.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Resolved: On the Motion of Councillor Pat Midgley, seconded by Councillor Gill Furniss, that the minutes of the meeting of the City Council held on 3 December 2014 be approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Petitions

4.1.1 Petition Requesting Additional Road Safety Measures on Church Street, Ecclesfield

The Council received a petition containing 93 signatures requesting additional road safety measures on Church Street, Ecclesfield.

On behalf of the petitioners, David Banham addressed the Council. He stated that there was concern at the heavy traffic on Church Street, Ecclesfield and adjoining thoroughfares. Pedestrians had to cross Church Street to gain access to Priory Road and facilities such as the village hall and the church, in which a range of activities took place for young people and older people. Traffic volumes were particularly high between 7am and 9am and 4pm and 6pm and vehicle speeds were also of concern. Pedestrians and school children found it difficult to cross the road. There were a high number of heavy goods vehicles using the road and which travelled to and from the motorway. A site visit to the area would confirm the risk to safety. Whilst the restrictions on funding were recognised, it was

requested that road markings and signs be used to help manage the problems outlined by the petition.

The Council referred the petition to Councillor Jayne Dunn, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene. Councillor Dunn stated that the issues outlined would be examined further, although this would be within the Council's budgetary limitations.

4.1.2 Petition Objecting to the Plans to Remove Grit Bins and Requesting the Full Restoration of the Volunteer Snow Warden Project

The Council received a petition containing 128 signatures objecting to the plans to remove grit bins and requesting the full restoration of the volunteer Snow Warden Project.

On behalf of the petitioners, Harry Matthews addressed the Council. He stated that the Council had reversed its decision to reduce gritting routes prior to Christmas. He said that grit bins were to be removed and residents had not been informed. He asked how seriously the Council was taking the issue and the concerns of residents and asked that it now listened to them.

The Council referred the petition to Councillor Jayne Dunn, Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene.

4.1.3 Public Question Concerning the Snow Warden Scheme

Alison Zwaard stated that she believed that the snow warden scheme was a very good City initiative. She had nominated herself to be a snow warden and in previous periods of winter weather, residents on her street had joined together to grit the road. People were prepared to do their bit to contribute and make the roads passable. Amey took over the operation of the Streets Ahead and winter services and she had been told that the Snow Warden Scheme had been disbanded following consultation. She said that she had not been consulted. When she contacted the Streets Ahead service, she had been informed that a grit bin would be located on her road, although it had not materialised. She asked when the Council would re-instate the Snow Warden Scheme.

Councillor Jayne Dunn, Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene responded to the petition and the question. She stated that the Council had not stopped the Snow Warden Scheme. There were now she said, 600 Snow Wardens across the City and she personally thanked them for what they did. A review of winter services had started and the provision of grit bins formed part of that review. The Council had responded to the winter conditions and had reinstated the gritting routes, which had been removed by a previous decision.

4.2 Public Questions

4.2.1 Public Question Concerning Questions to Full Council

Martin Brighton stated that “questions put to Full Council have been parried with unnecessary requests to provide information, with promises to respond at some later time. Information has been duly provided, yet is ignored, and there is still no response. This chamber is given the impression that citizens’ questions are being dealt with, when in fact they are not.” Mr Brighton asked: why is this happening?

Councillor Julie Dore, the Leader of the Council, responded that she would answer this question and Mr Brighton’s later question in writing. She stated that she remembered that Mr Brighton had previously alleged that a Council officer had made a clinical diagnosis about his mental state and that she had said that this was not acceptable. She said to Mr Brighton that, in the same way, he should not do that to her.

4.2.2 Public Questions Concerning Area Housing Forum Meetings and Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (HANAP) Meetings

Mr Brighton asked the following questions concerning Openness and Accountability:

1. Why has the facility for citizens’ questions been removed from Area Housing Forum Meetings?
2. At what meeting was this change to Council policy debated and approved by elected members?
3. At what meeting was the proposal to change the Council policy given prior consultation and consent from tenants?
4. Who authorised the change?
5. Why are citizens not allowed to attend HANAP meetings as observers, or ask Citizen’s questions?
6. At what meeting was this change to Council policy debated and approved by elected members?
7. At what meeting was the proposal to change the Council policy given prior consultation and consent from tenants?
8. Who authorised the change?

