

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS**

**Venue: Town Hall,  
Moorgate Street,  
Rotherham. S60 2TH**

**Date: Monday, 7th April, 2014**

**Time: 10.00 a.m.**

### **A G E N D A**

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006).
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Area Assembly Chairs (Pages 1 - 7)
  - Minutes of meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2014
4. Petition re Parkhurst, Doncaster Road (Pages 8 - 9)
5. Review of Neighbourhood Centres Phase One (Pages 10 - 15)
6. Promoting Benefit Take-up by Older Council House Tenants (Pages 16 - 19)
7. Neighbourhoods General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013-14 (Pages 20 - 23)
8. Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring February 2014 (Pages 24 - 30)
9. Housing Investment Programme 2014-15 to 2016-17 (Pages 31 - 37)
10. Housing Investment Programme 2013/14 - February 2014 (Pages 38 - 48)
11. Furnished Homes Scheme (Pages 49 - 52)

12. Exclusion of the Press and Public  
Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council)).
13. Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Pages 53 - 55)
14. Affordable Housing - Canklow Land Transfer (Pages 56 - 61)

**AREA ASSEMBLY CHAIRS  
MONDAY, 10TH MARCH, 2014**

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Beaumont, Dodson, Falvey, J. Hamilton, N. Hamilton, Havenhand, Johnston, Read, Swift and Whelbourn.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Currie and Sims.

**29. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2014, were noted.

Resolved:- That a report on Streetpride Champions be submitted to the next meeting.

**30. PARTNERS & COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (PACT) UPDATE**

Steve Parry, Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Manager, gave the following powerpoint presentation:-

The Policing Pledge 2008

- In June 2008, the Louise Casey Review, Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime, suggested a more structured approach to community empowerment and involvement in identifying and accountability around local priorities
- The Policing Pledge was born out of the new approach and in December 2008 the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police formally agreed to implement the principles of the Pledge
- The key components of the Pledge were separated into 3 main areas:-
  - Citizen Focussed service provision (dealing with people fairly, with dignity and respect and being accessible and keeping victims updated)
  - Incident handling protocols (999 calls, non-emergency calls and calls in relation to locally defined priorities)
  - Engaging and consulting the public on local priorities, crime data and sentencing (Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings and process)
- PACT meetings were established in Rotherham, amalgamated within the Area Assembly meeting on the months that meetings take place and as 'standalone' meetings on those months when there was no Area Assembly meeting
- On 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2010, the Home Secretary of the newly elected coalition

Government “scrapped” the Policing Pledge with immediate effect

- PACT meetings continue to be held in Rotherham aligned to the Area Assembly meetings
- The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable met in January to discuss the PACT meeting process in South Yorkshire and there was a joint agreement to publicise the following ‘PACT (Minimum Standards) Neighbourhood Engagement Policing Pledge’
- The current position in Rotherham in respect of the 7 ‘Pledge Standards’ was as follows:-

#### Pledge 1

- We will hold bi-monthly PACT meetings where you can meet your Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), local Councillors, partner agencies and other members of your community to agree priorities for your local area
- Current position – A robust structure already in place that exceeds the minimum requirement

#### Pledge 2

- We will hold at least 1 engagement event each month (in addition to PACT meetings) where you can meet members from your local SNT and talk to them directly about issues in your community. These will be held at various locations and times of day to give as many people as possible the opportunity to engage with their local police team
- Current position – This can be accommodated within the existing structure

#### Pledge 3

- We will ensure dates, times and venues of PACT and engagement events are advertised 12 months in advance and are not cancelled at short notice
- Current position – Accommodated within the existing process – PACT meeting advertised on both the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Area Assembly websites – confirmation required that meetings are published 12 months in advance

#### Pledge 4

- We will provide you with regular updates on local crime and policing issues. This will include information on specific crimes, those brought to justice, details of what action we and our partners are taking to make your neighbourhood safer and how your force is performing
- Current position – Primarily a Police process

## Pledge 5

- We aim to have all PACT meetings chaired by a local Councillor or member of the public; where this is not possible meetings will be chaired by a Police Officer
- Current position – Accommodated within the existing structure in respect of local Councillor – awaiting further detail from the Police in respect of meetings being chaired by a member of the public

## Pledge 6

- We will engage with partners and Local Authority Members to make sure we have a complete approach to keeping your local community safe and whenever possible ensure PACT meetings are incorporated into existing meetings to maximise the efficient use of officers' time
- Current position – Police acknowledge that improvements could be made in respect of regular engagement – PACT meetings are incorporated into existing meetings

## Pledge 7

- We will ensure that you are consulted on any significant changes that are under consideration for your local Safer Neighbourhood Area
- Current position – Awaiting further detail from the Police on their proposals in respect of this Pledge

Discussion ensued on the presentation with the following issues raised:-

- The existing structure should be able to accommodate the Neighbourhood Engagement Policing Pledge
- Attendance at Area Assembly meetings of Police Officers of sufficient ranking had been raised with the Police
- The Constitution had recently been updated including the frequency of meetings which may effect the PACT meetings being unable to “tag” onto an Assembly meeting
- It was the intention to have a PACT meeting bi-monthly with an engagement event on the alternate months which was the Police's responsibility to organise
- Desire for the word “consult” in Pledge 7 to be changed to “information sharing”
- A publicised time slot at a Parish Council meeting/Councillors Surgery could be used for Pledge 6
- Dates and times of Assembly meetings were publicised but sometimes, due to unforeseen circumstances, they had to be changed
- Concern if a PACT meeting was not chaired by a local Councillor or a Police Officer

It was noted that the Pledges had been introduced and were not out for consultation.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the report be submitted to the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

**31. AREA ASSEMBLY CHAIRS/AREA PARTNERSHIP MANAGERS UPDATE**

Andrea Peers, Area Partnership Manager, gave the following update:-

**Wentworth Valley**

- Community First bids were currently being invited for Hooper, Silverwood and the Valley Wards. There had been 2 celebration events on 10<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March
- Affordable Warmth – current ongoing programme in Wentworth, Harley and Brampton with an awareness drop-in event being held on 13<sup>th</sup> March
- Community Involvement – a Summer Wonderland event had been held on 25th February in Dalton supported by local Councillors. Over 200 local people had attended which had enabled the Team to build up their database on engagement activity
- Community Organisers – an extension had been secured for East Herringthorpe so applications would be welcomed until 2<sup>nd</sup> May. There were to be 2 local awareness raising drop-in sessions to promote it
- Easter Events – Local Elected Members had sponsored a range of Easter events
- Area Housing Panel – Wentworth North and Wentworth South were inviting bids for environmental projects for 2014/15
- NAG – the new Police Inspector had agreed to sign off Parkgate and adopt 2 new areas for Maltby

Councillor N. Hamilton congratulated staff on the Summer Wonderland event.

**Maltby**

- An awareness raising event around Child Sexual Exploitation had been held
- “Locks” Project – Burglary other (burglary of sheds and outbuildings) was a problem across the Borough. Some vulnerable areas in Maltby had been identified and an agreed joint package of funding (Area Housing Panel, local Members, Fire Service) with locks and signage purchased. Yorkshire Housing’s Staying Put Project had fitted the kit free of charge.

Councillor Beaumont reported that, following a lot of preparation for the CSE event with regard to the target audience, time of meeting etc., it had been agreed that the Bramley business community would be targeted. Invitations letters had been sent and personal visits explaining the purpose of the meeting. It had been very positively received, however, only 1 had attended from the business community.

**Aston**

- A roadshow had taken place to kick start the disadvantaged communities agenda

**Thurcroft**

- Winter Wonderland event held which had been very well attended
- Big Local consultation continuing – members of the public voting for the priorities they wanted to see in the Plan

**Dinnington**

- Event held on last day of term to engage young people – 500 young people had attended and had included attendance by the Police, Know the Score, Youth Service, Sexual Health, Community Alcohol Partnership etc.

Shaun Mirfield, Area Partnership Manager, gave the following report:-

**Rotherham North**

- Co-ordinating Groups had been held to discuss deprived neighbourhoods and staffing issues
- It had also been agreed that there would be an Away Day in September to both review the past and plan for the future and a session in February around the budget
- Deprived Neighbourhoods
  - Ferham – There was to be a clean up on 5<sup>th</sup> April and work ongoing to lease part of the old Thornhill Recreation Ground. Discussions were taking place with Green Spaces, Rotherham United Community Trust and Sport England with regard to a funding bid to develop facilities
  - Eastwood – A number of properties had been the subject to a Police investigation which would be discussed at the forthcoming NAG meeting. Local Learning Community event held at My Place which more than 40 front line workers had attended and identified a range of issues pertinent to schools and other local partners regarding pre-school provision, attainment, jobs and skills, safeguarding etc. It had been agreed a series of themed events be held the first of which was on 4<sup>th</sup> April looking at pre-school provision. Work was ongoing with Children, Young People and Families Services with regard to the development of the new school

Members also raised the following issues:-

- Athena Awards – deadline for nominations was 17<sup>th</sup> March
- Greasbrough Historical Group – a newly formed group that was working on a book of Greasbrough and the surrounding area and the war. It would involve a lot of work with the school and elderly people in

their homes. Any war memorabilia/memoirs that could be loaned/passed on would be greatly appreciated

- St. John's Green Task and Finish Group – there was a problem with litter in particular aluminium cans. An arrangement had been reached with a local recycler that if he provided recycling bins, the shopkeepers would position them outside their premises and he would empty them
- Wingfield Theatre Group – had received their first booking from a professional theatre group for Twelfth Night

Resolved:- That the information shared be noted.

### **32. AREA PARTNERSHIP TEAM STAFFING UPDATE**

Paul Walsh, Housing and Communities Manager, gave the following staffing update:-

Helen Thorpe – Community Involvement Officer  
Nicola Hacking – Community Involvement Officer, Wentworth Valley  
Julie Barnett – Community Involvement Officer, Rother Valley West

Work was ongoing to backfill the gaps at Community Support level the above 3 appointments had created.

Resolved:- That the latest staffing structure be circulated to Area Assembly Chairs.

### **33. ON-LINE COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Helen Thorpe, Community Involvement Officer, gave a presentation on how communications could be improved through the use of social media and hopefully reach a wider audience.

There were issues with monitoring social networks but that could be addressed through training. The advantages/disadvantages of a number of forms of social media were illustrated.

It was felt that Twitter would be the best vehicle for Area Assemblies.

Resolved:- (1) That Twitter be used as the method of social media to publicise Area Assemblies.

(2) That the response be monitored and reported in 4 months.

### **34. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to report.



**35. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That a further meeting be held on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2014, commencing at 2.00 p.m.

**BEECHWOOD (ROTHERHAM) MANAGEMENT LIMITED**

**Mr E. Stanley (Director)  
Beechwood Lodge Doncaster Road Rotherham S65 2BJ**

**RE: PARKHURST DONCASTER ROAD  
PETITION**

**For the attention of Councillor Dodson**

Dear Councillor Dodson.

