

Public Document Pack

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

Venue: Council Chamber, Town
Hall, Moorgate Street,
Rotherham

Date: Thursday, 15 April 2004

Time: 9.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence (if any)
2. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
3. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
4. Questions from members of the public and the press.
5. Declarations of Interest.

FOR INFORMATION

6. Furnished Homes Scheme
- presentation by Sandra Tolley, Housing Services
7. Housing Inspection
- verbal report by Executive Director of Housing and Environmental Services
8. Locum Solicitor (Section 11/82 Notices) - Progress Report
- report of Head of Housing Services

FOR MONITORING

9. Housing and Environmental Services Decisions meetings held on 15th and 29th March, 2004 (attached). (Pages 1 - 12)

MINUTES - FOR INFORMATION

10. Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Panel held on 18th March, 2004 (attached) (Pages 13 - 20)

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following items are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under the paragraphs, indicated below, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:-

11. Household Wheeled Bin Provision and Replacement (Pages 21 - 26)
- report of Head of Environmental Health
(expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Authority/supply of services)
12. Bereavement Services Provision (Pages 27 - 29)
- report of Head of Housing Services
(expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Authority/supply of services)

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 20 May 2004**

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor F. Wright
Vice-Chairman – Councillor Heaps
Councillors:-Atkin, Burke, Furnell, Gouly, Hall, Hodgkiss, Jackson, Nightingale, Rashid, R. S. Russell,
Senior and S. Smith

**DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
15th March, 2004**

Present:- Councillor Ellis (in the Chair); Councillors Jack, Kaye and Hamilton (Policy Advisors) and F. Wright (Environment Scrutiny Panel).

220. 3RD QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2003/04

The Head of Housing Services submitted the Programme Area's performance report for the 3rd quarter of 2003/04.

Currently 76% of indicators were on target which was a substantial improvement from the previous year where 50% of indicators met the outturn targets.

When compared to the All England figures published in December, 2003, for Housing Services, 1 indicator was in the top quartile and 3 were in the upper quartile. The indicator in the top quartile related to empty property relet times where the Authority was the 4th best performer in the country compared to ALMO authorities. This was a massive improvement from the previous year when all 4 had been in the bottom quartile. There were currently no indicators in the bottom quartile.

Environmental Health had 2 indicators in the top quartile, 2 in the upper middle, 2 in the lower middle and 1 in the bottom quartile. This was an improvement from the previous year when 30% of the indicators had moved up a quartile place.

Currently 76% of the performance indicators directly relating to the CPA were on track to meet the year end targets. There were several actions currently underway to boost performance levels in the last quarter of the year. Improvements in performance were already being seen in the Repairs and Maintenance Service.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following points highlighted/issues raised:-

- A report was to be submitted shortly outlining proposals for the Furnished Accommodation Scheme for the homeless
- The outcome of the Stock Condition survey had been received
- The gas service programme had been completed ahead of target

Resolved:- That the report and progress made be noted.

221. NOS. 25 WARDEN STREET, CANKLOW AND 20 WHYBOURNE GROVE, WELLGATE

The Head of Housing Services reported receipt of a request from the Nomad Residential Project and the managing agent, South Yorkshire Housing

Association, that the above miscellaneous properties are leased to Nomad to enable the project to continue providing access to accommodation for young vulnerable people.

The two properties were currently leased by Action Housing who provided independent living accommodation with support services to individuals who were subject to probation licenses and those who had just been released from Prison. Action Housing were reshaping their service provision and wished to hand back the two properties.

Consultation with Ward Members was required due to the change of client group.

Resolved:- (1) That, subject to consultation with appropriate Ward Members, Nos. 25 Warden Street and 20 Whybourne Grove be leased to Nomad Residential Project and South Yorkshire Housing Association for a 6 year period with them being responsible for all repairing and maintenance of the properties.

(2) That discussions take place with the Finance and Accountancy Manager regarding the lease arrangements for the stated properties given the Council Policy of leasing properties at market rent.