Councillor Harry Harpham, the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods responded that the Area Housing Forum Meetings were not public meetings and there were therefore no public questions. Other meetings and fora did exist where people were encouraged to participate and ask questions. There had been no change in policy regarding the Area Housing Forum meetings. With regard to meetings of HANAP, there were no public questions at that particular body. This was to help manage time at those meetings. In relation to Mr Brighton’s other questions, Councillor Harpham stated that there had not been any change in policy.

4.2.3 Public Question Concerning ‘Coercive Control’

Martin Brighton asked the Council to please note that:

1. Coercive Control applied by Council officers upon community volunteers

- does not constitute consultation or consent.
2. Where there is collective near unanimous rejection of a council proposal, Council-claimed consent by isolating and intimidating individual community volunteers is not consent
 3. Where the Council continues with the proposals, having decided before consultation took place, and despite the rejection, the methods for falsely claiming consent are in fact forms of Corporate abuse and deceit.

Mr Brighton asked: why are Council officers continuing to deride this citizen?

Councillor Julie Dore, the Leader of the Council, responded that she would answer the questions in writing.

4.2.4 Public Questions Concerning Public Questions

Marcus O'Hagan asked the following questions:

What form of question does the Council require and in what forum should they be put to for those questions to fall under the Freedom of Information Act.

When is the Council going to debate the issue or clarify in public that questions asked in this chamber and also put in writing and followed up by requests for clarification do not fall under the FIOA?

When will this Council provide citizens with clear written guidance as to what recourse they have when questions (made in writing in this and other Council meetings) are not answered even when followed up with a request (in writing) for a review of any unsatisfactory answer?

The Council has made claims to the Information Commissioner that the purpose of public questions is to "engage" the public by allowing them access to the Council and their business. If this was genuine wouldn't the Council answer the questions asked?

Has this Council forgotten that its members are representatives of the people and its officers are servants of the people and have duties of openness, honesty and integrity in that regard?

Councillor Julie Dore, the Leader of the Council, thanked Mr O'Hagan for submitting questions in writing in advance of the Council meeting. She said that she understood that Mr O'Hagan had been written to, in order to explain the situation with regard to public questions put in the Chamber and the decision of the Information Commissioner's Office that such questions do not constitute a request for information. If he wished to submit a request under the Freedom of Information Act, then he should write to the Council, stating what information he wanted. Such a request would constitute a Freedom of Information request.

Councillor Dore stated that the Council was not going to debate the issue of public questions and Freedom of Information. Questions asked in meetings including Council and Cabinet did not constitute requests under the Freedom of Information

Act.

The Council had written to Mr O'Hagan to explain how to ask a public question and with regard to requests under Freedom of Information. The avenues of recourse which were open to someone included contacting the Information Commissioner, making a complaint under the Members' Code of Conduct and the Council's complaints procedure, with potential recourse to the Local Government Ombudsman. The information was also available on the Council's website.

The purpose of public questions was to engage with the public. Many local authorities did not run a public question time in the same format as was done in Sheffield. For example, in some councils, written questions had to be submitted a week in advance of a council meeting. In Sheffield, other opportunities for public questions and engagement included Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Local Area meetings and Cabinet in the Community. The opportunity for public questions was not something that the Council had to do.

Councillor Dore stated that Members had not forgotten that they were representatives of the people.

4.2.5 Public Question Concerning Alcohol Licenses

Nigel Slack referred to a question which had asked at the meeting of Cabinet 17 December 2014 concerning the number of planning permissions granted in the past 5 years for the 'local' or 'metro' brands of the big four supermarkets (Asda, Morrison's, Sainsbury's, Tesco).