Beechwood Lodge is a Complex of 50 Flats on Doncaster Road and is situated next door to the derelict property of Parkhurst.

Over the last 10 years the residents of these Flats, many of whom are elderly and live alone, have been subjected to a variety of problems at Parkhurst on a frequent basis:

- 1 Drug addicts and alcoholics breaking in to the property and dossing there.
- 2 Overnight disturbance and disruption caused by these break-ins.
- 3 Fires started inside the building.
- 4 Intruders (roaming around our grounds and property, attempting to gain access to Parkhurst by scaling our boundary wall.
- 5 Teenagers breaking in to Parkhurst (presumably truanting from school).

Throughout these 10 years we have had regular correspondence with the appropriate Council Departments and many telephone conversations as well as on site meetings with both Council Officers and Councillors, none of which have provided a solution to the problem.

We would also like to point out a serious Health & Safety issue. Should there be a fire in the Parkhurst property there is no Fire Brigade access as the main drive gates are padlocked and the drive is blocked by overgrown trees, brambles and other vegetation.

The house itself is so near to the Eastern end of the Beechwood Complex that a major fire disaster could quickly develop.

We, the undersigned residents of Beechwood request that the situation is reviewed as a matter of urgency and appropriate action is taken.

All our previous efforts have been fully supported by the Manager of the elderly persons Residential Home on the other side of Parkhurst.

The latest incident of intruders being discovered was reported to the Police by Mr E. Stanley. Two Community Police Support Officers were sent to Beechwood Lodge but refused to climb over the boundary wall to check on the Parkhurst property.

We look forward to a speedy response to this disturbing and worrying situation.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Stanley

for and on behalf of Beechwood (Rotherham) Management Ltd

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS</b>
--

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:-</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:-</b>	<b>7th April, 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:-</b>	<b>Review of Neighbourhood Centres- Phase One</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:-</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods &amp; Adult Services</b>

## **5. Summary**

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013, Min No: 77 refers, the Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods received a report which detailed findings arising from the initial review of the 60 neighbourhood centres.

It was agreed that further customer and ward member consultation take place with regard to all centres to determine the final recommendations relating to future use.

This report details the outcome of the consultation exercise and review findings to date including final recommendations for the majority of centres.

Recommendations for Phase Two including remaining centres and other communal facilities will be submitted to a future meeting.

## **6. Recommendations**

**That Cabinet Member;**

- **Supports the retention of 37 centres as identified in Appendix 1**
- **Notes the proposed next steps identified in 7.4**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

### **7.1. Background**

A review of 60 neighbourhood centres located throughout the borough was initiated following customer requests in relation to the potential to opt out of the mandatory communal facility charge (CFC) and declining usage of neighbourhood centres by residents.

In addition, increasing management costs due to rises in utility costs and repairs and maintenance requirements, has resulted in the centres operating at an overall financial deficit and consequently creating budgetary pressures.

A consultation exercise for each of the neighbourhood centres, including communal lounge areas, guest bedrooms and laundry facilities has been undertaken, to determine proposals relating to future use.

This exercise, together with a desk top analysis of each centre, has enabled recommendations to be finalised for the majority of centres. However further work is currently being undertaken in relation to the remaining centres.

The review findings to date highlight that the use of centres, revenue expenditure and demand for each centre varies significantly. Further information is detailed in Appendix 1.

The exercise has also identified that there are a number of properties located within the boundary of a neighbourhood centre, which are not subject to the communal facilities charge. This is causing complaints and confusion amongst tenants which has been strongly conveyed at consultation meetings.

The Audit and Asset Management Service is undertaking a separate review of RMBC community buildings. This work is being aligned with the neighbourhood centres review, to further develop and support final recommendations.

This report does not provide findings or recommendations on other communal facilities, such as guest bedrooms and laundry facilities, as they require further consideration. The review of these facilities will be reported to a future meeting together with final recommendations for the remaining 23 centres and proposals to address issues identified with the communal facility charge.

### **7.2. Consultation**

A thorough consultation exercise with Ward Members, tenants and community groups has now been completed that has enabled recommendations for communal facilities in 62% of centres to be finalised. This consultation exercise included:

- Sending postal surveys to all tenants with follow up calls to non-respondents - 2333 tenant surveys were sent and 1658 completed surveys were received. Overall a 71% response rate.
- Seeking feedback from Ward Members
- Holding meetings with TARA's & Community Groups where applicable - 10 Community groups and TARA's who utilise the centres have been consulted via letter; 6 have responded to highlight their support for retention of the identified centres.

- Holding open meetings at Centres with tenants and Ward Members where centres were identified as unsustainable based on usage, survey results and Ward Member feedback.

### **7.3 Recommendations**

Based on a range of parameters including usage, financial information, Ward Member feedback and consultation responses from tenants, it is recommended that 37 of the 60 centres (62%) are retained as they are considered to be sustainable. Further information including consultation results, financial information and usage of these centres is detailed in Appendix 1.

The consultation process highlighted that the identified centres are well used and provide facilities offering many benefits to aged persons and local communities, such as reducing social isolation and maintaining independence by allowing them to participate and socialise through the provision of activities.

Links have been established with Age UK Rotherham and Rotherfed to support increased activity provision in these centres which will improve their sustainability.

We are also working with the Audit and Asset Management Service to offer potential use of neighbourhood centres to host community and voluntary sector activity, which may be displaced following the review of community buildings.

The remaining 23 centres are currently considered to be unsustainable. Further work is being undertaken to stimulate usage or consider options for future use, prior to finalising recommendations on these.

### **7.4 Next Steps**

Subject to approval by Cabinet Member, the following steps are proposed;

- 1 Ward members to be notified of the centres within their ward which are to be retained.
- 2 Write to tenants residing in centres identified for retention with details of the decision.
- 3 Further review the remaining 23 communal facilities, undertake further work in relation to laundry and guest bedroom facilities across all centres to enable recommendations to be finalised.
- 4 Identify options to address the issues identified with the communal facility charging arrangements.
- 5 Submit final recommendations to Cabinet Member and Cabinet in June/July.

### **8. Finance**

All 60 centres have previously operated at a surplus however there will be an overall approximate £100k budget deficit outturn in 2013/14, due to increasing energy costs and essential but unplanned repairs and maintenance costs. It is anticipated that there will be a budget deficit position in 2014/15.

Of the 37 centres, 4 centres are separate and distinct being large 'indoor' units (as identified below). These are operating at a high deficit due to heating and lighting costs throughout the building. However, an alternative use cannot be considered as

the lounge areas designed integrally to the wider communal areas/building. These are:

- Wellfield Lodge, Kimberworth Park
- Hampstead Green, Kimberworth Park
- Dawson Croft, Greasbrough
- Shaftesbury House. St Anns

The centres have received only essential and 'make good' investment for a number of years. The Strategic Housing and Investment Service are undertaking condition surveys to understand future investment liabilities. Subject to approval to retain the 37 centres, it is recommended that investment in these be prioritised, on an 'invest to save' basis, to enable management and maintenance costs to be reduced in the medium to long term. Funding has been provisionally requested from the Housing Capital Investment Programme in 2014/15 for this purpose.

#### **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The usage identified was based on a standard week's activities in each centre which therefore may increase/decrease subject to changes in occupancy.

The recommendations are based on the majority of responses from tenants however there may be a small number of tenants who may not be satisfied with the proposed recommendation.

The centres are currently operating at a deficit and there is no certainty that appropriate funding will be available to subsidise the units in future.

#### **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The proposals support the following 'Plan on a page' corporate priorities and achievements:

- Ensuring care and protection is available to those that need it the most
  - People in need of care and support have more choice and control to help them live at home
- Helping to create safe and healthy communities
  - People feel safe and happy where they live
  - More people are physically active and have a healthy way of life
  - People from different backgrounds get on well together

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

Cabinet Member for Safe & Attractive Neighbourhoods – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 - Neighbourhood Centres Review - Initial Recommendation

##### **Contact Names:**

Lynsey Skidmore, Housing Services Officer, Housing and Communities Service, Housing and Neighbourhood Services, Neighbourhood and Adult Services Directorate.

Telephone: (3)34950 or [lynsey.skidmore@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:lynsey.skidmore@rotherham.gov.uk)

Lindsey Gibson, Housing Projects Coordinator, Housing and Neighbourhood Services, Neighbourhood and Adult Services Directorate. Telephone: (2)55043 or [lindsey.gibson@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:lindsey.gibson@rotherham.gov.uk)