222. RESIDENT EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY AND COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The Principal Tenant Involvement Officer submitted a report on the Resident Empowerment and Consultation and Communication Strategies for Housing Services.

The Strategies had been produced following a review of current practice and structures with tenants, residents and staff. They supported the overarching commitment to re-shape Housing Services to meet the wider requirements of Neighbourhood Renewal and Neighbourhood Management.

The Community Empowerment Strategy was a statement of the Service's approach to resident empowerment and correlated to the Council's landlord and management role. It would also support the negotiations for achieving tenant and resident empowerment through the ALMO.

The Consultation and Communication Strategy provided the framework through which involvement of customers throughout the Service could be planned.

Resolved:- (1) That the Community Empowerment and Consultation and Communication Strategies be noted.

(2) That the action plan, when complete, be submitted to the Cabinet Member for consideration.

223. HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO DECEMBER, 2003

The Finance and Accountancy Manager submitted a report on the General Fund Revenue Budget position for the period April to December, 2003.

At present, the projected overall outturn position was an underspend of £0.287M. This was composed of an overspend on the Housing General Fund budget and underspends on the Waste Collection and Waste Disposal and Environmental Health budgets as follows:-

Environmental Health (excluding Waste Strategy) – The position had improved since November as the projected overspending had been replaced by an underspend attributable to a range of factors including reduced spending on salaries and use of agency staff and contractors. The introduction of legislation in respect of the Clinical Waste Service had been delayed and a grant was now expected from DEFRA in respect of costs associated with the Foot and Mouth Disease.

Waste Strategy – The projected underspending was now £0.25M. This reflected continued high levels of throughput at recycling centres and lower waste arisings at landfill sites.

Housing General Fund – The projected overspend had increased due to higher than anticipated salary costs and the use of agency staff in the Homelessness and Agency and Grants services.

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

(2) That the Finance and Accountancy Manager discuss with neighbouring authorities the timing of the bonus payment to the civic amenity contractors in recognition of meeting the recycling targets.

(3) That the Finance and Accountancy Manager supply the Chairman of Environment Scrutiny Panel with the total cost incurred for the employment of agency staff across the Programme Area.

224. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO DECEMBER, 2003/04

The Finance and Accountancy Manager reported on the Housing Revenue Account budget position for the period April to December, 2003.

It was currently estimated that the HRA would achieve a surplus of approximately £0.437M. Right to Buy sales had continued at similar levels to those in recent months with 126 properties having been sold during December giving a total for the current year of 957. It was estimated that this would result in the loss of £1.6M rent income.

Work was ongoing with Benefits staff to assess the level of rent rebates and housing subsidy that would be received in respect of the current financial year. This was currently estimated to be some £0.15M over budget. Additional Supporting People Grant had been received in respect of the services provided by the HRA and the notional interest received on HRA credit balances had also increased.

The above increases in income had been offset by increased expenditure. These included pressure on the District Offices budget, the management and administration budget, Section 11/82 claims and the repairs budget.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

225. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (HIP) MONITORING REPORT APRIL TO JANUARY, 2004

The Finance and Accountancy Manager submitted a report on the latest position in respect of the 2003/04 Housing Investment Programme.

At the end of January, 2004, spending on the HIP totalled £22.7M, £0.853M more than had been planned for the period and 80.28% of the total revised programme of £28.277M. This compared with the last reported position at the end of 2003 when £19.575M had been spent (68.4% of the approved Programme). As the end of the financial year approached, spending plans and resource projections would be reviewed to give a detailed projection of the year end position.

The latest estimates suggested that spending in 2003/04 would total £28.3M (including the £0.505M on health and safety work to replace central heating boilers containing asbestos that was approved in December. This compared with £28.6M last reported. The main reasons for the reduction were:-

- Eastwood Village project – A further reduction in planned spending due to delays from difficulties in obtaining agreement from property owners
- Wath White Bear Regeneration Scheme – review of cash flow projections prepared by the external quantity surveyors. A meeting with EDS had been arranged to review how the situation had arisen. Spending not incurred in 2003/04 would be slipped into 2004/05.
- Wharncliffe Flats – delay in start of project.