He stated that he was grateful to Councillor Bramall for his admission that the planning process cannot identify new permissions granted according to specific use or user and stated that perhaps this is something for future consideration, but that he would like to try and gather the information another way.

He said that each of the stores involved (Asda, Morrison's, Sainsbury's, and Tesco) will undoubtedly have applied for Alcohol Licenses and asked how many new licenses had been granted to these stores over the last five years?

Councillor Leigh Bramall, the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development, responded that Council officers had tried to provide a response to Mr Slack and in so doing, he believed that they had provided some incorrect information. He said that he would write to Mr Slack.

4.2.6 Public Question Concerning Sheffield City Region Growth Deal

Nigel Slack stated that under item 8 on the agenda for this meeting of the Council, he noted that that the City is getting a little more detail on what has been referred to as the 'devolution' deal for the City Region. He thanked Councillor Dore or the Chief Executive for titling this as the 'Sheffield City Region Growth Deal' and therefore putting it in the right perspective in terms of this economic deal's difference from real devolution.

He commented that there were some good aspects to this deal, at least for the private enterprise part of our economy, if not so much for public services and stated that two areas of concern stood out at this time.

Mr Slack asked how much is the 'Housing' deal worth to the City region and will any of that be available to provide 'Social Housing' run either by Councils or Housing Associations?

He stated that the 'Employment' deal commits the City Region to discuss the potential for being joint commissioners for the 'work programme' supported by the harmful sanctions regime. He asked will the Council confirm that it will not enter into any agreement concerning this part of the 'Growth Deal' without extensive consultation with the public.

Councillor Julie Dore, the Leader of the Council responded and stated that the City Region Growth Deal was an item on the agenda for this meeting of the Council and she hoped that Mr Slack was able to stay for that item of business. The Chair and Chief Executive of the Combined Authority would be in attendance for that item.

She commented that it was important to note what was not in the deal. Housing and employment were mentioned in the deal. There was not a financial sum as such attached to the deal. Unlike in Manchester, the concept of a Metro Mayor and governance model was not included. The Government had agreed to work with the City Region towards growth in respect of housing and employment. The housing deal would be delivered in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency and the strategic plan for housing in the region would be co-developed. At the present time, individual providers of social housing (including the Council) made bids to develop housing to the Homes and Communities Agency. However, the City Region was saying that it wanted to determine such matters in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency. There was a need for more social housing.

Councillor Dore stated that in relation to employment, the work programme was a term used for programmes to get people into work. However, it was accepted that the Government's Work Programme was unsuccessful and there was a wish to redevelop the programme in a way that suited the Sheffield City Region. Such a programme would not include the harmful sanctions regime to which Mr Slack referred. In summary the Growth Deal was just that, 'a deal' and not a settlement.

6. REPRESENTATION, DELEGATED AUTHORITY AND RELATED ISSUES

RESOLVED: On the Motion of Councillor Pat Midgley, seconded by Councillor Gill Furniss, that (a) approval be given to the following changes to the memberships of Boards, etc:

Appeals and Collective Disputes Committee	-	Councillor Tony Damms to fill a vacancy
Standards Committee	-	Councillor Ben Curran to replace Councillor John Campbell

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education - Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards to replace Mr Martin Lawton

(b) Representatives be appointed to serve on other bodies as follows:-

Sheffield Health and Social Care Foundation Trust Council of Governors - Councillor Josie Paszek to replace Councillor Mary Lea

Sheffield Media and Exhibition Centre Ltd - Councillor Nikki Bond to fill a vacancy

Norton Educational Foundation and Non-Educational Trusts - Greg Unwin to replace Rev. Joy Adams

7. LORD MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Councillor Vickie Priestley introduced the Lord Mayor's Annual Report for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

Council noted the report of Councillor Vickie Priestley reviewing her term of office as Lord Mayor during the Municipal Year 2013/14, now submitted, and referred the recommendations contained in the report for consideration by the Interim Director of Legal and Governance.