Appendix 1- Neighbourhood Centres Review

Final Recommendation	Centre Name	Area	Ward	Usage; Hours Per Week	Preferred Option-consultation	Total Tenants/ Households	Total Surveys Returned	Total non response	Response Rate	Option A- Retain	Option B- Alternative Use	Option C- Opt out	Option D- Other	Blank Surveys	Consultation Meeting Outcome	Community Group/TARA Response	Neighbouring Centres and Community Buildings including distance
										Total	Total	Total	Total				
Retain	Shaftesbury House	St Anns	Boston Castle	3	Retain (63%)	62	32	30	52%	20	6	2	0	5	N/A	Shaftesbury House TARA- no response to date	Unity Centre (within 380 metres)
Retain	Merebrow	Catcliffe	Brinsworth and Catcliffe	7.5	Retain (40%)	34	25	9	74%	10	6	1	1	7	N/A	N/A	Chapel Walk (within 225 metres)
Retain	Manor Lodge	Brinsworth	Brinsworth and Catcliffe	23	Retain (48%)	31	23	8	74%	11	5	5	1	1	N/A	N/A	Godric Green (Sheltered Centre) 709 meters
Retain	Godric Green	Brinsworth	Brinsworth and Catcliffe	40.5	Retain (54%)	35	26	9	74%	14	7	4	0	1	N/A	N/A	Manor Lodge (Sheltered Centre) 709 meters
Retain	High Nook	Dinnington	Dinnington	13	Retain (83%)	41	35	6	85%	29	6	0	0	0	N/A	High Nook TARA support retention	St Josephs Court (Sheltered Centre) 986 meters
Retain	St Joseph's Court	Dinnington	Dinnington	18	Retain (57%)	33	28	5	85%	16	6	3	0	3	N/A	St Josephs and Leopold TARA- support retention	High Nook (Sheltered Centre) 986 meters
Retain	The Lings	Bramley	Hellaby	16.5	Retain (42%) and Alternative use (30%)	41	33	8	80%	14	10	2	0	7	N/A	N/A	Ash Grove (within 929 metres)
Retain	Hepworth Drive	Aston	Holderness	5	Retain (64%)	37	22	15	59%	14	4	4	0		N/A	Aston TARA support retention	Aston CSC (within 350 metres)
Retain	Mason Avenue	Swallownest	Holderness	11.5	Retain (59%)	38	32	6	84%	19	9	2	1	1	N/A	N/A	Windy Ridge (Sheltered Centre) 573 meters and Heighton View (Sheltered Centre) 231 meters
Retain	Heighton View	Aughton	Holderness	12	Retain (57%)	46	30	16	65%	17	7	5	0	1	N/A	N/A	Mason Avenue (Sheltered Centre) 231 meters and Windy Ridge 342 meters (Sheltered Centre)
Retain	Windy Ridge	Aughton	Holderness	18	Retain (58%)	30	19	11	63%	11	4	3	0		N/A	N/A	Heighton View (Sheltered Centre) 342 meters and Mason Avenue (Sheltered Centre) 231 meters
Retain	York Gardens	Wath	Hooper	16	Retain (58%)	33	26	7	79%	15	7	3	0	1	N/A	N/A	Oaklea Avenue Community Centre (Community Building) 407 meters
Retain	Hurley Croft	Brampton Bierlow	Hooper	18	Alternative Use (48%) and Retain (36%) and majority retain at meeting	33	25	8	76%	9	12	2	0	2	Meeting well attended and majority of tenants supportive of retention of facilities as well as Cllrs Roche and Hamilton. Facility well used therefore consider retention	N/A	Ann Rhodes (Sheltered Centre) 1000m and Mission Field (Sheltered Centre) 686 meters
Retain	The Steadlands	Rawmarsh	Hooper	17	Retain 40%/ Alternative Use (24%) Opt Out (24%)	47	42	5	89%	17	10	10	0	5	Well attended meeting and majority support retention, few tenants attending state they do not use but are subsidising non residents use. A number of non residents from Whitfield Road were provided with the opportunity to opt out	N/A	Central Drive (Community Building) 176 meters and Manor Farm Drop in Centre (Community Building)
Retain	The Grange	Maltby	Maltby	28	Retain (53%)	49	38	11	78%	20	12	1	2	3	11 residents attended meeting, LS, LG, Cllrs Beaumont and Godfrey. All support retention of centre	N/A	Cliff Hills Neighbourhood Centre (within 1200 metres)
Retain	Model Village/Ascension Close	Maltby	Maltby	12	Retain (39%)	27	22	5	81%	13	5	0	1	1	N/A	Maltby Model Village Community Association support retention	Edward Dunn Memorial Hall (within 695 metres) and Tickhill Rd (within 1000 metres)
Retain	Marshall Close	Parkgate	Rawmarsh	19.5	Retain (47%)	39	30	9	77%	14	5	6	2	3	N/A	N/A	Turner Close (Sheltered Centre) 233 meters and Foljambe Street (Sheltered Centre) 127 meters
Retain	Turner Close	Parkgate	Rawmarsh	16	Retain (54%)	34	22	12	65%	12	2	2	0	6	N/A	N/A	Marshall Close (Sheltered Centre) 233 meters and Foljambe Street (Sheltered Centre) 360 meters
Retain	Arcon Place	Rawmarsh	Rawmarsh	17	Retain (54%)	35	22	13	63%	12	2	2	0	6	N/A	N/A	Apollo Street (Sheltered Centre) 512 meters
Retain	Pottery Close	Parkgate	Rawmarsh	27.5	Retain (36%)/ Alternative Use (28%)/ Opt Out (23%)	49	39	10	80%	14	11	9	2	3	Meeting attended by 23 residents, Cllrs Hamilton, Whelbourn and Vines plus LG, LS and WO'S. Majority of residents supportive of retention and additional tenants want to opt in	N/A	Greenfields (Sheltered Centre) 274 meters and Dale Road Peoples Centre (Community Building) 690 metres
Retain	Rotherwood	Thurcroft	Rother Vale	12	Retain (46%)/ Alternative Use (25%)	29	24	5	83%	11	6	2	0	5	Meeting well attended by 15 tenants plus LS, HM, JB and Cllrs Lelliott and Swift. All tenants supported retention of facility and are going to speak to age concern about increasing activities.	N/A	Arbour Drive (within 1000 metres)
Retain	Bakersfield (Longfellow Drive)	Herringthorpe	Rotherham East	17.5	Retain (40%)	163	113	50	69%	46	31	9	1	26	N/A	N/A	Durham Place (Sheltered Centre) 874 meters and Swinburne Place (Sheltered Centre) 930 meters
Retain	Oates Close	Henley	Rotherham West	4 tenants plus 10 hours MFS Respite	Retain (44%)/ Alternative Use (44%)	24	16	8	67%	7	7	0	1	1	Meeting attended by 3 tenants, Henley TARA, Cllrs Foden and Sims, LS, LG and CV. Supported retention of half of building and alt use of remaining part. Would like to keep laundry	Henley TARA support retention	College Road within 990 metres
Retain	Elizabeth Parkin	Ravenfield	Silverwood	6.5	Retain (68%)	29	25	4	86%	17	2	3	0	3	N/A	N/A	Ravenfield Parish Hall (within 517 metres)
Retain	Apollo Street	Rawmarsh	Silverwood	26	Retain (58%)	45	31	14	69%	18	3	8	1	1	Meeting well attended by 10 tenants plus LS, AR and Cllrs A & P Russell. All tenants supported retention of facility and are going to speak to age concern about increasing activities, issues in relation to non resident usage	N/A	Arcon Place (Sheltered Centre) 512 meters



**Appendix 1- Neighbourhood Centres Review**

Final Recommendation	Centre Name	Area	Ward	Usage; Hours Per Week	Preferred Option-consultation	Total Tenants/ Households	Total Surveys Returned	Total non response	Response Rate	Option A- Retain	Option B- Alternative Use	Option C- Opt out	Option D- Other	Blank Surveys	Consultation Meeting Outcome	Community Group/TARA Response	Neighbouring Centres and Community Buildings including distance
										Total	Total	Total	Total				
Retain	Staple Green	Thrybergh	Silverwood	10.75	Retain (42%)	30	24	6	80%	10	5	2	0	7	Meeting well attended by 28 residents plus LS,PB and Cllrs A and P Russell. Majority of tenants supported retention of the centre but a couple would prefer it to be optional as they do not receive HB and are paying for the facility	N/A	Vale Road (Sheltered Centre) 222 meters
Retain	Charles Street	Swinton	Swinton	12	Retain (64%)	33	28	5	85%	18	6	4	0	2	Meeting attended by 18 tenants, Cllrs Doyle and Wyatt, LS, LG and NJ plus Kathryn Wild Age Concern. Majority of tenants would like to retain centre as well used. Kathryn going to meet group to try and increase activities provision	N/A	Zion Mission Gospel Hall (within 80 metres)
Retain	Wootton Court	Thrybergh	Valley	6	Retain (52%)	34	29	5	85%	15	6	6	0	3	N/A	N/A	Dorothy Taylor (within 700 metres) and Mousehole Close (within 630 metres)
Retain	High Greave Place	East Herringthorpe	Valley	14.5	Retain (50%)	42	20	22	48%	10	5	1	0	4	N/A	N/A	Mowbray Gardens (within 720 metres)
Retain	Swinburne Place	Herringthorpe	Valley	15	Retain (50%)	62	30	32	48%	15	10	3	0	2	N/A	N/A	Bakersfield (Sheltered Centre) 930 meters and Durham Place (Sheltered Centre) 654 meters
Retain	Vale Road / Warreners Drive	Thrybergh	Valley	14 tenants plus 10 hours WDP Respite	Retain (57%)	57	46	11	81%	26	5	6	0	8	N/A	N/A	Elizabeth Finch (Sheltered Centre) 309 meters and Staple Green (Sheltered Centre) 222 meters
Retain	Viking Way	Kiveton Park	Wales	13.5	Retain (52%)	38	29	9	76%	15	4	5	0	5	N/A	KBUG- support retention	Victoria Court (within 1200 metres)
Retain	Peregrin Way	Harthill	Wales	16	Retain (39%) and Alt use(26%) and opt out (23%)	52	43	10	83%	17	11	10	1	4	14 tenants attended meeting plus LS, LG and Cllrs Watson and Beck. Majority support retention but small number supported alternative use as they do not use it. Issues raised in relation to non residents attending activities and not	Peregrin Way TARA- no response to date	Harthill Parish Hall (within 590 metres)
Retain	Wellfield Lodge	Kimberworth Park	Wingfield	0	Retain (35%)/ Alternative use (29%)	34	17	17	50%	6	5	2	2		N/A	N/A	St Johns Green (within 420 metres)
Retain	Dawson Croft	Greasbrough	Wingfield	2	Retain (57%)	25	14	11	56%	8	3	1	0		N/A	N/A	Fitzwilliam Square (within 550 metres)
Retain	Hampstead Green	Kimberworth Park	Wingfield	6	Retain (53%)/ Alternative use (40%)	27	15	12	56%	8	6	1	0		N/A	N/A	St Johns Green (within 690 metres)
Retain	Fitzwilliam Square	Greasbrough	Wingfield	15	Retain (68%)	27	22	5	81%	15	2	4	1	1	N/A	N/A	Dawson Croft (within 550 metres) and St Marys View (within 790 metres)
<b>Total</b>						<b>1525</b>	<b>1097</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>17</b>				

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:-</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:-</b>	<b>7th April, 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:-</b>	<b>Financial Inclusion - promoting benefit take up by older council house tenants</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:-</b>	<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD &amp; ADULT SERVICES</b>

### **5. Summary**

Supporting people to claim the benefits they are entitled to is a key strand of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2015. Information is available which indicates that the numbers of people claiming Attendance Allowance have fallen at the same time as it would be reasonable to expect rates to increase due to an ageing demographic disability profile for the borough. This report proposes establishing a one year pilot project designed to significantly increase the numbers of local people receiving Attendance Allowance.

### **6. Recommendations**

**That Cabinet Member,**

- 1. Agrees to establish a 1 year pilot project designed to increase the numbers of tenants who have reached pension credit age who successfully apply for Attendance Allowance**
- 2. Agrees in the light of the organisations existing experience, to commission Age UK Rotherham (AUKR) to undertake this pilot project at a cost of £30,000**

## **7 Proposal and details**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The Council has approximately 8800 tenants who have reached Pension Credit Age and are a minimum of 62 years of age. Approximately 70% of the tenants pay their rent by Housing Benefit and although not affected by Welfare Reform such as the Bedroom Tax, such tenants will receive a low and fixed income. The remaining 30% may have seen their income reduce as private pensions may not have kept pace with inflation. Both groups will be affected by the increase in the costs of basic necessities from a limited income and other sources of income such as the interest gained on their savings will be reduced due to low interest rates on savings and investments.

The report identifies the benefits of establishing a pilot project designed to increase benefit take up, specifically focussing on Attendance Allowance.

### **7.2 Background**

The poverty theme of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-15 contains the following key action *'To consider how we can actively work with every household in deprived areas to maximise benefit take-up of every person'*. Attendance allowance (AA) is a non means tested state benefit, designed to help with the extra costs of living attributed to long-term illness or disability. It is paid to applicants who have either physical or mental illness and it is paid on a scale between £55 to £80 per week. Payments are for life, or until the applicant has a change in circumstances such as entering into non self funding residential care. As such it can make a significant difference to the financial wellbeing of some of the borough's older or disabled residents. AA can be paid regardless of income, savings or National Insurance contribution record. Claiming AA does not reduce other benefits, it may even increase the amount recipients get as it can be used as a passport to other benefits. There are no restrictions on how AA is spent.