The following were proposed to absorb the above underspends:-

- Wath White Bear Regeneration Scheme – Early orders for Phase 4, a valuation in February, ensure all relevant fees were paid to EDS in the current financial year, additional work by the contractor in February and March
- Decent Homes Programme – The programme had been scaled back. This had been reduced by some £0.171M which would give projected spending of £8.471 in the current year
- Bringing forward spending planned for 2004/05 on existing projects and from rolling programmes including £125,000 on boilers containing asbestos,

additional central heating work up to £50,000 and £90,000 in respect of an additional generator for the Swinton Fitzwilliam estate

- Spending on small scale environmental works and similar project
- Bringing forward payment of £265,000 in respect of Fleming Way from 2004/05.

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

(2) That the actions proposed above to maximise spending in 2003/04 be approved.

226. VOID PROPERTY MONITORING

The Head of Housing Services submitted an update on void property re-let performance and associated issues for the period 9th February, 2004 to 5th March, 2004.

The number of voids as at 5th March, 2004 had increased by 12 from the start of the period to 399. The majority of voids, 256, were voids currently excluded from HES 68 and included properties such as those awaiting renovation. The number of voids that met the criteria to be included within HES 68 had increased by 8 during the said period to 143.

Overall performance against the Indicator had deteriorated from 22.85 days to 23.03 days during the preceding period.

The performance on allocating open access properties had continued with 10 open access properties being let in the period. The overall performance if all open access properties were removed from the Indicator would be 22.75 days.

Performance on HES 14 (average time taken to let a void from when one tenancy terminated until the next one started), which excluded all those properties that were excluded from HES 68, had improved from 25.73 days to 25.54 days during the period.

There had been 149 terminations in the period, all of which met the criteria to be included in HES 68, and 268 lettings. The cumulative figures for the year were 1,853 terminations and 1,982 lettings. In addition, there had been 69 new tenancies created by mutual exchanges since April, 2003. The number of available to let properties had decreased from 54 at the start of the period to 52.

The amount of rent income lost on voids up to the 5th March, 2004 had improved to 1.58%. This performance continued to place the Authority in the upper quartile for Metropolitan Authorities.

The sustainability of tenancies (HES5) measured the percentage of terminating tenancies in the year that had lasted longer than 12 months. The 2003/2004 target had been revised from 80% to 90% because it was not

sufficiently challenging. Performance for the 12 month period up to February, 2004 was 97.73%. This figure did not include tenancies termination within 12 months due to transfers, mutual exchanges and deaths. If these were included the figure would be 94.73%.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

227. RECYCLING GROUP

The minutes of the meeting of the above Group held on 2nd March, 2004, attended by Councillors Wyatt (in the Chair), The Mayor (Councillor R. Russell), Ellis and Senior were noted.

228. 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 those paragraphs, indicated below, of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

229. WASTE COLLECTION DIRECT SERVICE ORGANISATION AND HOUSING SERVICES DEPARTMENT DIRECT SERVICE ORGANISATION BUDGET MONITORING REPORT APRIL TO DECEMBER, 2003

The Finance and Accountancy Manager submitted the current budget position for the Waste Collection and Housing Services trading accounts for the period April to December, 2003.

Based on activity levels, expenditure and income for the period and estimated turnover for the remainder of the financial year, the projected outturn position on the Waste Collection and Housing Services trading accounts were small surpluses.

Resolved:- That the report be received.

(Exempt under Paragraph 8 of the Act – expenditure to be incurred)

230. TENDER REPORT FOR DECENT HOMES SCHEME PHASE 1C AT WATH UPON DEARNE

The Acting Housing Services Co-ordinator, Housing and Environmental Services and the Project and Partnership Manager, Economic and Development Services, submitted a joint report seeking authority to accept a negotiated target cost tender from Bramall Construction Ltd., for the work involved in the third phase of the Decent Homes Scheme at Wath upon Dearne.

The contract period was for 32 weeks with a start on site on 26th April, 2004 and completion by 6th December, 2004.

Resolved:- (1) That the target price tender of £1,422,666.81 submitted by Bramall Construction Ltd., on 25th February, 2004 for East Herringthorpe, based on their Stage 1 tender for Decent Homes Scheme Partnering Agreement, be accepted and a start be made, subject to the conditions of contract and parent company guarantee being accepted.

(Exempt under Paragraph 8 of the Act – expenditure to be incurred)

231. PROVISION OF HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report regarding the above Service which was presently contracted to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

The Citizens Advice Bureau had been contracted to provide an independent Housing Advice Service since 1999. The Authority had a statutory obligation to provide advice and assistance free of charge to its residents. The Citizens Advice Bureau had provided an independent advice service which had the benefit of giving a “second opinion” and the opportunity for advice and information received from the Council’s Homelessness Unit to be reinforced or challenged.

The imminent restructuring of the Housing Needs Unit presented an opportunity to consider whether the provision of housing advice could be more efficiently and effectively provided by an in-house service. It would ensure improved accessibility and greater control over the level and quality of service including the development of outreach services. It was intended that, as the service developed, application would be made for the Community Legal Services Quality Mark and the Charter Mark.

Resolved:- (1) That the provision of an independent “in-house” Housing Advice Service be approved, to be structured into the realignment of staffing resources in the restructure of the Housing Needs Unit.

(2) That the Citizens Advice Bureau be given six months’ notice to terminate their contract with Housing Services with effect from 1st April, 2004.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act – expenditure proposed to be incurred)

232. GARAGE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

In accordance with Minute No. 200, the Head of Housing Services submitted an updated report.

Discussion ensued on the report. It was noted that the Environment Scrutiny Panel was to consider the report on 18th March, 2004.

Resolved:- That a further report be submitted for consideration incorporating any comments by the Environment Scrutiny Panel.

(Exempt under Paragraph 8 of the Act – expenditure proposed to be incurred)

(Councillor Hamilton declared a personal interest in the above item and did not speak thereon.)

**DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
29th March, 2004**

Present:- Councillor Ellis (in the Chair); Councillors Hamilton and Kaye (Policy Advisers) and Heaps and F. Wright (Environment Scrutiny Panel).

233. PETITION

The Democratic Services Manager reported receipt of a petition, containing, 51 signatures, from tenants of the Ann Rhodes Centre, Brampton Bierlow, regarding their dissatisfaction with the condition of their sheltered accommodation.

Resolved:- That the petition be received and investigated and a report thereon be submitted to the next meeting.

234. RE-LEASING OF NOS. 102 SELBOURNE STREET, EASTWOOD, AND 54 SHAKESPEARE ROAD, EASTWOOD

The Head of Housing Services reported receipt of a request from the Action Housing Association and the managing agent, South Yorkshire Housing Association, that the leases of the above properties be renewed for a further six years.

The Action Housing Association provide dispersed supported accommodation to develop and enable independent living for individuals who were subject to Probation Licences and to those who had just been released from prison.

Consultation with Ward Members would be undertaken in respect of the proposed renewal of the leases.

Resolved:- (1) That Nos. 102 Selbourne Street, Eastwood, and 54 Shakespeare Road, Eastwood, be leased to Action Housing Association and South Yorkshire Housing Association for a further six year period at market rent with them being responsible for all repairing and maintenance of the properties, garden and curtilage.

235. 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 those paragraphs indicated below of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

236. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

The Head of Housing Services submitted 8 applications for consideration.

Resolved:- (1) That application Nos. 17210, 17821, 17211, 17665, 17739, 12191 and 17870 be approved in the sum of £112,137-19 provided that the works are carried out:-

(a) substantially in accordance with plans and specifications submitted by the Head of Housing Services;

(b) within a period of 12 months of the application being approved.

(2) That consideration of application No. 17856 be deferred, pending confirmation of the position regarding potential repayment of discretionary elements of grants following disposal of the property.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 4, 5 and 8 of the Act – contains names and addresses of individuals requesting financial assistance)

237. RECTIFICATION WORKS TO PRIVATE DRAIN – NORTH ANSTON

The Acting Head of Environmental Health submitted a joint report with Streetpride, Design and Engineering Service, regarding the results of a legal action taken against the Council and to advise on the necessary expenditure to settle the matter associated with laying a new drain to a private property.

The matter was the subject of an ongoing Court case between the owner of the property and the Council. The Court had ruled that the Council must produce details of a proposed scheme to remedy the situation at a future Court hearing. It was, therefore, proposed that the drain would be laid down the side of the property and into the public sewer, beneath the road, at the front of the property. The estimated cost of all the work, not covered by insurance, was £15,000.

Resolved:- That all reasonable costs incurred, to rectify the matters arising from the relaying of the drain serving the said property, be met from the Environmental Services Revenue Budget 2003/2004.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 12 of the Act – expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Authority/charges to be made for services in relation to legal settlement)

238. TENDER – EXTERNAL/ENVIRONMENTAL WORK – BIRKS HOLT ESTATE, MALTBY

A joint report was submitted by the Head of Streetpride and Principal Regeneration Officer on tenders received for the regeneration external/highway works on the Birks Holt Estate, Maltby.

Six contractors had been approved and invited to tender of which five had submitted tenders for the above contract. It was hoped that works would start on site on 4th May, 2004 with a contract period of twenty-six weeks.

Resolved:- That the tender submitted by Ringway Highway Services, in the sum of £1,233,162.75, dated 26th January, 2004, be approved.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act – expenditure proposed to be incurred)

239. BEREAVEMENT SERVICES PROVISION

The Acting Head of Environmental Health submitted a report setting out the options considered by the consultants for the future provision of the Cemeteries and Cremation Services.

The consultants from the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration Incorporated had explored options for the improvement of the service.

Resolved:- (1) That the requirement for improvements to Bereavement Services be recognised and that feasibility of options, outlined by the consultants in their report, be explored.

(2) That the report be referred for consideration to the Environment Scrutiny Panel.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act – expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Authority/supply of services)

240. POLICY – HOUSEHOLD WHEELED BIN PROVISION AND REPLACEMENT

Further to Minutes Nos 104 and 115 of meetings of the Environment Scrutiny Panel held on 22nd January and 5th February, 2004 respectively, the Acting Head of Environmental Health submitted a report outlining considerations that needed to be taken into account prior to determining the criteria for adopting a charging Policy for replacement household wheeled bins.

The report set out various options for introducing charges for new and replacement dustbins, a breakdown of the annual cost of new/replacement/repaired household wheeled bins and policies in other Authorities.

Resolved:- (1) That arrangements be progressed to introduce a charge for new bins at new build properties as now discussed and discussions be held with developers as appropriate.

(2) That the policies adopted by other Authorities now referred to be researched further.

(3) That the report be referred for consideration to the Environment Scrutiny Panel.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act - expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Authority/supply of services)

241. FURNISHED HOME SCHEME

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report on the provision of a furnished home scheme which assisted vulnerable customers in setting up and maintaining a tenancy thereby reducing a cause of tenancy failure through the provision of furniture, carpets and curtains.

The accompanying feasibility report outlined the nature of such a scheme, detailing the operational aspects, cost implications, client groups and management arrangements.

It was proposed that a pilot scheme be introduced on 1st May, 2004.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposals set out in the report be supported.

(2) That Standing Orders be waived to facilitate the testing of suppliers for quality, cost and delivery times as now reported.

(3) That proposed furnished charges be accepted.

(4) That a full evaluation of the pilot scheme be made after six months.

(5) That a presentation on the pilot scheme be made to the Environment Scrutiny Panel.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Act – financial affairs of another person/expenditure to be incurred)

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL
18th March, 2004

Present:- Councillor F. Wright (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor R. Russell), Councillors Burke, Furnell, Hall and Nightingale, Mr. D. Alderson (Housing Tenant Panel representative) and Mr. J. Carr (National Society for Clean Air).