8. ASSESSMENT OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICES IN SHEFFIELD

The Council received a presentation concerning the Assessment of Child Sexual Exploitation Services in Sheffield from Dr Kathryn Houghton, Safer Outlook Consulting Ltd (independent author of the report) and Sue Fiennes, Independent Chair of the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board.

A report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families containing the assessment and an executive summary had been circulated with the agenda for this meeting. The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee had considered the assessment at its meeting on 15th December. The Cabinet had considered it at its meeting on 17th December and the outcome of those discussions had also been circulated with the agenda.

Also in attendance for the item of business were Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director - Children, Young People and Families – Sheffield City Council; Dorne Collinson, Director of Children and Families - Sheffield City Council; Victoria Horsefield, Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Board Manager; and Kevin Clifford, Chief Nurse, NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group.

Members of the Council asked questions and commented upon the content of the Assessment of Child Sexual Exploitation Services in Sheffield, which is

summarised below:-

Comments and Questions

The Council had to be vigilant and wished to improve services. There were also the other aspects of child abuse which should be considered in addition to the issue of child sexual exploitation. This meant that all safeguarding practices and responsibilities should be considered. The Council's strategy was to prevent, protect, pursue and prosecute. There were issues relating to the way that cases relating to children were dealt with by the Courts and the support available for children who were witnesses. It was considered that the outcome of cases which had gone through the Court were not always the best ones. It was positive that the Council was to work with the judicial system in this regard.

The publication of the Jay Report had meant that a review was necessary of child sexual exploitation services. It was import to ensure service improvement and with this aim, the Children Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee had made recommendations. There were particular issues relating to the treatment of children by the judicial system which could be improved to make children feel safe and make it easier for them to give evidence to the Courts. Particular thanks was given to the children and young people who talked about their experiences as part of the Assessment and it was noted that a letter would be sent to those young people. An annual safeguarding report was also submitted to the Scrutiny Committee in order that it could carry out its monitoring role.

It was crucial that the Council made sure that the systems which it had in place were as robust as possible. The findings of the Assessment did highlight good practice in Sheffield. However, the extent to which good practice was replicated elsewhere in South Yorkshire and the adoption of a common approach by the South Yorkshire Police were matters of concern. The implementation of the action plan would be monitored by the Scrutiny Committee.

Officers were asked to outline the process from the viewpoint of keeping parents or carers informed.

Members had a role in ensuring there was a learning culture both in the Council and with regard to the Council's partners. It was important that vulnerable young people were treated properly by the judicial process.

Responses to comments and questions

The action plan, when finalised, would be a robust document and would follow due process. The Assessment report was the beginning of the process and governance was an important consideration. Parents were in a position to recognise the signs of child abuse. The process by which parents and carers interacted with the reporting process was outlined. Training resources were available for parents and carers through the safeguarding Sheffield children webpages. Activity was overseen by the Safeguarding Children Board.

The Police were continuing to make improvements; the Police and Crime

Commissioner had established a child sexual exploitation forum and the Assistant Chief Constable was the Force lead in relation to child sexual exploitation. Good practice would be disseminated and there were lessons which could be learned from other areas. Young people should be respected and supported in giving evidence to the Courts. Young people on the Young People's Panel had said that they felt supported at Court and by the Child Sexual Exploitation Service and Police Liaison personnel. The ability to retain on-going support for young people was difficult, whilst the staff in the service wanted to provide such support. It was important that young people were able to become active citizens.

Comments and Questions

Clarification was sought as to the background of Dr Kathryn Houghton who was the independent author of the report; the extent to which the Assessment could be said to be independent; the assistance provided by the Council in the Assessment process and any matters which were of concern.

With regards the multi-agency self-assessment, questionnaire, to which 75 percent of secondary schools and post-16 education providers had provided a return, assurances were sought that these were being pursued and that agencies took child sexual exploitation seriously.

Academies and free schools might present a challenge with regard to monitoring what measures they had in place in relation to child sexual exploitation. Poor education, poverty and family breakdown might also present a challenge with regard to sustaining progress.