Whilst it is surprising that claimant rates are falling, one possible explanation is that home visits by the DWP have ceased in recent years. Because of the complex application process, assistance is often required to make a successful claim.

According to Age UK Rotherham (AUKR) estimates, that there are approximately 14,000 people in Rotherham who are not FAC eligible but could potentially significantly benefit from AA because of their poor family/support networks. Targeting residents, who are not yet in such need as to become eligible for statutory services, but yet still have significant health difficulties, could have longer term benefits for the council. The importance of early intervention is well documented and contributes to allowing elderly people to maintain their independence and the ability to self-care which in turn minimises the potential future reliance on publically funded services

The Council currently employs 2 visiting officers within the Revenues and Benefits Service who will assist with the full range of benefits advice, although only 1 officer is currently working, and the amount of time available for all potential claimants is obviously limited.

### **7.3 Barriers to applying for Attendance Allowance**

In comparison to some other benefits, AA does not have claimant rates as high. This may be for a number of reasons; Information concerning AA may not be widely available to the possible recipients and many older people may not realise they qualify for the benefit

regardless of income or lifetime savings. In addition the application form is 48 pages long and can be extremely daunting to many people with poor literacy skills or not experienced in completing forms. There may also be some cultural reasons for poor take up with some older people not wanting to admit they need help and as a result do not answer the questions as fully as they could. Age UK Rotherham (AUKR) have identified that as many as 40% of the application forms completed without assistance will not be approved and many people do not reapply. However with assistance people who do reapply are often deemed eligible.

### **7.4 The Benefits**

Improving people's material circumstances can have various benefits;

- Health - The reduction of income experienced by elderly people can have adverse effects to their health if they are unable to adequately heat their home, maintain a healthy diet and have a varied and active social life. Elderly people can very often experience illness due to living in cold homes and can become depressed and socially isolated if unable to leave their home. The allowance can pay for anything the recipient determines; it could for example pay for heating or indeed taxis to help attend social events without relying on family.
- Housing – The allowance can pay for heating, gardening, cleaning and decorating all of which helps maintain the property and contributes to maintaining independence and reduces the reliance on family and public services. From a landlord perspective, any monies spent by tenants on heating or up keeping their home are beneficial in maintaining the fabric of the property.
- Rotherham Economy – The increase in income will impact on the Rotherham economy as more money will be spent in the Rotherham area.
- Access to other benefits – If the claim for Attendance Allowance is accepted this can lead to being entitled to other benefits which further increases income.
- Reduction in need for Social Care – Being able to live an independent life for as long as possible minimises the need to request assistance from publically funded services.
- Bereavement – Older people do not have many changes in circumstances in later life but the loss of a partner is a significant change that older people will have to face. If the spouse or partner is the main income provider, many widows only receive a fraction of their husband's pension, and they continue to live in the same property the expenses can remain the same while the income is reduced. The additional income which Attendance Allowance provides can help provide much needed financial assistance and may avoid having to leave or sell their current home and avoids adding additional anxiety and stress in this time of grief.

### **7.5 Proposal**

It is proposed to commission AUKR to deliver a one year pilot project, the purpose of which will be to determine if it is possible to significantly increase the financial wellbeing of older frail or disabled council tenants. AUKR could fill the apparent gap left by the DWP and have a track record of making 120 successful claims from 200 applications. However

to increase their existing capacity they will require additional resources. On the basis of past performance relating to Attendance Allowance claims, AUKR suggest a return on investment of £16.59 for every £1 spent is achievable.

The pilot project will work exclusively with council house tenants, and represent a key strand in Rotherham Housing Services' financial inclusion strategy. It is felt to be especially relevant to housing tenants because of the high proportions of older and poorer residents who live in council housing. However the one year pilot will determine the appropriateness of a) continuing with the scheme, and b) further developing the scheme to address the needs of all potential applicants in the borough.

AUKR are in a unique position to provide this pilot service, nationally they are taking forward a programme of promotion and support for claiming Attendance Allowance. To ensure that moving forward there are no failings in the appropriate procurement of the service a tender exercise will take place once a full analysis of the findings of this pilot has been assessed, in line with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

## **8. Finance**

It is proposed to fund the project to the tune of £30,000 for one year. For this, AUKR have advised that they will be able to assist 300 applicants, at an average cost of £100 per application. If past success rates are replicated, this would potentially generate an additional annual benefit income to Rotherham of £497,000.

The project will work exclusively with Rotherham council house tenants and will be funded from the Housing Revenue Account. Financial provision for this project has been made in the budget for 2014/15.

## **9. Background papers and consultation**

RMBC's Health and Well Being Strategy  
Age UK proposal

**Contact details:** - Kath Brisland – Financial Inclusion Manager  
01709 255643 / 07920212216  
[Kath.brislandl@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Kath.brislandl@rotherham.gov.uk)

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring 2013/14</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

This Budget Monitoring Report provides a financial forecast for Neighbourhoods General Fund within the Neighbourhoods & Adult Services Directorate to the end of March 2014 based on actual income and expenditure for the period ending February 2014.

The forecast for the financial year 2013/14 is an overall forecast under spend of (-£321k) against an approved net revenue budget of £2.461m.

### **6. Recommendation**

**That the Cabinet Member receives and notes the latest financial projection against budget for 2013/14.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

The table below shows the summary forecast outturn position against the approved Net Revenue Budgets:-

SERVICE AREA	Net Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance from Net Budget Deficit/ (Surplus)	% Variation to Net Budget
	£000's	£000's	£000's	%
Strategic Housing & Investment	188	199	11	5.85
Housing Options	290	189	-101	-34.83
Housing & Communities	271	201	-70	-25.83
Central	303	295	-8	-2.64
Business Regulation	207	159	-48	-23.19
Safer Neighbourhoods	1,202	1,097	-105	-8.73
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,461</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>-321</b>	<b>-13.08</b>

The main variations against budget can be summarised as follows:-

### 7.1 Strategic Housing & Investment Service (SHIS) (+£11k)

The SHIS team budget has a pressure of +£11k mainly as a result of lower than expected staff turnover against budget.

### 7.2 Housing Options (-£101k)

This area is projecting an overall under spend of (-£101k). This includes a (-£48k) projected under spend on the Dispersed Units Trading Account which will be requested as an earmarked balance to be carried forward at year end to support the on-going refurbishment programme for these units.

There is also a projected surplus of (-£62k) within the Private Sector Adaptations Service as a result of a continued vacancy and an increase in fees and charges from additional Aids and Adaptations work. The projected income is dependent on the additional work being completed by the year end and is being closely monitored.

The Key Choices Property Management Service is showing a projected over spend of +£9k as a result of lower than anticipated income from managed properties.

### 7.3 Housing & Communities (-£70k)

This service area is projecting an overall under spend of (-£70k).

This consists of projected under spends both within Area Assemblies and Supplies and Services budgets (-£51k) as a result of the Council wide moratorium on non-essential spend, which is partially reduced by a small over spend on Anti Social Behaviour due to lower than expected staff turnover +£2k.

There is also a small under spend of (-£3k) on the Community Safety Unit budget as a result of a recent vacancy which will not be filled this financial year.

The under spend includes (-£18k) within Community Leadership Fund, of which (-£16k) relates to Members Annual budgets and was recommended for carry forward at the meeting for Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (minute number 48).

#### 7.4 Central (-£8k)

A small under spend is forecast due to savings within supplies and services budgets.

#### 7.5 Business Regulation (-£48k)

Overall Business Regulation is projecting a (-£48k) under spend. Pressures on staffing costs within Health and Safety, Food and Drugs and Animal Health budgets totalling +£14K are being offset by savings within Trading Standards mainly due to continued vacant posts (-£61k).

Licensing is projecting an over spend of +£20k due mainly to projected income for new licences not as high as originally anticipated earlier in the year.

Bereavement Services is now projecting a (-£21k) under spend as a result of lower than forecast costs relating to anticipated repairs and maintenance. It is likely that £10k of this under spend will be requested for an earmarked balance for carry forward at the year end to complete essential repairs and maintenance work that has not been able to be carried out in time for this financial year end.

#### 7.6 Safer Neighbourhoods (-£105k)

Savings within Community Protection through vacancy management, further savings achieved as a result of the moratorium on non-essential spend and additional grant funding, partly reduced by a small remaining pressure on income due to reduced Environmental Protection Act (EPA) applications, leaving an overall forecast under spend of (-£114k).

Also, statutory Health and Safety work on Landfill Sites is resulting in a forecast overspend of +£9k in this area.

#### 7.7 Agency & Consultancy

To date there has been no spend on Agency and spend totalling £46,808 on Consultancy within Neighbourhoods General Fund Budgets.

Consultancy expenditure was incurred in respect of data and analysis relating to Green Deal Energy Efficiency projects and Flexible Support Fund Project Delivery, both of which are externally grant funded.



#### 7.8 Non Contractual Overtime

There has been minor expenditure of £200 on Non Contractual Overtime within Safer Neighbourhoods area. This was for the cost of weekend enforcement of the removal of Travellers from a Town Centre site.

### 8. Finance

The financial implications for each service area have been outlined in Section 7 above.

### 9. Risks and Uncertainties

These forecasts are based on financial performance to the end of December 2013. The forecast outturn is dependent on delivery of planned management actions being achieved and thus effective and tight financial management practices remain essential including holding monthly budget clinics with the Service Director and senior managers.

### 10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget within the limits determined in March 2013 is vital to achieving the Council's Policy agenda. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance.

### 11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Report to Cabinet 20 February 2013 – Proposed Revenue Budget & Council Tax 2013/14.

The content of this report has been discussed with the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods and the Director of Finance.

**Contact Name:**

**Mark Scarrott, Financial Services - Finance Manager (Neighbourhoods and Adult Services), Business Partnering, Extn 22007**

**Email:** [mark.scarrott@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:mark.scarrott@rotherham.gov.uk)

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday 7th April 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Report 2013/14</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods and Adult Services</b>

**5. Summary**

This budget monitoring report presents the forecast outturn position on the 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) based upon actual income and expenditure to the end of February 2014.

The overall forecast is that the HRA will make a contribution to working balance (reserves) of £0.369m, a variation of -£2.968m against approved budget.

**6. Recommendations**

- **That Cabinet Member receives and notes the latest financial projection against budget for 2013/14.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

**7.1** This budget report is based upon actual income, expenditure and known commitments as at the end of February 2014 forecast to the end of the financial year to give a projected outturn position, compared to budget.

**7.2** Appendix A of this report provides the Budget Operating Statement for 2013/14 which shows the various income and expenditure budget lines which make up the net cost of delivering the service. The latest forecast net cost of service is (-£8.781m) which, together with Revenue Contribution to Capital (RCCO) costs of £8.437m and interest received (-£25k) will result in an overall surplus of £0.369m to be transferred to Working Balance.