Councillor Ellis was in attendance at the invitation of the Chairman.

117. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors Atkin, Hodgkiss, Jackson (Council business), Senior and Mr. Mayo (Housing Tenant Panel representative).

118. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

119. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following item to enable the matter to be processed.)

120. PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE REVIEW GROUP

The Chairman reported that the above Scrutiny Committee was to set up a Review Group to consider co-option to Scrutiny Panels. Nominations were required to sit on the Review Group.

Resolved:- That the Scrutiny and Support Unit be informed of any interested Member.

121. DECENT HOMES PARTNERSHIP/REGENERATION

Ian Burnett, Wates Construction Ltd., gave the following presentation to the Panel:-

Heating Scheme	1,950 homes
Birks Holt Regeneration Homes	150
Canklow Decent Homes Project homes	<u>350</u>
	2,450

£400,000 savings against target costs

This year East Herringthorpe, Middle Eastwood, Blackburn and Richmond

8 houses to hand over at Canklow this week

What are Wates doing with regard to performance?

- Site Management Team strengthened (looking to the future), strong leadership in areas of housekeeping, site tidiness and security
- Tenants feedback – continually measured and reviewed
- Tenant protocol produced – complaints/enquiries to be dealt with quickly. Mindsetting - need to understand the tenants' problems and alleviate them
 - Increase in visits by Tenant Liaison Officers
 - Better understanding of works involved
 - Deal with issues at source

Safety:-

- Initial area of concern - good working relationships now developed with Rotherham's Health and Safety Unit
- Wate's Group accident rate = 6.9 per 1,000 employees
- General industry accident rate = 12.4 per 1,000 employees
- Areas of improvement being continually monitored. Addressed in workforce induction
- New work methods adopted where risks occurred
- Workforce registered for CSCS (safety and construction skills)

Workmanship:-

- Signing off procedure with tenants and contract administrator
- Changed sub-contractors who were not performing – strict criteria for selection
- Instigated review of common quality issues

Performance:-

- Daily monitoring of progress
- Projectability of time in dwellings (reduction from 35 to 25 days/hours). Phase III complete on time. Voids III 2 weeks early.
- Regularly review and monitor performance against agreed KPIs (measure against Housing Forum Benchmarking Club)

Sub-Contractors:-

- Local labour – Canklow 73% Birks Holt 71%
- Code of Practice drawn up and implemented
- Drop-in planned – tenant representatives to be invited (working in peoples' homes, Tenants Charter etc.)
- Supply chain from vetted sources (key trades working on other Wate's Decent Homes scheme)
- Supply chain partners – incentives to get it right the first time (profitability, fair payment, good working conditions)
- Rotherham Direct Works:-
 - Windows and doors
 - Discussing possible use of labour resource pool

Community:-

- Contact made with Members of East Herringthorpe and Local Housing Office – create relationships
- Setting up an office at East Herringthorpe (Building Works Depot) – opportunity for collective working and community base
- Open Day at East Herringthorpe on 31st March (tenants' choice, colours, designs etc.)
- Involvement in local area TARAs
- Supply chain and Wates – Assistance at first anniversary of local park
- Fun days, white goods collection, drinking fountains etc.

Customer Charter

- Instil team work, respect and fair dealing, achieve effective communication with all partners and residents
- Work with and involve residents, respecting their views and welcoming their input to the project
- Managing the project with consideration for the environment and the wider community ensuring the health and safety of partners and residents at all times
- Deliver value for money and with the co-operation of residents in providing access, delivering the project to the agreed cost, timetable and quality standards
- To provide liaison, personal telephone contact numbers and a point of contact for the residents to enable them to make enquiries at any time
- To promote resident feedback through the completion of satisfaction surveys regarding all aspects of the work carried out in their homes and to improve Wate's performance through continual improvement

Finally

- Wates were committed to working closely with Rotherham to ensure that any areas of weakness were improved and by total collaborative working significantly improving the performance of the Decent Homes Teams both now and in the future.

A question and answer sessions ensued with the following issues raised/highlighted:-

- The East Herringthorpe estate was split into 2 Wards – both sets of Ward Councillors needed to be kept informed
- Throughout the Borough, local Ward Members needed to be fully aware what was happening in their area, as well as local TARAs, with a comprehensive and up-to-date contact list provided
- A colour coded monitoring chart was on display in the site office which was completed on a daily basis
- Refurbishment in tenanted properties was a difficult area and one in which the company had to work closely with the Local Housing Area Office and tenants
- The Key Performance Indicators in terms of performance was submitted to the Decent Homes Board on a monthly basis

Ian Burnett undertook to supply all Members of the Scrutiny Panel a copy of the Welcome Pack for information.

Resolved:- That the presentation be noted.

122. REPLACEMENT WASTE BINS – POLICY

It was noted that this item had not been considered by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services but would be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel in due course.

123. THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2003/04

The Performance and Development Officer submitted the third quarter performance report (October to December, 2003) for Housing and Environmental Services Programme Area.

At the end of the quarter, 76% of the Indicators were achieving the quarterly control targets with action put into place to ensure all the year end targets were achieved. This was a substantial improvement from the previous year when only 50% of the Indicators had met the outturn targets.

The Executive Director of Housing and Environmental Services reported that the results of the recent stock condition survey had been received. The survey had revealed that the proportion of properties which did not meet the national Decency Standard had increased from 51% to 78%. The 51% figure had been derived from three year old data when the Government's Decent Standard had not been in place. It was now intended to update the stock condition information annually. Although the current target would be hit, there was a need for much more investment in the properties and work to bring them up to the target.

Discussion ensued on the report. The following points were noted:-

- BVP86 (cost of waste collection per household) – there were discrepancies in the way authorities collated their figures in that some included administration costs
- There had been very good work between Economic and Development Services and Housing Services to ensure that the missed collections performance was maintained during bad weather. The Publicity Department was also involved if there were weather conditions to ensure everyone was informed as quickly as possible
- The number of enquiries through Councillors surgeries only related to those received via the Councillor surgery system. However, it was noted that a number of Councillors made enquiries but did not enter them onto the system
- Those properties earmarked for demolition should be excluded from HES69 (rent lost through voids)

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

(2) That future reports be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel as soon after the close of the quarter period as possible.

(3) That the issue of Councillor Surgery reports be referred to the Member Training Panel.

(4) That should performance fall with regard to complaints, monthly reports be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel.

(5) That a separate Indicator be provided for those properties that are earmarked for sale or demolition and that are excluded from HES69.

124. DECISIONS OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Panel noted the decisions made under delegated powers by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services held on 2nd and 16th February and 1st March, 2004.

125. ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL – 5TH FEBRUARY, 2004

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 5th February, 2004, were noted.

126. MEMBERS TRAINING PANEL – 22ND JANUARY, 2004

The minutes of the meeting of the above Panel held on 22nd January, 2004, were noted.

127. PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

The Panel noted the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 23rd January, 13th and 27th February, 2004.

128. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACTION GROUP

The Panel noted the minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Development Action Group held on 39th January, 2004.

129. ASYLUM SEEKERS WORKING PARTY

The Panel noted the minutes of the Asylum Seekers Working Party held on 25th February, 2004.

Resolved:- That arrangements be made for the Scrutiny Panel to visit the Asylum Team.

130. 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 8 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (expenditure to be incurred).

131. GARAGE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

In accordance with Minute No. 114(2), the Head of Housing Services submitted a revised report taking on board the points raised at the previous meeting.

It was noted that there would be a stand alone budget for garages and that investigation was taking place into whether the funds raised from the sale of garage sites could be ringfenced for the improvement of garages

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

(2) That this Scrutiny Panel support the disposal of garage sites, subject to agreement from local Ward Members and residents, which were not in use and the subject of anti-social behaviour.

(3) That the Scrutiny Panel note that the initial proposal to increase garage rents had been withdrawn.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 8, 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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