Responses to comments and questions

Dr Kathryn Houghton outlined her background and experience for Members of the Council. She stated that she had only accepted the contract to carry out the Assessment on the basis that there would be full independence. She had received guidance with regard to the terminology which the Council used and was given the relevant raw data. Telephone interviews were conducted with Council officers. Dr Houghton said that she had received tremendous support from the Council.

With regard to the self-assessment by secondary schools and post-16 providers, the remaining 25 percent of assessments had been followed up and many had now been returned with a view achieving a 100 percent return. All schools, regardless of their governance model, were part of the remit of the Safeguarding Board.

In some cases, young people were groomed in circumstances where they were experiencing poverty or poverty of experience and might be in the judicial system themselves. Such circumstances had to be understood in responding to the issue of child sexual exploitation.

Magistrates, when considering cases before them, looked at the burden of proof whereas in social care, the premise was that the child was to be believed. The Crown Prosecution Service required sufficient evidence to obtain proof of guilt and

to ensure a fair trial. However, if the child perceived that they were being abused, then this should be recognised.

Comments and Questions

A question was asked concerning the detail of sub-regional approaches to diverting young people away from sexual exploitation and the hub and spoke model to share good practice with other local authorities.

Questions were asked with regard to the role of school governors and schools in preventing child sexual exploitation and the role of education in increasing young people's awareness.

Responses to comments and questions

Sub-regional work was being carried out with other local authorities in South Yorkshire and South Yorkshire Police and there were proposals as part of the first stage of a bid submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) in relation to the development of sub-regional child sexual exploitation services. There were also proposals for authorities to learn from one another and establish progressive practices and safe services for children and young people in the sub region, regardless of boundaries. These included therapeutic support and education services. Work would be progressed regardless of the outcome of the bid to the DfE.

A consistent approach was needed to child sexual exploitation by organisations and agencies, including schools, the police, social work teams and others. Schools and governing bodies were important in relation to prevention and all schools had access to advice, support and training. There was an advice line and online resources for those working in the sector. Governors had a role in overseeing a child protection and safeguarding plan and related policies. It was important that governing bodies were aware of issues relating to child sexual exploitation and safeguarding in general and had access to training and expertise. If early intervention was possible, later need could be prevented. School attendance was an important factor and it was also necessary to train a range of people, including those within schools, school crossing patrol wardens, Police Community Support Officers and others, such as hoteliers and licensees, to identify potential risks to young people. Where children disengaged and became secretive in their behaviour, there may be a risk. Particular concerns related to social media, social networking and the potential for grooming to occur via the internet.

Comments and Questions

Recognition was needed of child sexual exploitation in a similar way to which domestic abuse had become more recognised by society. A balance had to be struck so as to ensure that threats were properly communicated but children and young people were not unduly scared.

A further question was asked as to whether, in Sheffield, there had been a look

back at historic cases of child sexual exploitation; and how to ensure that children as witnesses were be able to speak up and give evidence.

A question was asked concerning the number of prosecutions and warnings for offences relating to child sexual exploitation.

Responses to comments and questions

Society had come to more widely recognise domestic abuse, which was one of the primary reasons behind social care cases. Society also needed to accept children coming forward to report incidents with the confidence to say that they were being abused. There had to be a proportionate approach to the communication to children of the potential threats although it was important to keep open communications. In many cases children were shamed or tricked into not telling their parents or carers about incidents. Children should be made to feel that there was no issue too big for them to tell their parents about.

The Council had looked back at past cases. The first case of child sexual exploitation in Sheffield was recorded in 1999. A Panorama television programme had brought cases to people's attention and cases became recognised as child sexual exploitation. There were protection programmes put in place. People were more informed now about the level of manipulation and grooming involved in such cases.

Children should be treated appropriately and believed, and in such circumstances, they were likely to successfully provide evidence. There was some way to go to achieve greater consistency in the treatment of children through the judicial process.

The outcome of cases in terms of sentences or where a case had collapsed were outlined.

Questions and Comments

Questions were asked concerning whether what had taken place in Rotherham in relation to child sexual exploitation could happen in Sheffield; the impact of pressures in social care and multi- agency teams; the relationship between adults and children and the possible damage to innocent and supportive relationships within families.

Responses to Questions and Comments

The assessment of services in Sheffield was a snapshot in time. There was no guarantee that child sexual exploitation could not take place and people should not be complacent. However, the City had demonstrated the ability to learn, change and adapt.

Resources for child protection had been protected in the wider context of budget reductions. The resources which were in place were the right ones at this time. However, these had to be constantly reviewed, and used wisely and effectively.

The change in relationships between children and adults was perhaps inevitable but it was important to recognise that as loving parents or grandparents it was not a problem to have fun together or show affection. Abuse was clearly different to a loving relationship. Sexual abuse was manipulative and children were coerced and frightened. This should not interfere with loving relationships that children need and benefit from. Such loving relationships may increase resilience and help families to recognise when behaviours were not normal.

In the past, there was not societal recognition of child sexual exploitation and there was a view that such cases were the fault of the child or young person who might already be engaged in prostitution. This had now changed and it was recognised that children and young people should be viewed as credible witnesses. There was work to be done with regards the courts and judicial process. The young people's panel were concerned to include their views in the Assessment, which included that they felt there was justice and they were believed.

Questions and Comments

Questions were asked about the extent of external challenge of services; what more local authorities could do in working together to bring about improvements when things weren't working well; and concerning the scale of the problem of child sexual exploitation.

The Licensing Committee would participate in training on 29 January. There was a challenge with regard to taxi licensing in that taxis from any local authority area were able to drive into the City. Lobbying was taking place for a national database of taxi drivers and the potential of processes to link with neighbouring Derbyshire Police were being examined.

Responses to Questions and Comments

With regards external challenge, the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board had an independent chair and Local Government Association (LGA) supported peer challenge work had also taken place. It was expected that the LGA would propose further steps. There was a duty on the services in Sheffield to take up external challenge and there was routine reporting to the Safeguarding Children Board. The Assessment of child sexual exploitation in Sheffield required independence and was therefore commissioned with an independent report author.

The incidence of child sexual exploitation was not known with any certainty. However, it could reasonably be expected that reported cases and issues would be properly investigated. There had been an additional thirty referrals to child sexual exploitation service in the period before the Christmas holiday, which was an exceptional number. All referrals were risk assessed and dealt with appropriately. There was not a benchmark as such of how many cases could be expected. It was important that people were confident that something would be done about reported cases of child sexual exploitation.

In years prior to the recent Assessment, the Safeguarding Children Board had published the numbers of cases of children which it was believed were at risk of child sexual exploitation. The work related to Licensing and performance concerning taxis which were licensed outside of Sheffield was important and there was an area of development identified with regard to continuing support for decision-makers on Licensing Committees in terms of child sexual exploitation awareness and knowledge.

Information sharing protocols across agencies was evident in the assessment and occurred across authority and agency boundaries and this formed a vital part of safeguarding children and young people.

Training for employees and elected Members would take place at a general and more specific level, dependent upon an individual's responsibilities with regard to children and young people. More specialised training would be available for Members, such as those serving on the Fostering and Adoption Panels or those with links to children's homes in the City.

It was most important not to be complacent and to continually improve services and be at the forefront of developments relating to child sexual exploitation. All of those who contributed to the Assessment and development of the child sexual exploitation services in Sheffield were thanked.

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, thanked all of the attendees in relation to the presentation of the Assessment and their responses to questions and comments from Members of the City Council.

Resolved: that the City Council agrees that the scope and findings of the assessment into child sexual exploitation services in Sheffield satisfies the Council that the current delivery of child sexual exploitation services in Sheffield are sufficiently robust and that the areas for development identified within the report are appropriate and proportionate.

9. SHEFFIELD CITY REGION GROWTH DEAL

The Council received a presentation on the Sheffield City Region Growth Deal from Councillor Sir Steve Houghton, the Chair of the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority, and Mr Ben Still, Chief Executive, Sheffield City Region.

The presentation outlined Sheffield City Region's Strategic Economic Plan and Growth Deal and City Region Devolution Deal and set out next steps in delivering the Growth Deals.

Members of the City Council asked questions and commented upon the issues raised in the presentation and responses were given as summarised below:-

A comment was made concerning the proportion of new jobs which would be highly skilled and the concern that remaining jobs would be minimum wage or lacking in ambition in relation to skills. In response, the Council was informed that 30 thousand out of the 70 thousand jobs which the Economic Plan aimed to create were highly skilled jobs. It was important to provide employment for people and then give opportunity to move on from less skilled jobs to more highly skilled ones. Not everyone would be expected to want a job which was in the highly skilled sector and a range of all forms of employment should be valued. Pay would be set by the labour market and demand for labour.

Questions were asked concerning practical steps which might be taken to improve bus services; how businesses would be made aware of support available through a marketing plan; methods of reducing investment risk for businesses and the identification of entrepreneurial enterprises that wished to expand. In response, Members were informed that there was deliberately no marketing strategy at this time. Firstly, the City Region had to be clear about its product and then work out how to sell it, to which audience and in what way. A comprehensive marketing strategy would be developed within the limits of available resources.

Those businesses most likely to be successful and help create growth had to be identified and encouraged as they may employ significantly more people in the future. There was also a need to move businesses, as with communities in the region, away from a culture of dependency. Business support would take place through the City Region Growth Hub model. The idea was for businesses to commit to using local labour and to grow within the region.

The Government had opened a door in relation to improving bus services and there was a level of caution concerning how much could be achieved without regulation. However, the deal did commit the Government to push the boundaries with regard to bus services, including in relation to the cost of fares (in line with competition laws) and improving the ticketing and fare offer.

A comment was made about the relative centralisation of the UK and the requirement for more control of the region's own affairs, which included political leadership. In reply, the meeting was informed that the Combined Authority had been chosen as the appropriate executive governance model and it was important for the Combined Authority to ensure that this model of governance delivered necessary leadership and regional control. Referenda had taken place in the City Region with regard to the idea of an elected mayor and many places had rejected the proposal. The City Region did not have fiscal devolution or an ability to raise taxation. However, through the Combined Authority, all of the participating local authorities had agreed to sign up to the Strategy and to align their respective spending. This may not have been possible with a Mayoral model. The Strategic Economic Plan was a driver for change. Consideration would be given to the changes needed to remove identified obstacles, including financial considerations, powers or political change.

The Mayor of London had considerably greater financial resources at their disposal, for example the ability to spend on transport infrastructure, which was

many times that of the Sheffield City Region. The challenge was whether change could take place in this region to improve things for people in the region. Devolution would not itself create a northern powerhouse but that did not mean that we could not ask for more powers to do things that we know we can deliver better than government was able.

Comments were made concerning the use of proven success by the City Region to then obtain further powers; the differences to the Manchester devolution deal in that there was not reliance on primary legislation; retention of skilled graduates; the development of a skilled workforce; the importance developing and then producing products in the Region and the potential national and international growth of such enterprises. It was thought more realistic to look at investment as opposed to grants to businesses and there was concurrence with the idea that the Region was able to do many things better than central government.

Responding to some of those comments, the Council was told that the north of England was losing many people to London and the South. The question was: how could the City Region produce and retain a skilled workforce and reduce the knowledge transfer. Places such as Oxford and Cambridge also had research capability and Sheffield City Region had to build its own research hubs and grow spin-off industries on a larger scale. Supply chains also had to be strengthened. However, other meaningful forms of employment had to be created as well.

Universities were giving consideration to more entrepreneurial enterprise programmes and outlets in the Advanced Manufacturing Park were being encouraged to develop into manufacturing industries. Businesses also needed certainty in relation to such things as access to finance.

Comment was made that people who were now in their 30s and had previously moved away to London could be encouraged back to the City Region where their circumstances had changed and they were looking to have families or have less distance to commute to work. Young people leaving school also had to be helped to be ready for work and not move into a position where they were neither in training, education or employment.

In response, Members were informed that programmes would be developed in schools to help young people to become work-ready. Viable, non-academic routes, such as apprenticeships were also needed for young people.

Comments and questions were asked about engagement with parents as to the inspiration and aspiration they could provide for their children; the proportion of micro-businesses with which work was being done; expertise in the Growth Hub; and the environmental aspects of the Growth Deal.

Members were informed that the Growth Hub was a strong partnership which included the Chambers of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses and a cohort of businesses who were able to share experiences. There was a range of expertise. Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) comprised 92 percent of businesses in the region and there were only a small number of 'blue chip'

companies. The measures in the Growth Plan were specifically targeted at SMEs, as these were where most growth would come from.

It was important that young people saw parents going to work as role models and if people were able to work, then they should. The Region also needed to ensure that its schools were good enough. Something akin to the London Challenge may be appropriate for the area. Aspiration was a problem if people could not see jobs and opportunities and local Councillors also had a responsibility to help raise people's aspirations.

A question was asked as to whether the respective local authorities in the City Region were mature enough to think regionally and collectively and in response, Members were told that this was a key challenge for the City Region, although there was a definite desire to work together. It was thought that a place like Manchester was effective at presenting a single picture to the outside world. However, there were inevitably internal differences. The City Region's investment plan was intended to develop the right schemes in the right places.

Responding to a comment concerning the possibility that the Sheffield City Region had lost out on the possibility of better powers because it had rejected the concept of a mayor (which Manchester had adopted), Members were told that the other leaders in Manchester would be able to veto a decision of the Metro-mayor. This was unlike the London Mayoral model. So far, it was not thought that the City region had lost out on powers and a step by step approach was being taken to devolution. The regulation of bus services may not be an end in itself as the Region would need to fund and prioritise such a development. Transport for London worked because of the considerable amount of investment given by Government.

A governance model was required which could deliver the Strategic Economic Plan and if the Combined Authority was not the appropriate model, then this may have to be changed.

Comments and questions were raised concerning the road infrastructure links to the Doncaster Sheffield Airport and the potential expansion of freight and long distance flights; the status of the bid to the European Social Fund (ESF) to build capacity and social resilience to help get people back to into work; and the supporting mechanisms such as work in schools, transport fares and provision of locally based employment.

In reply to these points, Members were informed that the Airport was one of the key strategic drivers and SCRIF (Sheffield City Region Investment Fund) would help to enable the new link to the Airport and there were further plans to improve connectivity to the Airport. The airport planning process was also a consideration in terms of how well it served carriers and passengers. The ESF was included in the process of achieving the Growth Deal and the Region had difficulty in persuading the Government to release its grip in that regard. The priority was to get that aspect of the Deal working.

The relationship between local authorities and their communities had to change

as it was not sustainable to continue with the relationship as it had been. Greater capacity and resilience had to be developed in communities and this may change aspirations.

A comment was made concerning the need for homes, including the social housing and private sector, the growth of which could be brought about by the Sheffield Housing Company. In response, Members were told that engagement was necessary with the Homes and Communities Agency to unlock the assets necessary to enable housing development. This could be achieved by placing resources for the building of homes back with each local authority.

A question was asked concerning whether there was sufficient internal challenge in the Local Enterprise Partnership by the private sector and in response; Members were informed that the right people from the private sector were required. The Combined Authority had to take a leadership role.

The Council noted the information reported in relation to the Sheffield City Region Growth Deal and thanked Councillor Sir Steve Houghton and Mr Ben Still for their presentation.

(Note: The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Talib Hussain) Chaired the meeting for this item of business, the Lord Mayor (Councillor Peter Rippon) having left the meeting.)