**7.3** Within the Operating Statement are several budget heads which are either year end adjustments (for example debt management costs £222k) or are subject to external influence and therefore outside direct control (for example cost of capital charges £14.602m).

**7.4** Budget Monitoring is therefore mainly focussed upon expenditure and income which is within control, i.e. income of £78.904m, the repair and maintenance budget of £17.996m and supervision and management of £20.065m.

### 7.5 Budget Monitoring

**7.5.1** Appendix A, column B demonstrates the projected outturn based upon activity to the end of February 2014.

**7.5.2** Overall it can be seen that the net cost of service (before RCCO and interest received) is forecast to be -£8.781m, a surplus of £2.968m as shown in the table below.

	<b>Budget £000</b>	<b>Forecast £000</b>	<b>Variance £000</b>
Expenditure	73,091	71,232	-1,859
Income	-78,904	-80,013	-1,109
<b>Net Cost of Service</b>	<b>-5,813</b>	<b>-8,781</b>	<b>-2,968</b>

**7.5.3** Several of the budget lines within income and expenditure are forecasting to outturn with a variance to budget as highlighted in the table below:

	<b>Budget £000</b>	<b>Forecast £000</b>	<b>Variance £000</b>
<b>Expenditure:</b>			
Housing Repairs Account	17,996	17,240	-756
Supervision and Management	20,065	19,072	-993
Rents, Rates & Taxes	174	214	40
Provision for Bad Debts	742	793	51
Cost of Capital Charge	14,602	14,402	-200
<b>Income:</b>			
Dwelling Rents	-74,245	-74,519	-274
Non Dwelling Rents	-792	-741	51
Charges for Services	-3,602	-4,342	-740
Other Fees and Charges	-214	-361	-147
<b>Net Variance</b>			<b>-2,968</b>

**7.5.4** It can be seen that there is a forecast increase in income and an under spend on the expenditure budget.

**7.5.5** The balance of this report will focus on the main variations to budget.

## **7.6** Expenditure

Column B of Appendix A demonstrates that based upon actual spend and commitments to date, total expenditure is forecast to outturn at £71.232m compared to a budget provision of £73.091m, a reduction in spend of £1.859m. The main variations are as follows:

### **7.6.1** Contributions to Housing Repairs

Appendix A demonstrates that the forecast year-end spend on Repairs and Maintenance is currently forecasting an overall underspend of £756k against a budget of £17.996m.

**7.6.2** The empty homes budget is difficult to forecast as this is a very responsive service. The original budget has been set based upon an estimated 1,500 minor voids in year. At the end of January there were 256 more void completions than budgeted. The main reason for the increase is the impact of the Welfare Reform as more tenants requested a transfer to smaller properties.

Within the Housing Repairs budgets there is an overall forecast overspend on Empty homes due to increase in minor voids.

However, this is offset by a forecast under spend on overheads within revenue schemes plus shared savings now agreed with both contractors resulting in lower costs to the HRA.

**7.6.3 Supervision and Management**

Column B of Appendix A demonstrates that based upon expenditure and commitment to date, total expenditure is forecast to outturn at £19.072m, a forecast overall under spend of £993k.

The main reason for the variation is lower than expected staff turnover including delays in implementing the review of structures across a number of teams. This is reduced by an additional contribution to the Furnished Homes reserve due to additional income as more clients use the scheme (see paragraph 7.7.3).

**7.6.4 Cost of Capital Charge**

This latest forecast cost of capital charge is £200k less than budgeted due to lower than anticipated interest rates.

**7.6.5 Rents, Rates and Taxes**

There is a forecast overspend of £40k due to the increase in number of void properties.

**7.6.6 Provision for Bad debts**

The latest forecast is to increase the provision for bad debts by £51k to reflect the increase in number of current and former tenant arrears during the year and outstanding income from rechargeable repairs.

**7.7 Income**

**7.7.1** Column B of Appendix A shows that based upon income received to date the total forecast income collectable is £80.013m, an increase of £1.109m above the approved budget of £78.904m.

**7.7.2** Dwelling rental income is projected to over recover by £274k, after allowing for 2% loss of income. However, Non-dwelling rents is forecast to slightly under recover against budget of £51k due to a review and reclassification of a small number of properties to general fund resulting in less income due to the HRA.

**7.7.3** Income from charges for services and facilities are forecasting an outturn of £4.342m, an over recovery of income of £740k. This is mainly due to additional income on Furnished Homes (£650k) resulting from an increase in number of clients, additional fee income from Right to Buy sales (-£13k) plus one off income from prior year charges for District Heating (-£92k). However, there is a forecast under recovery of income from clients using Sheltered Neighbourhood Centres services (+£15k) as tenant's opt out of the laundry charge due to having their own facilities.

**7.7.4** Other fees and charges is forecasting an over recovery of income of £147k against budget, which includes additional income in respect of the sale of Tenants contents insurance, recovery of court costs, income from sale of second hand furniture and income from utility companies for the use of solar panels.

## **7.8 Summary**

In summary it can be seen in foregoing paragraphs 7.6 and 7.7 that the variance to budget of -£2.968m when comparing the forecast net cost of service against the budget of -£5.813m is due mainly to variances within housing repairs, supervision and management and cost of capital together with an over recovery of income.

## **8. Finance**

Impact on Working Balance - The report identifies that any deficit or surplus arising from the net cost of service will be transferred to the Working Balance which is reflected through the Appropriations section of the Operating Statement at Appendix A. Any forecast increase/decrease will be added to the budgeted sum shown under transfer to reserves.

Based upon the current forecast out-turn position on the net cost of service, there will be a forecast transfer to balances of £0.369m. This compares with a budgeted transfer from balances of £2.599m, a variation of -£2.968m.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

**Inflation – Non Contractual** –The 2013/14 Budget was formulated around an inflation assumption of nil (except on utilities); if inflation rises costs may exceed budget provision. It should be noted that the inflationary increase on the repair and maintenance contract is locked in for the financial year at 2.6 % and this has been provided for within the budget set.

**Mitigation:** Ongoing monitoring

- **Vacancy Factor**

Salaries budgets assume various levels of vacancies. If vacancies do not arise this could lead to salary costs in excess of budget.

**Mitigation:** In depth monitoring and forecasting of salary budgets.

- **Repair and Maintenance Voids.** Whilst the current empty home forecast is considered to be a prudent projection based upon 1,500 minor voids, it should be noted that the final number of voids received and completed in year could change. Any change in numbers or values will impact on expenditure.

**Mitigation:** Ongoing monitoring and triangulation with contractors. Any forecast increase in expenditure will be offset by a reduction in planned revenue works.

- **Rental Income**

Net rental income has been calculated on the basis of 2% void loss. Any increase / decrease on the actual levels of voids will impact on the level of income achieved.

**Mitigation:** Ongoing monitoring.

- **Impairment of Fixed Assets**

HRA Self Financing legislation has resulted in the costs of impairment/revaluation of non-dwellings becoming a real charge to be met by the HRA. This figure cannot be calculated until year end after the asset register has been fully updated. In 2012-13 the impairment charge was £646k.

**Mitigation:** Action is being taken to review the management of expenditure on non-dwellings assets to minimise the risk of impairment charges to the HRA. Advice is also being obtained via CIPFA as this is a real issue affecting many other local authorities.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

**10.1** The HRA supports the new Corporate Plan Priorities and is central to the long term strategy:

- Making sure no community is left behind.
- Helping to create safe and healthy communities.
- Improving the environment.

**10.2** The HRA is supported by a 30 year Business plan in line with the requirements set out in the Self Financing Initiative introduced from April 2012. Any savings or additional costs are assessed to determine the impact over the whole 30 years.

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

- Budget and Council Tax Setting Report (2013/14) to Cabinet February 2013
- Director of Finance and Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services have been consulted on the preparation of this report.

### **Contact Name:**

**Mark Scarrott, Finance Manager, Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, Financial Services, Business Partnering, ext: 22007, email mark.scarrott@rotherham.gov.uk**

## Housing Revenue Account - Draft Budget Operating Statement

Narrative	2013/14 Full Year Budget £	2013/14 Forecast Out-turn £	Variance £
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Contributions to Housing Repairs Account	17,996,000	17,239,866	-756,134
Supervision and Management	20,065,000	19,071,583	-993,417
Rents, Rates, Taxes etc.	174,000	213,927	39,927
Provision for Bad Debts	742,500	793,500	51,000
Cost of capital Charge	14,602,200	14,402,200	-200,000
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	19,288,734	19,288,734	0
Deferred Charges	0	0	0
Impairment of Fixed Assets	0	0	0
Debt Management Costs	222,000	222,000	0
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>73,090,434</b>	<b>71,231,810</b>	<b>-1,858,624</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Dwelling Rents	-74,245,061	-74,518,567	-273,506
Non-dwelling Rents	-792,280	-740,527	51,753
Charges for Services and facilities	-3,601,649	-4,342,394	-740,745
Other fees and charges	-213,800	-360,905	-147,105
Leaseholder Income	-50,910	-50,910	0
<b>Income</b>	<b>-78,903,700</b>	<b>-80,013,303</b>	<b>-1,109,603</b>
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>-5,813,266</b>	<b>-8,781,493</b>	<b>-2,968,227</b>
Amortised premia - Debt redemption	0	0	0
Interest received	-25,000	-25,000	0
<b>Net Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>-5,838,266</b>	<b>-8,806,493</b>	<b>-2,968,227</b>
<b>Appropriations:</b>			
Transfer from Capital Finance Account- Deferred	0	0	0
Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay	8,437,000	8,437,000	0
Transfer from Capital Finance Account- Impairment	0	0	0
Transfer from Major Repairs Reserve	0	0	0
Transfer to(+) from(-) Reserves	-2,598,734	369,493	2,968,227
<b>Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>7 April 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Housing Investment Programme 2014/15 to 2016-17</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods and Adult Services</b>

**5.0 Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide details of the Housing Investment Programme for the financial years 2014/15 to 2016/17.

**6.0 Recommendations**

**That Cabinet Member receives and notes the Housing Investment Programme for 2014-15 to 2016-17.**

## 7.0 Proposals and Details

- 7.1 The budget process that led to the original Capital Programme for 2013/14 to 2016/17 ensured that the Council's capital investment plans were aligned with its strategic priorities and vision for Rotherham.

In order to maintain that strategic link, and make best use of the capital resources available to the Council, it is important that the programme is kept under regular review and where necessary revisions are made.

The table below provides an overview of the HIP programme for the period 2014-15.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget 2014-15 £</b>
Refurbishments	11,995,000
Other Capital Projects	13,563,000
Fair Access to All (Adaptations)	3,389,000
Regeneration/ Neighbourhood Renewal – Public Sector	5,086,000
Regeneration/ Neighbourhood Renewal – Private Sector	971,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,004,000</b>

## 7.2 Details

### **7.2.1 Housing Improvement Programme 2014-15 Capital Works**

Appendix A provides a detailed budget breakdown by scheme for 2014-15 to 2016-17 and how the programme will be funded, it should be read in conjunction with the following explanations for works in 2014-15

#### **7.2.2 Refurbishments – Budget £11,995,000**

This budget is to fund works for internal and external refurbishments to properties. Internal works will include elements such as new kitchen and bathrooms. External elements include re-roofing, external render, fascias, soffits & bargeboard replacements and outhouse improvements. This does not include any virement which will be made if approved by Cabinet member when considering the P11 HIP report of 7 April 2014.

#### **7.2.3 Other Capital Works – Budget £13,563,000**

The sections below, breakdown individual spend within the Other Capital Works budget.

#### **7.2.4 Environmental Works – Budget £1,612,000**

This budget will fund a variety of projects throughout the borough currently subject to consultation with tenants and members. Works funded through this

scheme will include bin store improvements, shrub bed enhancements, off street parking and footpath re-surfacing etc.

**7.2.5 Empty Homes – Budget £2,900,000**

This budget is to fund major voids where the cost exceeds £4,000. This often occurs when a previous tenant has refused decency works so properties require new kitchens and bathrooms etc. prior to re-letting.

**7.2.6 Replacement Communal Entrance Doors – Budget £840,000**

This is a continuation of the scheme in 2013-14 and will result in all communal entrances to flats having high security entrance doors fitted.

**7.2.7 Electrical Board & Bond – Budget £200,000**

This is a demand led service and is to fund electrical improvement works to properties (e.g. consumer units, rewires etc.) following fixed wire electrical testing.

**7.2.8 Asbestos Removal & Testing – Budget £380,000**

This budget is to fund asbestos surveys and removals to properties that are receiving planned capital improvement works.

**7.2.9 Boundary Wall Treatments – Budget £825,000**

This budget is to fund improvements to boundary/ retaining walls and footpaths throughout the borough. This does not take account of any virement which will be made if approved by Cabinet Member when considering the P11 HIP report of 7 April 2014.

**7.2.10 District Heating Conversion/ Upgrades – Budget £2,000,000**

It is proposed to fund district heating upgrades and replacements as to be detailed within the report to cabinet member in June 2014.

**7.2.11 External Insulation – Budget £50,000**

This will fund ad hoc top ups of insulation to external wall cavities and lofts.

**7.2.12 New IT System – Budget £245,000**

This budget is to fund the purchase and implementation of the new integrated Housing Management System.

**7.2.13 General Structures - Budget £650,000**

This budget is to fund remedial works to building structures and includes pointing, rendering, underpinning and damp proof works.

#### **7.2.14 Replacement of Central Heating/ Boilers - Budget £3,761,000**

There is an ongoing programme of Central Heating replacements in order to reduce the revenue burden as a result of increasing repairs to Buderus and Alpha boilers.

#### **7.2.15 Community Centre Improvements – Budget £100,000**

This will fund essential upgrades to lighting and fire equipment within the centres.

### **7.3 Fair Access to All**

#### **7.3.1 Disabled Adaptations (Public Sector) – Budget £2,078,000**

#### **7.3.2 Disabled Adaptations (Private Sector) – Budget £1,311,000**

This will fund the ongoing provision of disabled adaptations to council and private dwellings.

### **7.4 Regeneration / Neighbourhood Renewal Public Sector**

#### **7.4.1 Non-Traditional Investment – Budget £1,400,000**

This budget is to complete external refurbishment and insulated render works to non traditional properties. This is part of an ongoing programme to extend the life of non traditional stock by circa 25 years.

#### **7.4.2 Garage Site Investment – Budget £250,000**

This will fund improvements works to garage sites across the borough. Works will include re-surfacing to the highway, re-roofing, new doors and general environmental improvements.

#### **7.4.3 New Build DPU Bungalows – Budget £500,000**

It is proposed to construct 4 DPU bungalows, 2 located in Kimberworth and 2 located in Thurcroft using cost savings generated to date through the Repairs and Maintenance contract with Morrison FS and Wilmot Dixon Partnerships.

#### **7.4.4 Enabling Works (HRA Land) – Budget £100,000**

This will facilitate development/ access to HRA sites identified for disposal or new build development opportunities for private developers.

#### **7.4.5 Opportunity/ Strategic Acquisition – Budget £2,835,915**

This funding is part of a multi year commitment to acquire properties to add to the council's social housing stock through the 30 Year HRA Business Plan.

## **7.5 Regeneration/ Neighbourhood Renewal Private Sector**

### **7.5.1 Dinnington Transformational Change – Budget £1,200**

This project was funded through the Regional Housing Board and was the installation of temporary art work to Dinnington Town centre. This budget will fund the removal during 2014-15.

### **7.5.2 Canklow Phase 1 & 2 – Budget £690,000**

This is a multi-year programme of activity to regenerate an area within Canklow through Housing Market Renewal. The project is focused on demolition, buy back and refurbishment of public and private sector properties in the area.

### **7.5.3 Bellows Road Service Centre Clearance – Budget £280,000**

This is an ongoing Housing Market Renewal scheme and includes the construction of new shop units and provision of new housing within the area.

## **7.6 Slippage to 2014/15**

The 2014-15 Budget proposals include any previously approved slippage from 2013-14. Approval for any further slippage will be sought in June 2014 when reconciliation of actual spend in 2013-14 is complete.

## **7.7 Housing Improvement Programme 2015-16 to 2016-17**

Details of the proposed HIP for 2015-16 onwards are attached at Appendix A for information, along with details of how this will be funded.

## **8.0 Finance**

**8.1** Financial implications are contained within the body of this report. Any revenue implications from the revised programme have been fully reflected in the HRA's latest 2013/14 outturn revenue forecast.

## **9.0 Risks and Uncertainties**

The Capital Programme is funded through a number of sources: borrowing, capital grants & contributions, revenue contributions and capital receipts. Any uncertainty over the funding of the Programme rests on confirmation that grants/contributions and capital receipts continue to be available in coming years. Where funding sources are volatile in nature the risks will be managed by continually keeping the programme under review.

## **10.0 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The HIP supports the Corporate plan priorities and is central to the longer term Housing Strategy:

- Making sure no community is left behind
- Helping to create Safe and Healthy Communities
- Improving the environment

The preparation of the Medium Term Financial Strategy incorporating a profiled capital programme and the associated revenue consequences, together with regular monitoring, highlights the Council's commitment to sound financial management.

## **11.0 Background Papers and Consultation**

Dave Richmond, Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods, Stuart Booth, Director of Financial Services and Budget Holders have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

Reports to Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods

### **Report Author**

**Paul Elliott, Business and Commercial Programme Manager; Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, [paul.elliott@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:paul.elliott@rotherham.gov.uk); Ext. 22494**



<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER</b>
---

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>7 April 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Housing Investment Programme 2013/14 – P11 February 2014</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods and Adult Services</b>

### **5.0 Summary**

This report provides an update of the Housing Investment Programme 2013-14 to end of Period 11 February 2014.

As at the end of Period 11 February 2014, total spend on the Housing Investment Programme was £17,940,076 compared to a budget provision of £19,532,452 representing an under spend to date of £1,592,376 (-11%) variance against planned expenditure.

The report will provide details of savings and slippage on the individual schemes of work within the overall programme, and highlights the fact that the resources not profiled to be drawn down in 2013/14 will be carried forward into next financial year.

### **6.0 Recommendations**

**That Cabinet Member receives and notes the spend and forecast position to the end of Period 11, February 2014.**

**That Cabinet Member approves the virement of £200,000 slipped funding for the Boundary Walls scheme to the 2014-15 Refurbishment budget. This will result in a revised Refurbishment budget of £12,195,000 and a revised Boundary Walls budget of £625,000 in 2014-15.**



## 7.0 Proposals and Details

7.1.1 This budget report is based upon the outturn position for the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) up to Period 11 February 2014.

7.1.2 There has been a total spend of £17,940,076 against the revised budget of £19,532,452 which has resulted in an under spend to the end February 2014 of £1,592,376.

	2013-14 Original Budget £	2013-14 Revised Budget £	2013-14 Revised Budget £ Jan 14	Actual spend to P11 £	Forecast spend to 31 March 14 £	Forecast Variance to end March 2014 £
<b>Refurbishments</b>	<b>14,303,000</b>	<b>14,609,863</b>	14,109,863	6,047,255	12,173,158	-1,936,707
<b>Other Capital Works</b>	<b>9,934,000</b>	<b>10,377,546</b>	9,821,069	6,181,335	10,377,528	556,459
<b>Sub Total - Capital Works to properties</b>	<b>24,237,000</b>	<b>24,987,409</b>	<b>23,930,932</b>	<b>12,228,590</b>	<b>22,550,684</b>	<b>-1,380,248</b>
<b>Fair Access to All</b>	<b>3,091,000</b>	<b>3,784,215</b>	4,002,068	2,879,100	3,872,018	-130,050
<b>Regeneration/Neigh bourhood Renewal</b>	<b>2,960,000</b>	<b>3,398,624</b>	3,029,181	2,140,143	3,076,882	47,701
<b>Other Public Sector</b>	<b>2,166,000</b>	<b>725,335</b>	725,335	692,243	739,994	14,659
<b>Total Revised Capital Programme</b>	<b>32,454,000</b>	<b>32,895,583</b>	<b>31,687,516</b>	<b>17,940,076</b>	<b>30,239,578</b>	<b>-1,447,938</b>

There has been a total reduction in forecast spend to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 within month of £516,123. This has increased the forecast underspend to £1,447,938.

## 7.2 Details

### 7.2.1 Housing Improvement Programme 2013-14 Capital Works

Appendix A provides the full programme breakdown of budget, forecast outturn, and variance by project line and should be referred to in conjunction with the following explanations.

### 7.2.2 Refurbishments

**(Revised Budget £14,109,863 Forecast Outturn £12,173,156**

**Variance -£1,936,707)**

Refurbishments is comprised of Internal Works (Decent Homes) and External Works (Roofing, pointing, cladding). Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £6,047,255.

The existing programme primarily focuses on External works to dwellings such as replacement roofs, external works to blocks of flats and replacement of fascia's, soffits and rainwater goods. The programmes have taken longer than anticipated to tender and mobilise, this has resulted in reduced forecast spend. Discussions have concluded with Keepmoat, resulting in an increased scope of works to now include full replacement of fascia boards and felt membrane beneath tiles abutting rainwater goods. This has subsequently increased spend forecasts on the fascia's, soffits and bargeboard

replacement programme so reducing the forecast underspend. This financial year we have completed improvements to 1,714 properties through this programme.

### **7.2.3 Other Capital Works**

**(Revised Budget £9,821,069 Forecast Outturn £10,377,528**

**Variance £556,459)**

The sections below, breakdown individual spend within the Other Capital Works budget. Collectively across all projects there has been an reduction in forecast spend within month of £156,688.

### **7.2.4 Environmental – Brinsworth**

**(Revised Budget £224,337 Forecast Outturn £234,235**

**Variance £9,898)**

Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £176,235. This project includes the completion of bin stores, paths and landscaping works around the Pike Road area and will be complete within the current financial year.

#### **Other Environmental Works**

**(Revised Budget £1,130,574 Forecast Outturn £1,148,276**

**Variance £17,702)**

Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £680,638. There has been an increase in forecast spend to 31 March 2014 from P10 to P11 of £18,162.

A variety of environmental schemes are ongoing and due to commence. Examples include:

#### **Briery Walk, Munsbrough**

The removal of overgrown trees and bushes in public open space which were creating secluded locations and blocking street lights. The clearance was the first phase of improvements before looking to improve security of drying spaces and secure drying spaces which have become run down/ damaged over time. We have used fencing to reduce opportunities for rat-runs in an attempt to aid police surveillance and deter opportunities for crime.

#### **St Johns Green, Kimberworth Park**

Visually opening and removing sheltered areas on communal stairs to flats above the shops which have had persistent troubles with ASB over many years. Also the installation of gates and railings to improve the security of these flats.

**7.2.5 Empty Homes (Revised Budget £1.819m Outturn £2,704,049  
Variance £884,407)**

Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £1,480,503.

There has been an increase in forecast spend to the end of March 2014 of £122,896 within month. The primary reason for this additional forecast spend is an increased number of voids being identified as requiring major works at survey stage.

204 major voids were complete to the end of February 2014. Major voids occur when the cost of bringing a property up to the lettable standard exceeds £4,000. This often occurs where a previous tenant has refused decent homes works and so properties now require new kitchens, bathrooms or central heating systems.

**7.2.6 Replacement Communal Entrance Doors  
(Revised Budget £929,863 Forecast Outturn £929,863  
Variance £0)**

High security communal entrance doors have been replaced to 99 blocks of flats. It is anticipated this scheme will be fully complete by end of the financial year. Spend to date on this scheme is £584,374.

**7.2.7 Electrical Board & Bond  
(Revised Budget £200,000 Forecast Outturn £116,465  
Variance - £83,535)**

There has been a reduction in forecast spend of £45,416 within month. Spend to the end of February 2014 was £71,790.

This is a demand led service and the number of properties requiring capital works following Fixed Wire Testing was lower than forecast.

Actual fixed wire test related works (re-wires, new consumer units etc.) have been carried out in 159 properties.

**7.2.8 Asbestos Removal & Testing  
(Revised Budget £370,000 Forecast Outturn £350,000  
Variance -£20,000)**

Total spend to end of February 2014 was £292,261. This budget is primarily focused on funding asbestos surveys and removals to properties that are receiving planned capital improvement works. The under spend is a result of asbestos removal and testing now being met from within individual project budgets.

**7.2.9 Boundary Wall Treatments**  
**(Revised Budget £200,000 Forecast Outturn £0**  
**Variance -£200,000)**

To date works have still to commence. It was anticipated works would take place to the boundary walls of 70 properties in the final quarter of the financial year. Due to a need to consult Leaseholders on the scheme this has resulted in the project now being delayed into 2014-15.

Previously cabinet member approved slippage of £200,000 into 2014-15 to fund works. Following review of work content it is now deemed to be revenue, so will be funded through Repairs and Maintenance Planned works funding. The Cabinet Member is therefore asked to approve virement of slipped funding to the 2014-15 Refurbishment budget. This will result in a revised Refurbishment budget of £12,195,000.

**7.2.10 Flat Door Replacement**  
**(Revised Budget £620,362 Forecast Outturn £765,750**  
**Variance £145,388)**

The Replacement Flat Door programme has now commenced, the forecast outturn spend is greater than budget allocation due to higher than expected costs received at tender stage. The forecast overspend has reduced by £234,250 within month due to survey's wrongly identifying 225 properties as requiring replacement doors and 305 no access/ decline properties where we have elderly or vulnerable tenants. The team are currently working with Housing Management to gain access and/ or persuade tenants to have works complete at these properties. The remaining forecast overspend on flats doors will be off set by virement of the windows budget, which is forecast to spend less than planned.

As at the end of February 2014 there has been a total spend of £451,650. A total of 743 properties have received new flats doors through this programme.

**7.2.11 District Heating Conversions**  
**(Revised Budget £218,000 Forecast Outturn £89,794**  
**Variance -£128,206)**

Spend to the end of February 2014 was £55,739.

The 2013/14 programme provides for a full stock condition survey of all District Heating schemes to enable more accurate forecasting in future. It was also intended to replace hoppers as part of a Renewable Heat incentive application; however as at the time of writing this report we have not received any indication if this application has been successful. We do not therefore anticipate any further work in Q4.

At the current time remaining spend forecast is based on previous years capital charges to cover potential breakdown of the District Heating system.

**7.2.12 EPC Improvements**

**(Revised Budget 475,000 Forecast Outturn £99,798  
Variance -£375,202)**

Spend to the end February 2014 was £52,733. This budget was originally intended to fund External Wall insulation to non – traditional properties and installation of top up cavity and loft insulation. Given the success at leveraging in additional funds through the non traditional investment programme, the majority of funding for EWI has not been required and has been used on projects such as glazing upgrades.

Thermal efficiency works through upgrading of glazing to 16 properties has been undertaken to date allowing properties to become more energy efficient.

**7.2.13 New IT System**

**(Revised Budget £324,732 Forecast Outturn £60,000  
Variance -£264,732)**

This budget is to fund the purchase and implementation of the new integrated Housing Management System, within month the forecast spend has increased by £20k. To date the project has experienced significant delays in implementation due to poor service from the supplier. As a result the funding of £264,732 will be slipped into 2014-15. There has been no spend to date. Discussions are ongoing with the supplier to rectify the situation.

**7.2.14 General Structures**

**(Revised Budget £650,000 Outturn £657,665  
Variance £0)**

This budget is to fund remedial works to building structures and includes, pointing, rendering, underpinning and damp proof works. Based on current run rate for works and costs charged to revenue which are subsequently transferred to capital, we continue to expect fully spending this budget by end of the current financial year. Spend to the end of February 2014 was £306,501.

**7.2.15 Lift Replacement**

**(Revised Budget £75,000 Forecast Outturn £56,882  
Variance -£18,118)**

Works commenced mid-January 2014 to undertake the refurbishment of lifts at Shaftsbury House. It is anticipated all works will be complete by mid-March 2014. There has only been a minor spend to end of February 2014 which is £3,016.

**7.2.16 Replacement of Central Heating/ Boilers (Revised Budget £3,010,589  
Forecast Outturn £3,192,098 Variance £181,509)**

Spend to the end of February 2014 was £2,033,227, an increase within month of £281,897. Forecast spend within month has also increased by £110,035.

There is a programme of Central Heating replacements in order to reduce the revenue burden as a result of increasing repairs to Ideal and Buderus boilers. As a result it was identified that significantly more capital investment was required in 2013-14.

A total of 1,060 new boilers have been fitted through planned work programmes.

### **7.3 Fair Access to All**

**7.3.1 Disabled Adaptations (Public Sector)**  
**(Budget £1,944,980 Forecast Outturn £1,802,365**  
**Variance -£142,615)**

**7.3.2 Disabled Adaptations (Private Sector)**  
**(Budget £2,057,088 Forecast Outturn £2,069,653**  
**Variance £12,565)**

Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £2,879,100. A series of service improvements and efficiencies have led to delivery of backlog works resulting in increasing spend.

Disabled aids and adaptations (major) were undertaken in 399 public sector homes.

Disabled aids and adaptations (major) were undertaken in 317 private sector homes.

### **7.4 Regeneration / Neighbourhood Renewal**

**7.4.1 Non-Trad Investment**  
**(Budget £1,841,310 Forecast Outturn £1,767,499 Variance -£73,811)**

Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £1,612,000. This budget is to complete external refurbishment and insulation render works to non traditional properties. This is part of an ongoing programme to extend the life of non traditional stock by circa 25 years.

Investment was made in 293 non-traditional dwellings in Wath, Rawmarsh, East Dene and Whiston.

**7.4.2 Garage Site Investment**  
**(Budget £500,000 Forecast Outturn £805,422 Variance £305,422)**

Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £189,157. Investment has been made to 4 Garage Sites so far this year at Haugh Road, Rawmarsh; Langley Close, East Herringthorpe; Gray Avenue, Aston and Scott Close, Thurcroft. Works have included re-surfacing to the highway, re-roofing, doors and general environmental improvements.

At an update meeting with Mears on 26 March 2014, it was confirmed all works would be complete by 31 March 2014, we therefore believe the forecast outturn to be accurate.

**7.4.3 Dinnington Transformational Change  
(Budget £23,404 Forecast Outturn £22,314 Variance £1,090)**

This project was funded through the Regional Housing Board and was the installation of temporary art work to Dinnington Town centre. The original budget was £25,000. We had previously reduced this budget to reflect the then forecast spend, however actual spend has now exceeded this budget so the minor overspend of £1,090 will be off set from other savings within the Regeneration/ renewal budget.

**7.4.4 Canklow Phase 1 & 2  
(Budget £210,657 Forecast Outturn £180,657 Variance -£30,000)**

This is a multi-year programme of activity to regenerate an area within Canklow through Housing Market Renewal. The project is focused on demolition, buy back and refurbishment of public and private sector properties in the area. Actual spend to the end of February 2014 on this project is £173,697.

**7.4.5 Bellows Road Service Centre Clearance  
(Budget £454,990 Forecast Outturn £299,990  
Variance -£155,000)**

This is a Housing Market Renewal scheme and includes the construction of new shop units and provision of new housing within the area. To date there has been a total spend of 142k. There remains a risk that forecast outturn will not be met and further slippage required.

**7.5 Other Public Sector**

**7.5.1 Opportunity Acquisitions  
(Budget £725,335 Forecast Outturn £739,994 Variance £14,659)**

Total spend to the end of February 2014 was £692,243.

This is a multi-year commitment to acquire properties to add to the Council's social housing stock through the 30 Year HRA Business Plan. Strict criteria are applied to the acquisitions which have led to more protracted negotiation than anticipated and hence the previous slippage. To date a total of 16 properties have been purchased under this scheme. Negotiations are ongoing to purchase a further 72 properties through this programme at Wickersley, Rawmarsh, Thurcroft, Dalton and Harthill.

## 7.6 Slippage to 2014/15

During P11 HIP Monitoring we have identified further projects that will not spend all budgets allocations within the current financial year but due to completion of tenders or works already on site will require remaining unspent budget slipping into 2014-15. We intend to complete a year end outturn report in June 2014, providing actual spend position as at 31 March 2014 and details of any slippage required.

## 7.7 Summary

7.7.1 Overall total HIP spend to Period 11, February 2014 was £17,940,076. The current forecast outturn position to 31 March 2014 is £30,239,578 compared to a revised budget provision of £31,687,516.

## 8.0 Finance

8.1 The table below identifies the funding available to meet the costs of delivering the HIP in 2013/14:

<b>Funding Summary HIP</b>	<b>£</b>
Grants	1,271,031
RCCO	8,437,000
Prudential Borrowing HRA	593,834
Prudential Borrowing GF	457,751
Capital Receipts RTB	1,073,371
Capital Receipts RTB 1 to 1	131,501
Capital Receipts JG	632,577
MRA	19,780,222
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,377,267</b>

Year end adjustments to funding will be made as appropriate to ensure all works are funded from within existing resources. The year end funding position will be reported in the year end out turn report.

## 9.0 Risks and Uncertainties

The 2013/14 Forecast Outturn position may be subject to change based on final value of works completed to 31 March 2014. This may be influenced by any extreme weather or unforeseen issues on site. Based on current spend position at P11 it is likely that some Public and Private sector schemes may require further slippage of funding into 2014-15. If this was to materialise it will be reported at P12 Final Outturn monitoring.

## 10.0 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The HIP supports the Corporate plan priorities and is central to the longer term Housing Strategy:



- Making sure no community is left behind
- Helping to create Safe and Health Communities
- Improving the environment

### **11.0 Background Papers and Consultation**

Dave Richmond, Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods,  
Stuart Booth, Director of Financial Services and Budget Holders have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

Reports to Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods

Report Author

**Paul Elliott, Business and Commercial Programme Manager; Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, [paul.elliott@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:paul.elliott@rotherham.gov.uk); Ext. 22494**

## Appendix A

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		<b>HIP PROGRAMME 2013-14 - POSITION AS AT PERIOD 11</b>							
2									
3									
4			Budget		Manager's		Variance		%age
5			£		Forecast		(Over + /		(Over + /
6					£		Under -)		Under -)
7							£		%
8		<b>REFURBISHMENT / IMPROVEMENTS</b>							
9		Refurbishment	13,499,514		11,917,805		-1,581,709		-12%
10		Windows	610,349		255,351		-354,998		-58%
11		<b>REFURBISHMENT / IMPROVEMENTS TOTAL</b>	<b>14,109,863</b>		<b>12,173,156</b>		<b>-1,936,707</b>		<b>-14%</b>
12		<b>OTHER CAPITAL WORKS</b>							
13		Empty Homes	1,819,642		2,704,049		884,407		49%
14		Replacement of Central Heating / Boilers	3,010,589		3,192,098		181,509		6%
15		Replacement of Communal Doors (High Security)	929,863		929,863		0		0%
16		Environmental Works	1,372,613		1,357,476		-15,137		-1%
17		Electrical Board & Bond	200,000		116,465		-83,535		-42%
18		Community Centre Improvements (5 Year Programme)	0		0		0		NA
19		Boundary Wall Treatments	0		0		0		NA
20		Asbestos Removal & Testing	370,000		350,000		-20,000		-5%
21		Flat Door Replacement	620,362		765,750		145,388		23%
22		District Heating Conversions	218,000		87,482		-130,518		-60%
23		One-Off Properties	0		0		0		NA
24		EPC Improvements	475,000		99,798		-375,202		NA
25		New IT System	80,000		60,000		-20,000		-25%
26		General structures	650,000		657,665		7,665		1%
27		Lift Replacement	75,000		56,882		-18,118		-24%
28		<b>OTHER CAPITAL PROJECTS TOTAL</b>	<b>9,821,069</b>		<b>10,377,528</b>		<b>556,459</b>		<b>6%</b>
29									
30		<b>ALL WORKS TO PROPERTIES TOTAL</b>	<b>23,930,932</b>		<b>22,550,684</b>		<b>-1,380,248</b>		<b>-6%</b>
31									
32		<b>FAIR ACCESS TO ALL</b>							
33		Public Adaptations	1,944,980		1,802,365		-142,615		-7%
34		Private Adaptations	2,057,088		2,069,653		12,565		1%
35		<b>FAIR ACCESS TO ALL TOTAL</b>	<b>4,002,068</b>		<b>3,872,018</b>		<b>-130,050</b>		<b>-3%</b>
36									
37		<b>REGEN. / NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL</b>							
38		<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>							
39		Non-Traditional Investment	1,841,310		1,767,499		-73,811		-4%
40		Garage Site Investment	500,000		805,422		305,422		61%
41		<b>Public Sector Sub Total</b>	<b>2,341,310</b>		<b>2,572,921</b>		<b>231,611</b>		<b>10%</b>
42									
43		<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>							
44		Dinnington Transformational Change (RHB)	22,314		23,404		1,090		5%
45		Canklow Phase 1 & 2	210,567		180,567		-30,000		-14%
46		Bellows Road Service Centre Clearance	454,990		299,990		-155,000		-34%
47		<b>Private Sector Sub Total</b>	<b>687,871</b>		<b>503,961</b>		<b>-183,910</b>		<b>-27%</b>
48									
49		<b>REGEN. / NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL TOTAL</b>	<b>3,029,181</b>		<b>3,076,882</b>		<b>47,701</b>		<b>2%</b>
50									
51		<b>OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR</b>							
52		<b>HCA NEW BUILD</b>							
53		Opportunity Acquisition	725,335		741,547		16,212		2%
54		Carry Over from 11-12 New Builds	0		-1,553		-1,553		NA
55		<b>OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR TOTAL</b>	<b>725,335</b>		<b>739,994</b>		<b>14,659</b>		<b>2%</b>
56									
57		<b>SUB TOTAL 2</b>	<b>7,756,584</b>		<b>7,688,894</b>		<b>-67,690</b>		<b>-1%</b>
58									
59		<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>	<b>31,687,516</b>		<b>30,239,578</b>		<b>-1,447,938</b>		<b>-5%</b>

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET</b>
--

<b>1</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday 7 April 2014</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Furnished Homes Scheme</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods and Adult Services</b>

## **5 Summary**

The Council's Furnished Homes Scheme has been successful in supporting and sustaining vulnerable tenancies since it was launched in 2004.

In order to maximise the Scheme's flexibility and capacity to respond to the changing circumstances brought about by welfare reform and the HRA self-financing rules, it is proposed that, with effect from 1 April 2014, the Scheme is reclassified as a General Fund Service.

## **6 Recommendations**

**Cabinet Member is asked to note that:**

**The Furnished Homes Scheme is operated as a General Fund Service with effect from 1 April 2014.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

### Background

7.1 The Council launched the Rotherham Furnished Homes Scheme (the Scheme) in 2004 with the specific welfare aim of:

- Assisting vulnerable tenants to set up and sustain their tenancies
- Preventing homelessness due to tenancy failure;
- Meeting the gap in the affordable furnished homes sector that existed in the local housing market at that time; and
- Providing a low cost alternative to high interest furniture stores, payday lending and other sources of high interest personal finance.

By April 2009, over 700 Council house tenants had joined the Scheme.

7.2. In 2009, the Scheme was remodelled to provide a more flexible personalised service, enabling tenants to choose from a wider range of furniture to meet their particular needs and circumstances. Financial safeguarding measures were also introduced to allow tenants the opportunity to amend their package or opt out of the Scheme altogether should it become unaffordable.

These changes have proved very popular and have led to a rapid expansion of the Scheme with the overall number of furnished tenancies now having increased to 2,750.

### Proposals

At present, the Scheme has only been offered to Council house tenants and, as such, has, up to and including 2013/14, been accounted for as a HRA traded service but outside the scope of the annual and 30 year financial and business plan of the Housing Revenue statutory ring-fenced Account.

There has always been a business development and expansion opportunity to provide the service to other Registered Social Landlords, charities and social housing providers. A proposed business development plan is being developed in this regard in order to determine the extent to which the service could further realise business opportunities and future revenues. The Services ability to realise such potential commercial opportunities are somewhat dependent on its ability to access capital investment finance. Continuing to operate as a HRA Traded Service is restrictive given the HRA's current financial borrowing limit which is already fully committed on strategic schemes supporting the HRA Business Plan. Such a restrictive borrowing limit does not apply to the General Fund. It is only subject to the general condition under the Prudential Code that the financing charges associated with the capital investment are affordable.

Accordingly, it is therefore proposed that the service is reclassified as a General Fund Service with effect from 1 April 2014. For the tenants the reclassification of the service has no implications on the way the service is structured or delivered and furnished homes tenants will therefore be unaffected. Equally, there are no financial or other implications for the 30 year business plan of the Statutory Housing Revenue Ring-Fenced Account.

As such, the Scheme would charge the HRA for the cost of providing the service to Council house tenants, as it does now and the HRA would continue to receive the income from the weekly service charge made to furnished homes tenants. Officers in the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service have advised that the proposed change will not have any direct bearing on entitlement to housing benefit which will continue to be dependent on the eligibility criteria being satisfied. Equally, legal services have confirmed that given the specific welfare aims of the service there are no legislative barriers which would prevent the Scheme from being operated as a General Fund Service subject to:

- the level of charges to the HRA not being regarded as excessive – charges reasonably reflect the full cost of providing the service having regard to the need for the service to be self-financing. This includes generating a sufficient margin to give the scheme flexibility to fund replacement furniture and to support future business development;
- the service meeting the accounting code definition of a traded service - the service is being provided in a competitive environment in which tenants have the option to purchase or rent furniture from elsewhere should they wish. It, therefore, meets the definition.

## **8. Finance**

The Service's future sustainable financial standing is currently dependent on it being able to meet replacement furniture for tenants as required. It is, therefore, important that sufficient working capital is available to the business to meet its financial obligations and it is able to preserve a stable financial position to meet future unforeseen events and risks. This will enable the service to continue to be self-financing with no revenue budget implications and to realise future potential business development opportunities that may become apparent. To this end, and in accordance with Professional Accounting Standards, we will review the Service's earmarked working balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 in light of the revised Business and Financial Plan for the Service.

## **9 Risks and Uncertainties**

No operational, legal, or financial risks or uncertainties have been identified which would prevent the proposed reclassification of the service.

The views of the Council's external auditors, KPMG, have been canvassed. They have indicated that they see no reason to challenge the proposal subject to the level of charges to the HRA for the service being reasonable.

Ultimately, the Scheme's continued medium term future is dependent on future Government welfare reform changes in particular the proposed future introduction of Universal Credit and whether the provision of furniture for social housing tenants will continue to attract benefit entitlement and at the same level. . These are at present unknown but it is hoped that by reclassifying the service it will be able to be more adept at responding to any changing legal or welfare regulations.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The Furnished Homes Scheme supports the Council's Housing Strategy aims of preventing homelessness by sustaining tenancies, increasing the amount of affordable housing by keeping the level of empty social, affordable dwellings low, and, supporting the most vulnerable tenants.

It also has the potential, should the business be expanded, to improve the private rented sector by supporting landlords through housing related support services.

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

The report takes account of consultation with legal and Revenues & Benefits

- Rotherham Housing Strategy 2013 - 2043

### **Contact Names:**

Stuart Booth, Director of Financial Services, [stuart.booth@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.booth@rotherham.gov.uk), Tel Ext 22034

Dave Richmond, Director of Housing & Neighbourhoods, [dave.richmond@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:dave.richmond@rotherham.gov.uk), Tel Ext 23402

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted