

Public Document Pack

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Venue: **Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.**

Date: **Monday, 10 May 2004**

Time: **9.30 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.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Recycling Plan - Amendment (Pages 1 - 3)
to approve the implementation of the Blue Box Scheme to 100,000 premises a year ahead of schedule
4. Regular Performance Assessment - Final Report (Pages 4 - 6)
To note the report and the positive statements by RPA Inspector
5. South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (Pages 7 - 17)
- to approve the Capital Procedure 1 Form and note the procurement processes
6. Homelessness Strategy (Pages 18 - 37)
To note the progress made against the action plans
7. Petition - Ann Rhodes Centre (Pages 38 - 39)
To note the report
8. Void Property Monitoring as at 30th April, 2004 (Pages 40 - 45)
Report to be supplied separately
9. Exclusion of the Press and Public
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.
10. Petition - St. Edmund's Avenue, Thurcroft
To receive a petition submitted by residents of St. Edmund's Avenue, Thurcroft

11. Decent Homes Scheme Phase 1A at West Melton (Pages 46 - 49)
(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act – contractual information)

12. Annual Maintenance Plan 2004/05 (Pages 50 - 78)
(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act - contract negotiations/expenditure proposed to be incurred)

13. Replacement of District Heating Main Distribution Pipes - Vale Road, Thrybergh and Mansfield Road, Aston (Pages 79 - 80)
(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act - Expenditure to be incurred/negotiation of terms for supply of goods/services)

14. Electrical Upgrade of Council Properties (Pages 81 - 82)
(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act - Expenditure to be incurred/negotiation of terms for supply of goods/services)

15. Contract - Fixed Wire Testing of Domestic Properties (Pages 83 - 84)
(Exempt under Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Act - Expenditure to be incurred/negotiation of terms for supply of goods/services)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services**
2. **Date of Meeting 10th May 2004**
3. **Title Recycling Action Plan - Amendment**
4. **Originating Officer Adrian Gabriel, Waste Strategy Manager, Tel. Ext. 3108**
5. **Issue**
 - 5.1 To obtain Member approval to amend the implementation of kerbside recycling schemes as contained within the Recycling Action Plan 2003-2006
6. **Summary**
 - 6.1 The Recycling Action Plan 2003-2006 provides for a phased introduction of kerbside recycling schemes during the life of the plan. It is proposed to amend the implementation programme for the current year to allow for the extension of the blue box scheme to a further 50,000 premises. This will replace the projected scheme of placing 50,000 premises on a kerbside green waste collection service.
7. **Clearance/Consultation**
 - 7.1 The Council has recently introduced a pilot scheme for kerbside green waste collection using wheeled bins. Full evaluation of this pilot and further consultation with “best practice” Council’s is required prior to extending this service across the Borough. A number of Council’s have introduced green waste collection schemes with varying results, for example a major increase in total waste arisings.
8. **Timing**
 - 8.1 The next phase of implementing a kerbside recycling scheme will commence in May 2004.
9. **Background**
 - 9.1 The Recycling Action Plan was approved by the Cabinet Member of Housing and Environmental Services in August 2003 (Housing and Environmental Services, 11/08/03, Minute No 65). This plan provides for the development of a number of initiatives, including the phased implementation of kerbside schemes for recycling across the Borough.
 - 9.2 The first phase of the plan was implemented in September 2003 with the implementation of 50,000 premises onto the “Blue Box” scheme collecting glass, cans and textiles.
 - 9.3 In partnership with Barnsley and Doncaster Council’s the award of DEFRA funding has allowed us to commence a pilot trial of 12,000 premises on a green waste collection scheme with effect from the end of March 2003.
 - 9.4 In accordance with the Recycling Action Plan it was intended to further extend the blue box scheme to another 25,000 premises whilst introducing a kerbside green waste collection service to those already served by the Blue Box scheme (Phase 1).
 - 9.5 Following discussion with a number of Council’s on green waste schemes it is considered that full evaluation of our pilot scheme is required prior to determining the future “roll out” of a kerbside collection service.
 - 9.6 It is therefore, proposed that the Blue Box kerbside collection service is extended beyond 25,000 premises, to a total of 50,000 premises within the Borough from

May 2004. This will allow a full evaluation exercise and further consultation to be undertaken with other Council's regarding the effects that sizeable implementation of a green waste collection service has had on waste arisings within their areas.

- 9.7 By adopting this proposal the Blue Box scheme will serve over 95% of households across the Borough. This puts the Council in a strong position with regard to meeting the requirements of the Household Waste Bill 2004 which requires all households within an area to receive a service for the collection of at least two recyclable materials by 2010.

10. Argument

- 10.1 The full evaluation of the green waste pilot scheme will provide actual information on the waste arisings that are being generated from the 12,000 premises on the scheme. This will allow us to determine whether waste has increased/decreased/remained the same, due to the extra capacity available, and if there is any effects on the levels of green waste presented at our Recycling Centres. There is a need to maintain the drive of increasing

11. Risks and Uncertainties

- 11.1 Significant public participation is needed to achieve our recycling targets when kerbside recycling schemes are introduced. Experience elsewhere suggests that there is a risk that as kerbside recycling is introduced, individuals may take the opportunity to put more waste in their residual waste dustbin to replace the recycled materials they have taken out. Our pilot area of 12,000 premises will provide full evaluation on this issue and allow better determination of our strategy on future collection services. An increase in waste arisings may have a detrimental affect on our LPSA target and key performance indicator (BV 84) for the kilograms of waste collected per head.

12. Finance

- 12.1 The costs for the phased implementation of kerbside recycling are contained within the Waste Management budget and Local Public Service agreement, through unsupported credit approvals.

13. Sustainability

- 13.1 There is a need to deliver sustainable waste services that promote the re-use, recovery and recycling of household waste to protect the environment and sustain the earth's natural resources for future generations.

14. Wards Affected

- 14.1 All wards

15. References

- 15.1 Recycling Action Plan 2003-2006
15.2 Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services, 11/08/03, Minute No 65

16. Recommendations

THAT MEMBERS APPROVE:

- 16.1 **Amendment of the Recycling Action Plan as contained within this report to enable a Borough wide implementation of the blue box scheme to 100,000 premises a year ahead of schedule.**
16.2 **A full evaluation on the green waste pilot area to be reported after six months operation to allow implementation of roll out of the scheme from April 2005.**

- 16.3 A programme of visits to assess the implications of green waste collection in other local authorities operating larger scale schemes.**

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting** Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services
2. **Date of Meeting** 10th May 2004
3. **Title** Regular Performance Assessment – Final Report
4. **Originating Officer** Adrian Gabriel, Waste Strategy Manager, Tel. Ext. 3108
5. **Issue**
 - 5.1 To inform Members of the outcome of the recent Regular Performance Assessment of the “Environment Block” undertaken in conjunction with the Audit Commission.
6. **Summary**
 - 6.1 In October 2003 the Council was instructed by the Audit Commission to undertake a self-assessment of its Environment Block services under the terms of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment model. This exercise was undertaken by officers with responsibility for the Transport, Planning and Waste functions of the Council. Following a recent evaluation of the Council’s submission by an Audit Commission Inspector, the Council has received a positive response that can be used to drive future improvement.
7. **Clearance/Consultation**
 - 7.1 The self-assessment exercise on the Environment Block services involved co-operation between officers in Housing and Environmental Services and Economic and Development Services on cross cutting issues. The submission to the Audit Commission was presented to the Cabinet Members for Housing and Environmental Services and Economic Development and Planning for final approval.
8. **Timing**
 - 8.1 The Audit Commission has recently reported back to the Council on their evaluation of our submission.
9. **Background**
 - 9.1 In October 2003 the Council was informed that it had been chosen by the Audit Commission to “pilot” a new regime of Regular Performance Assessments based on the Comprehensive Performance Assessment model. In December 2003 a self assessment exercise of the “Environment Block” covering planning, transport and waste was completed by officers within Housing and Environmental Services and Economic and Development services. The self-assessment document covered four specific areas, these being the Corporate Context of the Council, the Quality of Service, the Achievement of Improvement and the Capacity to Improve. In relation to the assessment of the waste function the self-assessment exercise included for all the collection, disposal, recycling and enforcement services provided by Housing and Environmental Services, Environmental Health plus the “Streetpride” based waste services operated by Economic and Development Services. Following completion and the approval of the Cabinet Members for each Programme Area, the document was submitted to the Audit Commission for evaluation.
 - 9.2 In February 2004 as part of a challenge exercise, an inspector from the Audit Commission spent three days with the Council interviewing relevant officers and undertaking some reality checks on the evidence data presented.
 - 9.3 In March 2004 the Audit Commission presented their final report on our Regular Performance Assessment. The report does provide a positive response to the Council’s

assessment of the waste services that we provide and the inspector agreed with the service scores we presented within our assessment. Although the report has outlined a number of weaknesses in relation to performance, the data used covered our results for the key performance indicators for the year end 2002/03. This issue has been challenged through our step change in current performance that demonstrates the positive moves we have made in the last year. It is accepted further work is required to continue this momentum and benchmarking will be undertaken to compare our results and achieve top quartile status.

- 9.4 The Inspector has also highlighted issues such as working with business to promote waste reduction, targets to reduce waste, improve sickness absence and developing re-use schemes. There is a need to include these elements within our team plans, although some of the issues highlighted are being progressed at the present time.
- 9.5 The recommendation of the Inspector is that there is sufficient evidence of improvement in service quality to recommend a Waste Management Inspection in 2004.

10. Argument

- 10.1 The Council's response to the report has been positive in welcoming an inspection of Waste Management. It has also been established that the Audit Commission will use the rating they apply to the waste management inspection as the score for the "Environment Block" in the forthcoming Corporate Performance Assessment of the Council later this year.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

- 11.1 The Council has been informed that the waste management inspection will be undertaken in July 2004. Presently the Waste Management Unit is heavily committed to developing and implementing the next phase of kerbside recycling. A significant weakness of our last waste inspection was the failure to have in place a long term Waste Strategy. Capacity and expertise to progress this will be provided through the appointment consultants to progress this issue. Further support and capacity build for our Waste Services to ensure we achieve an improved inspection rating and thus contribute to the Council's Corporate Performance Assessment will be needed.

12. Finance

- 12.1 The Regular Performance Assessment and our subsequent full inspection were and will be contained within the Programme Area and Service Area revenue budgets.

13. Sustainability

- 13.1 There is a need to maintain and improve the management of waste to protect the environment for future generations.

14. Wards Affected All wards

15. References

- 15.1 Regular Performance Assessment , Self Assessment – December 2003
15.2 Regular Performance Assessment, Report – April 2004
15.3 Corporate Performance Assessment 2004

16. Recommendations

- 16.1 **That Members note the content of this report and the positive statements made by the RPA inspector, including that we had had "sufficient evidence of improvement in service to recommend a Waste management Inspection in 2004".**
- 16.2 **Members note that the inspection of the Council's Waste Management CPA block is scheduled for July 2004.**

16.3 **Members recognise the progression of the development of a Long Term Waste Strategy via employment of consultants.**

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services**
2. **Date 10 May 2004**
3. **Title South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder – Town Centre Feasibility Studies**
4. **Originating Officer Patrick Middleton, Development Co-ordinator (Rotherham Investment & Development Office x3826 patrick.middleton@rotherham.gov.uk)**

Divisional Manager, John Smales Development Team Manager
(Rotherham Investment & Development Office x3873
john.smales@rotherham.gov.uk)

5. Issue

For Members to note the attached Capital Procedure 1 Form and the procurement process proposed for the appointment of consultants to undertake a range of preliminary works to inform the implementation of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Initiative in Rotherham Town Centre.

6. Summary

The Town Centre Area Development Framework (ADF) proposes a range of preliminary works to be carried out to help inform the implementation of the programme. We are looking to progress four pieces of work over the coming months. They include studies to support the implementation of a housing demonstrator project, a Living Over the Shops initiative and acquisition strategy in the Westgate area and an examination of potential delivery vehicles. Importantly it will allow the carrying out of an Housing Aspiration Study which will enable us to gauge more accurately the level of interest within the development sector for mixed use / residential led schemes in Rotherham Town Centre. These pieces of work will be funded 100% through the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Initiative.

7. Clearance / Consultation

Reports on the progress of the bidding process have been taken to the Scrutiny Panel and CMT in December. We have also held a Member workshop on Housing Market Renewal and given a presentation to the Area Assembly Chairs. Update reports have been given to the Town Team and Local Strategic Partnership. The Housing Strategic Partnership has also been presented with emerging Town Centre proposals on a number of occasions. This partnership includes contractors, developers, estate agents and private landlords.

8. Timing

The completion of the Housing Aspiration Study has been made a condition to the carrying out all other elements of the proposed package of preliminary studies. We will look to advance this piece of work in the first quarter of 2004/05 to provide sufficient time for all other elements to be completed to enable expenditure in 2005/06.

9. Background

The Transform South Yorkshire strategic and policy objectives have been interpreted at the local levels of Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham through the development and production of Area Development Frameworks (ADFs). These have been prepared to a common framework and:

- Define a sustainable vision for the towns and neighbourhoods and the rationale for Housing Market Renewal (HMR) intervention to contribute to the vision
- Present a programme of housing based interventions to be supported by Transform South Yorkshire related to strategic objectives and key themes
- Set the context for other interventions that will support a strategic and agreed vision for the future of the area

The Rotherham Town Centre ADF seeks to put forward the principle of mixed use urban villages through an incremental development programme. The Town Centre currently has a limited population and few residential premises and as such the proposed context of the ADF has the fundamental ambition of creating a “stage” for the construction and development of a buoyant housing market placed in a vibrant mixed use setting.

The ADF has been driven by Rotherham’s Town Team Vision, as part of the Renaissance Towns Initiative.

The Vision for the Town Centre foresees the creation of a vibrant mixed use Area in which to live, work, trade and spend leisure time in a safe and attractive setting with only the highest quality of design of public realm and built environment and urban fabric.

10. Argument

It is envisaged that the findings of these important and fundamental pieces of work will provide an independent and objective assessment of the potential for delivering residential developments in the town centre.

The Housing Aspiration Study (£20,000 - £30,000 – 100% HMRP funded) in accordance with Standing Order 43.5.C we will invite three written quotations when commissioning this piece of work.

The Demonstrator Project Feasibility Study (£300,000 - £400,000 – 100% HMRP funded) in accordance with Standing Orders and European Regulations this will be commissioned through a Restricted OJEC Notice procedure.

Westgate Hillside Feasibility and Acquisition Strategy (£30,000 - £47,500 – 100% HMRP funded) in accordance with Standing Order 43.5.C we will invite three written quotations when commissioning this piece of work.

The LOTS Study (£10,000 - £14,350 – 100% HMRP funded) in accordance with Standing Order 43.5.B we will invite at least two oral or written quotations when commissioning this piece of work.

Delivery Vehicle Study (£40,000 - £47,500 – 100% HMRP funded) in accordance with Standing Order 43.5.C we will invite three written quotations when commissioning this piece of work.

Please refer to the attached Capital Procedure 1 Form for further information.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

The outcome of the Housing Aspiration Study is a condition of the Agreement between the Participating Authorities and the ODPM which will determine whether the remainder of the proposed works within the Rotherham Town Centre ADF area are permitted to proceed.

12. Finance

The projects outlined in section 10 are to be financed through the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Initiative. The costs of managing these studies through Economic Development Services can also be claimed against Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder funds.

12. Sustainability

The package of works outlined in section 10 meet the Council's strategy for regenerating and revitalising the town centre, building on work taken forward through the Objective 1 Programme and Yorkshire Forward's Renaissance Towns Initiative. They will help bring forward new high quality developments within and on under utilised sites and premises.

13. Wards Affected

Central

14. References

Appendix 1 – Town Centre ADF Area
Appendix 2 – CP1

15. Presentation

The Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Initiative is a welcome addition to the programmes and initiatives being employed by this Council to take forward the regeneration and revitalisation of Rotherham Town Centre.

16. Recommendations

Members accept the attached Capital Procedure 1 Form in respect of the Town Centre Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder and note the procurement processes, which are in accordance with Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

THE GUIDANCE NOTES SHOULD BE FOLLOWED WHEN COMPLETING THIS FORM.**1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

- 1.01 Programme Area: Economic and Development Service
- 1.02 Project Title/Number: Housing Market Renewal (Town Centre ADF) Feasibility Studies
- 1.03 Contact Officer: Malcolm Meekins
- 1.04 Cost Code:

2.0 PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

2.01 Which Corporate Plan Core Value(s) does the project meet?

1. Putting people first and ensuring fairness and equity in service delivery – this first phase of feasibility work aims to establish what the housing aspirations are and seek to expand the choice and quality of housing available to the people of Rotherham and the sub-region.
2. Ensuring effective consultation and involvement – This feasibility phase of the project includes consultation with and the involvement of all stakeholders and those affected by the project.
3. Working in partnership – The implementation of the project will be carried out in partnership with Housing Services, existing businesses in the Town Centre, Town Team, Transform South Yorkshire (the Pathfinder), CABE and private developers.
5. Promoting sustainable development – The Town Centre has excellent transportation infrastructure and a wide range of amenities and facilities which make it a sustainable location for housing, yet currently it has a limited population and few residential premises. The Rotherham Town Centre ADF seeks to put forward the principle of sustainable mixed use urban villages through an incremental development programme of high quality developments within and on underused sites and premises.

2.02 Which Corporate Plan Strategic Objective(s) does the project meet?

- i) A place to live - ensuring the highest possible design and build quality in new developments and ensuring types and mixes of housing that attract new people and encourage them to stay.

- ii) A place for enjoyment – the Town Centre ADF envisages a vibrant mixed use environment where people will come to live work and play
- iii) A safe place – Secure by Design principles will be used/encouraged in all new developments

2.03 How does the project meet Service Delivery Plan Objectives?

The feasibility is the first phase of the implementation of the Pathfinder in the Town Centre and consists of the following:

- Housing Market and Aspiration Study
- The Demonstrator Project Feasibility Study
- Westgate Hillside Feasibility and Acquisition Strategy
- The LOTS Study
- Delivery Vehicle Study

These studies will inform the Implementation of the development phase, which will contribute to the Regeneration Plan and in turn the Community Strategy.

It will:

- i) focus development on derelict/underused sites in the Town Centre area, providing an excellent and sustainable environment for business
- ii) re-populate the town Centre and rebalance the housing market by providing sustainable neighbourhoods of quality, choice and aspiration.
- iii) contribute towards achieving a Rotherham Town Renaissance, by populating the Town's centre, ensuring the river and canal form a key part of the Town's future
- iv) Improve openspace, ensuring the highest possible design and build quality in new developments and ensuring types and mixes of housing that attract new people and encourage them to stay.

2.04 Statutory Requirement: (No Partial Yes)

2.05 Option Appraisal: (No Partial Yes)

The outcomes of the feasibility stage will provide sufficient information for the project to proceed to the implementation phase and provide evidence to convince funding partners of the value of the project and will encourage support for project implementation.

To deliver these outcomes a number of options were considered:

- i) the use of internal staff resource to undertake the exercise both from Housing Services and Economic Development Services,

- ii) the selection of consultants with the right skills to support the development of the project appointed by RMBC,
- iii) no feasibility work undertaken at all.

The preferred option is option ii).

2.06 Release of a Capital Asset: (No Partial Yes)

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2.07 Cross-Cutting: (No Partial Yes)

The overall HMR programme is being led by Housing Services. However, it has been agreed that EDS will take responsibility for delivering the Town Centre activity.

2.08 Endorsed/Supported by Non-Funding Partners: Yes

Update reports have been given to the Town Team, Local Strategic Partnership Area Assembly Chairs and the Housing Strategic Partnership, this partnership includes contractors, developers, estate agents and private landlords. All these bodies are supporting the proposals.

3.0 INDICATIVE PROGRAMME

	FROM	TO
3.01 Brief/Design	March 2004	April 2004
3.02 Tender Period(s)	May 2004	July 2004
3.03 Contract Works	June 2004	March 2005
3.04 Commission Period
3.05 Comment on any milestones/conditions regarding grant or other funding relative to programme:		
<p>Grant funding bids for the studies have been submitted to Transform South Yorkshire and a decision will be given at the end of April 2004.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>		

4.0 FORECASTED CAPITAL COSTS AND FUNDING:

4.01 Estimated Capital Costs

	2004/05 £	2005/06 £	2006/07 £	2007/08 £	TOTAL £
Land:					
Site Investigation:	645,401				645,401
Construction:					
Furniture/Equipment:					
Project Fee Allowance:	33,849				33,849
Contingencies:					
TOTAL COSTS	679,250				679,250

4.02 Funding:					
Source: (Specify)	2004/05 £	2005/06 £	2006/07 £	2007/08 £	TOTAL £
A Housing Pathfinder Renewal	679,250				679,250
B					
C					
D					
E					
SUB TOTAL FUNDING	679,250				679,250
FUNDING REQUESTED	0				0
TOTAL FUNDING	679,250				679,250

4.03 Status of Funding:	
A	Funding applied for to carry out site investigations/feasibility studies.
B	
C	
D	
E	

5.0	REVENUE IMPLICATIONS					
5.01	Impact: None <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additional Cost <input type="checkbox"/> Savings <input type="checkbox"/>					
5.02	COSTINGS/SAVINGS					
	Revenue Budget Heading	2001/02 £	2002/03 £	2003/04 £	2004/05 £	2005/06 £
5.03	Comments/Assumptions:					

6.0	<p>ASSUMPTIONS/RISKS/CONSULTATIONS</p> <p>The initial stages of the project are to carry out feasibility studies to develop strategies for the implementation of practical solutions to restructure and renew the housing market within the Town Centre.</p> <p>The first piece of work is a Housing Aspiration Study which will provide an evidence base for the development of a new housing market in the Town Centre. The positive outcome of this study will determine how the proposed works within the Town Centre ADF are to proceed and will be the basis to secure HMR Pathfinder funding for their implementation.</p> <p>Relevant external bodies, Town Team, and the landowners/ tenants of any land/properties affected will be consulted throughout the project.</p>
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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting** CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

2. **Date of Meeting** 10 May 2004

3. **Title** HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2003-2008
REPORT ON CURRENT PROGRESS AGAINST ACTION
PLAN

4. **Originating Officer** Linda Main
Housing Needs Co-ordinator , Ext. 3429

5. **Issue**

The Homelessness Strategy identifies three Strategic Objectives which will be progressed and monitored through the implementation of the Action Plan developed in conjunction with the Strategy.

A copy of the Action Plan is attached (Appendix A) showing achievements to date and plans for future action.

6. **Summary**

The Council's Homelessness Strategy was published on 31 July 2003, and identifies three Strategic Objectives:

1. To reduce homelessness through appropriate prevention measures
2. To ensure appropriate accommodation and support services are available
3. To improve information and service quality

The Action Plan identifies the work needed to achieve these Objectives

7. **Clearance/Consultation**

- Homelessness Core Group
- Multi-Agency Events
- Consultation with individual Agencies on specific milestones within Action Plan
- Homelessness Strategy supported for publication by Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services 31.7.03.

8. **Timing**

Although the Homelessness Strategy has a life of five years it will be reviewed, monitored and improved regularly during its lifecycle.

Regular reports are to be made to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services outlining progress against the Strategy Action Plan.

9. Background

The Homelessness Act 2002 required all local authorities to review their homelessness services, identify the extent and main causes of homelessness in their area and to develop a Homelessness Strategy by 31 July, 2003.

Under the provisions of the Act the Strategy must identify the Authority's plans to:

- Prevent homelessness
- Secure availability of accommodation for homeless people
- Secure satisfactory support services

These provisions underpin the Government commitment to improving the quality of life for individuals and households and preventing and intervening as early as possible when homelessness is likely to become an issue.

10. Argument

The prevention of homelessness has been established as a priority by the Government, recognising the impact of homelessness on health, education, sustainable communities and social inclusion.

The number of homelessness applications in Rotherham over the last four years has risen substantially, from 1646 in 1998/99 to 2180 in 2002/03.

The work required to prevent homelessness will need to be addressed through a partnership approach involving social services, health services, probation services, registered social landlords, private landlords and voluntary agencies.

There are clear links between Rotherham's Community Strategy and identified corporate priorities and the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy (Appendix B).

11. Risks and Uncertainties

The Council and its partners must deliver on the key priorities within the homelessness Strategy.

A risk analysis is contained within the Strategy which identifies six areas of risk (three low risk, one medium and two high risk) (Appendix C).

The two areas of High Risk identified are:

- Lack of resources to deliver the Strategy
- Opposition from local communities in connection with accommodation and support provision

Safeguards to minimise the risks are contained in the Strategy and will need to be monitored.

Delivery against the Strategy cannot be achieved by the Council alone. It is vital that effective and committed partnerships are developed and sustained.

Staffing resources within the Homelessness Team have been difficult over the last twelve months with reliance on temporary agency staff to maintain day to day

performance. Slippages have occurred in some areas of work associated with the Strategy as appropriate staffing resources have not been available.

Proposals have been made to streamline the working of the Homelessness Team and to improve efficiency and effectiveness and are due to be implemented in the forthcoming restructuring process.

12. Finance

The Strategy identifies the need for the financial consequences to be evaluated and fed into the Council's integrated business and financial planning regime.

There is a need to combine resources with partners and to attract external funding.

The staffing resources used are being met from the Housing General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

The Homelessness Directorate of ODPM has made some funding available, particularly to help authorities reduce bed and breakfast usage and to reduce levels of rough sleeping. In 2002/03 and 2003/04 Rotherham has received a grant of £31,000 per annum with recent confirmation of the same grant level for 2004/05.

The Supporting People framework and the funding of floating tenancy support schemes through the Supporting People initiative will improve and monitor the quality of services that help vulnerable people to maintain their accommodation (Appendix D).

13. Sustainability

Achieving the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy is a key part of the wider policy and strategic framework and will help to promote the economic and social well being of the Borough, leading to a better quality of life for residents.

One of the key aims of sustainable development is to ensure that quality housing is available for everyone, with particular emphasis on availability of housing for people in need allied to services that enable people to maintain their tenancies.

Delivery of the objectives and the promotion of joint working with partners is an integral part of developing sustainable communities and ensuring fair access to housing for vulnerable people across a diverse community.

14. Wards Affected

All

15. References

Housing Act 1996, Parts VI and VII
Homelessness Act 2002
Housing Strategy
Homelessness Review
Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008

16. **Presentation**

See background and argument.

17. **Recommendations**

THAT THE REPORT IS RECEIVED AND THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE ACTION PLAN IS NOTED.

Objective: 1: To reduce homelessness through appropriate prevention measures.

Outcome: Reduction in numbers of homeless applicants by 10%, as a result of good quality, timely advice tailored to individual requirements through the development of an independent Housing advice service, personal housing plans and mediation service by March 2005.

Action	Milestones	End Date	Achievements	Future Action
1.1 Market services more effectively	Develop 5 year marketing plan. Establish service directory. Produce leaflets/posters.	1 Oct. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing mechanisms in place: • Homelessness promotional leaflets and posters produced and distributed to agencies. (sample enc.) • Monthly customer/agency newsletter, introduced from Dec 03. (sample enc.) • Video presentation giving information about Homelessness and Advice Services produced Dec 03 and now displayed in all Neighbourhood Offices • Programme implemented for quarterly Multi-Agency Awareness Events (promotion of service via exhibition). • Multi-Agency awareness day held Sep 03 with around 60 homelessness service providers taking part and press coverage. • Directory of Services developed, identifying 110 agencies in Rotherham. • Ricochet Led Project – re-production of Shelter's Accommodation Directory for South Yorkshire for agency use • RMBC – Pocket Guide to Services produced for customers. Information obtained from relevant agencies. Currently with design studio for production. (sample enc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing development of 5 year marketing action plan including Property Shop and Road Show's. • Currently under collation, anticipated completion May 04. • To be distributed April 04. • Establishment of Independent Housing Advice Service.

1.2	Undertake prevention work in schools	Engage head teachers. Establish training/information programme and resource packs.	1 Jan. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ricochet Led – Peer Education Project established with secondary schools, Ricochet employing full time Peer Education Officer following consultation with Head Teachers/Education Services. Awareness raising/preventative programme developed by Peer Presenters who have personal experience of homelessness. Two Comprehensive Schools engaged to date. Resource packs produced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following positive feedback from teachers and pupils – programme to be rolled out to all Comprehensive Schools. Link to be established with Youth Cabinet.
1.3	Establish clear links with prisons	Establish anticipated outputs. Establish links/outreach programme. Develop prison information pack. Evaluate effectiveness and benefits. Continue/expand if successful.	1 Jan '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for Housing Advisory service within HMP's established following identified gap in resettlement process. Visited local Doncaster prison's – outreach programme developed. Video conferencing established Jan 04, giving regular links with Homelessness Officers to provide advice and assistance. Prison Information Pack under development. Business Plan around links to resettlement and outreach programme developed. Joint meeting established with Supporting People Team, Probation Service and Action Housing to develop partnership working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of outreach programme. Monitor benefits e.g. sustainability of tenancies. Develop new partnership links with Crime and Disorder Strategy and Supporting People Team. Develop improved processes with RSL's to assist with resettlement. Explore improved options for suitable and appropriate rehousing to reduce links with ex-offenders' previous history.

1.4	Increase housing advice	<p>Identify duplication of services. Establish gaps in advice/tenancy relations. Agree priority for development of additional services.</p>	1 Nov. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of Pocket Guide to Services will identify both duplication of services and gaps in advice (objective 1.1). • Training programme with all Neighbourhood Housing Offices on Housing and Homelessness Advice completed Dec 03. • Production of Self Assessment Form for Customers. • 'Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about Homelessness Guide' produced and now given to all homeless applicants. • Portfolio of Private Landlords. • Housing Options Pack developed to increase housing advice. • Development of "drop in" services by Homelessness Officers to provide monthly advisory surgeries e.g. at Community Alcohol Services • Meeting arranged 11 March 2004 with Barnsley, Sheffield and Doncaster Councils to look at examples of good practice following implementation of the Homelessness Strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be produced April 04 • Anticipated completion end March 04 • To be commenced following restructuring of Homeless Team. • Benchmarking of services provided by Beacon Councils completed. • Proposal to establish 'in house' independent Housing Advice Service.
1.5	Establish helpline	<p>Identify costs incl. freephone option. Develop resource pack. Train helpline staff. Identify and cost interpreting services. Identify and publicise number. Evaluate – continue if effective.</p>	1 Nov. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free, confidential direct phone lines to Homelessness Unit now installed at each Neighbourhood Housing Office. • Free telephone number publicised via posters. • Language line giving access to interpretation facilities both in Homelessness Unit and all Neighbourhood Offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information re: helpline to be included in Homelessness Resource Pack. • Future consideration required as to use of Rotherham Connect (long term helpline).

1.6	Develop personal housing plans	Draft framework for plans. Consult services users. Run pilot. Evaluate - offer service if effective.	1 Apr. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Maps/Procedures developed. • Pilot scheme to be implemented for homelessness on personal housing plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot to be introduced March 04 with sample of applicants from Homelessness Unit
1.7	Increase lifeskills	Identify priority client group(s). Develop training/support programme. Identify funding sources Commission services provider for pilot Evaluate – continue/expand service if effective.	1 Apr. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former prisoners identified priority client group. • Supporting People –Floating Support Services funded through Action Housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of programme to be undertaken with Supporting People Programme. • Undertake work with Action Housing to establish level of lifeskills training provided
1.8	Establish mediation service(s)	Agree priority groups for service. Cost service before commissioning. Develop performance measures and outputs. Commission service provider(s) for pilot. Evaluate - continue/expand service if successful.	1 Nov. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking of mediation schemes undertaken. • Evaluation of Neighbourhood Mediation Service undertaken. Re: suitability for homelessness mediation – found not to be appropriate. • Mediation Pilot to be implemented April 04. • Leaflet around mediation service under development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ongoing resources for continuation following evaluation of pilot.

Objective: 2: To ensure appropriate and timely accommodation and support services are available

**Outcome: Elimination of use of bed and breakfast accommodation through provision of increased number of units of temporary and emergency overnight accommodation to 32 units in total by September 2004.
Introduction of Choice Based Lettings Scheme by October 2004 which will facilitate sustained tenancies.
Maintenance of referral processes to floating support services through the Supporting People programme.**

Action	Milestones	End Date	Achievements	Future Action
2.1 Ensuring appropriate Accommodation and Support	Production of a thorough review document of the Out of Hours Service.	1 Oct '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Housing Service 'Out of Hours' phone service completed. • Development of 4 units of overnight emergency accommodation accessible through out of hours service via coded door entry system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out a recruitment drive to increase the number of staff on the out of hours phone rota. • Operational from April 04. • To consider alternative options for the delivery of an out of hours service to the homeless. • To review the quality of the accommodation used by the Service for homeless clients against statutory standards.
2.2 Provision of direct access services	Identify capital and revenue requirements and resources. Scope the scheme(s). Identify development and service delivery partners. Seek capital and long term revenue funding guarantees. Develop service(s) if funding available.	1 Jan. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotherham Homeless Project have received planning permission to convert former White Swan Public House for use as direct access accommodation. • Joint working with Supporting People, Action Housing and Hallam Housing Society to develop Dispersed Housing Scheme at Elliot Court. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotherham Homeless Project currently exploring options for funding and support through local Churches, Charitable Organisations and Supporting People.

2.3	Increased temporary housing	<p>Identify priority groups. Identify partners. Research and confirm units needed. Identify potential stock. Identify housing management costs. Cost refurbishment works. Identify additional support services needed. Cost and resources support services. Commission use of accommodation.</p>	1 Apr. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified priority groups as Homelessness applicants. • Identified need for 20 Units of dispersed temporary accommodation for homeless and further 10 for former asylum seekers. • 17 dispersed units are operational and 4 units are being developed for overnight stays. • Develop 2 units of temporary move on accommodation from Women's Refuge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management/monitoring arrangements of scheme. • One unit of family accommodation identified and under preparation. Continuing to seek further appropriate unit.
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2.4	Increased permanent accommodation accessible by homeless people	<p>Confirm unit numbers needed. Maximise use of s.106 agreements and HIP. Ensure priorities in line with regional and sub regional priorities to access capital funding. Identify development partners. Identify and re-designate low demand stock. Refurbish stock. Identify additional support services. Cost and resource support services.</p>	1 Apr. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken Housing Needs Survey. • Affordable Housing Policy adopted – target figure of 25% for new developments • Links to Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Partnership identified. • Low demand stock – review of Sheltered Housing undertaken • Sustainability model completed, gained picture of low demand stock. • Policy decision passed – not to invest in system built properties • Open Access Scheme ongoing monthly. • Local Lettings Policies developed to meet needs of local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued joint working with planning to access maximum number of units per affordable scheme.
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<p>2.5</p>	<p>Engagement with the private sector</p>	<p>Meet with private sector landlords. Identify barriers & opportunities. Select potential partners. Establish actions to deliver access to private sector. Cost and resource actions. Pilot actions. Evaluate effectiveness and benefits. Continue/expand if effective.</p>	<p>1 Jan. '04</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application submitted to Regional Housing Board for One Stop – Choice Based Letting Shop • RSL Liaison Group established to increase level of nominations. Nomination Agreement developed • Joint working on South Yorkshire Charter – protocol for South Yorkshire Housing Association nomination procedures. • The Strategic Housing Partnership formed Feb 03. Includes representation from the Private Rented Housing Sector – both the Rotherham and District Residential Landlords Association (RDRLA) and an estate/lettings agent. • Continuous work with Robond, the Rent Guarantee Scheme to monitor the quality of private sector housing associated with the Scheme and accessed by their client group. • A Private Rented Sector Landlord Accreditation Scheme is being developed. It is proposed that this scheme will be piloted in the Eastwood/Springwell Gardens area with support from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular quarterly meetings established. • Continued development of RDRLA. • Financial and resource – support for Robond.
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<p>2.6</p>	<p>Increase in choice of housing by homeless people</p>	<p>Establish choice based lettings pilot for homeless people. Develop publicity. Implement scheme and monitor outcomes. Identify role of property shop and timescale for implementation. Link choice based lettings if successful to property shop services.</p>	<p>1 Nov. '03</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established procedures for choice based lettings pilot, policy and procedures guide developed.. Awareness raising training sessions delivered to all Neighbourhood Housing Offices and roadshows to other agencies. Benchmarking exercise carried out with other Local Authorities for information/comparison. Examples of good practice received. Draft website under development. Application submitted to Regional Housing Board for One Stop – Choice Based Letting Shop. 	<p>Presentation of report to Housing Cabinet Member.</p>
<p>2.7</p>	<p>Increased provision for women fleeing domestic violence</p>	<p>Identify options with client group. Establish priority of options. Identify partners. Cost options and additional support services. Establish resources. Timetable delivery of options. Evaluate effectiveness .</p>	<p>1 Oct. '03</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rotherham Women's Refuge received commitment from Supporting People Programme for additional revenue. Bid submitted to Housing Corporation December 2003 to develop new refuge (increase from 4 to 10 bed spaces) Development of move on temporary housing for individuals experiencing Domestic Violence. Support to be provided by Women's Refuge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision to be reached April 04. One unit of family accommodation identified and under preparation. Further unit sought.

2.8	Furnished housing project	Establish expected outcomes. Monitor effectiveness. Continue/expand if successful.	1 Oct. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility report for Furnished Home Scheme completed. Moving in Packs developed for vulnerable new tenants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 implement pilot of 50 furnished homes. Will be in use from April 04. Year 2 develop further 100 furnished homes, Year 3 an additional 100 furnished homes to be developed. Undertaking regular monitoring of success and sustainability of Scheme.
2.9	Availability of storage facilities for homeless people's possessions	Consult on storage needs. Identify and cost options. Decide on most effective option(s). Ensure resources available to meet expectations.	1 Oct. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation undertaken with existing furniture re-cycling companies regarding availability of storage facilities. Consultation undertaken with service providers to explore options. Benchmarking undertaken with Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster to identify their storage procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to be prepared for Housing Cabinet April 04.
2.10	Lack of access for pets	Identify relevant charities to temporarily rehome pets. Identify schemes where pets will be allowed. Establish ground rules for pets with service users. Engage RSPCA/animal welfare charities.	1 Jan. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation undertaken with Animal Sanctuaries, RSPCA and Cat Protection League, none of whom have any facilities to assist in provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact to be made with the Council's Dog Warden. Benchmark with Sheffield, Doncaster and Barnsley Council's. Investigation required with Women's Aid. Report to be prepared for Housing Cabinet April 04.

Objective: 3: To improve information gathering and service quality.

Outcome: To develop a streamlined homelessness service with well trained, knowledgeable staff with clear values shared through partnership working and increased customer involvement.

Action	Milestones	Date	Achievements	Future Action
3.1 Better co-ordination of existing services in particular to reduce offending and substance misuse.	Establish directory of all services offered. Obtain agreement of other Services for better co-ordination. Develop joint working practices and agreed joint protocols including data sharing linked to reduced offending, substance misuse and training and employment options. Identify full costs and confirm re-alignment of resources.	1 Nov. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Directory of Services and Pocket Guide to Services established including specific sections relating to offending and substance misuse. (objective 1.1) 	Meeting with Drug Strategy Team, Community Alcohol Services and Crime and Disorder Strategy Team to progress on identified milestones.
3.2 Further research into a number of hard to reach groups.	Establish research project plan. Establish lead research role for each area. Identify & cost what professional research is needed Amend/reprioritise Strategy in line with findings and available resources.	1 Apr. '04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified priority hard to reach groups through Multi-Agency Awareness Event. Procedure in place to hold monthly drop in surgeries at identified agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting to be arranged Feb/March with identified agencies to prioritise key areas of work. Action Plan requires development Special Needs Survey required during 2004/2005

<p>3.3</p>	<p>Develop innovative ways of involving customers and stakeholders in identifying service improvements</p>	<p>Research involvement options form existing good practice. Involvement plan established with timescale. Resources identified and plan implemented within resources available.</p>	<p>1 Jan. '04</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Improving the Homelessness Maze Suggestion Scheme' leaflet produced and given to all homeless applicants • Monthly prize for best suggestion, partly supported by sponsorship from Asda. First prize to be awarded April 04. • Competition held at Multi-Agency Awareness Event for service users to choose a name for Rotherham's Pocket Guide to Services. • Maxi-Messaging service (mobile phone link with customers) under investigation. • Developing a Tenants and Residents Homelessness Champion Focus Group to look at service improvements. • Developing homelessness user focus group. • Homelessness Registration Card produced for applicants accepted under Homelessness Legislation to help ensure contact is maintained. (sample enc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation required with Legal and I.T. prior to carrying out pilot. • Contact TARA's via Tenant Involvement Unit to identify interested people. • Initial one off meeting to be arranged March/April 04. • Card introduced March 04.
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3.4 (a)	Continuous development of stretching performance measures.	Identify areas to be monitored. Establish regular benchmarking information. Develop continuous improvement targets.	1 Oct. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaken Homeless Self Assessment process Monthly reporting against established Performance Indicators ongoing. Undertaken EFQM exercise on Homeless Service Links established with Housemark as an benchmark tool. Attended Homeless Beacon events to establish good practice. Identified need to monitor re-housing of homelessness applicants. Work underway to gain picture of current situation. Proposed re-structure of Homelessness Team developed. Proposed Peer review with London Borough of Harrow (Beacon Council). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Charter Mark Self Assessment on Homeless Service. Increase level of performance indicators on Homeless Service. Awaiting overall re-structure of Housing Services. London Borough of Harrow - awaiting funding from ODPM Develop South Yorkshire sub regional working group.
3.4(b)	Deliver improved quality and continuous improvement.	Review current structure. Re-align to produce high quality service.	1 Oct. '03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Directory of Services and Multi-Agency Awareness Events. Undertaken two awareness events encompassing all statutory and non statutory agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting to be arranged March 04 to progress milestones. Developing user focus group.
3.5	Develop communications/information strategy	Establish gaps in effective communication and data sharing following actions in plan to improve co-ordination. Establish gaps in information available following actions in plan to improve information availability. Produce effective strategy after involvement of stakeholders.	1 Oct. '03		

Corporate context and priorities

Rotherham MBC has a number of corporate priorities. The direct links between the Council's priorities and homelessness issues are identified in the table below:

Corporate Priorities	Links to Homelessness
Investing in People	Through support and creation of skills for life and work.
Investing in the Economy	Improving the individual's ability to secure and maintain employment or offer voluntary services to the community.
A place to live	Improving the opportunity to access choice regarding housing options and also ensuring a Decent home for all.
A place for everyone	Reducing inequalities and supporting and celebrating the diversity of Rotherham's communities. Removing stigmatisation of homelessness.
A place which cares	Maximising independence. Improving the health of homeless people. Providing support to maintain accommodation. Empowering vulnerable people and communities.
A safe place	Enabling people who have experienced homelessness, or the risk of homelessness to feel safe, knowing that services exist to provide help, advice and accommodation.
A place for enjoyment	Engaging in community activities and utilising cultural and leisure facilities.
A place with active, involved communities	Engaging in citizenship and local democracy to feel part of the local and wider community.
A progressive, responsive, accessible quality-service provider	Homelessness partnerships providing high quality, accessible and customer friendly services.

Risk Analysis

Any strategy poses risks to its full implementation. The overall risk of the strategy failing is assessed as being low to medium and there is a need to identify what the main risk are and to identify ways in which those risks can be minimised, as can be seen in the table below. This is crucial in this instance, as Rotherham MBC and partners must be seen to deliver on key priorities in the strategy.

Area of risk	Risk rating high, medium, low	Safeguards
Strategy receives low corporate priority	L	Ensure strategy is endorsed fully by Cabinet and identified as key in other related strategies, e.g. Housing.
Prevention measures fail to reduce homelessness	M	Action plan is specific about development of targets; lead officers to monitor and review targets regularly with relevant groups. Housing providers need to be on board with the main priorities for increased accommodation for priority groups.
Accommodation and support provision is not increased in line with identified need	H	There is a risk of low support for the provision of direct access and services for those with complex needs because this could be seen potentially as an unpopular service. Communities need to be supported in accepting the development of services in their area.
Information and service quality do not improve	L	Information needs must be part of a detailed research project plan.
Resources are not available to deliver strategy	H	Strategy identifies the need to attract additional resources to enable delivery. Resource availability must be considered further and priorities within the action plan re-established if resources fall short of the total amount needed.
Significant changes to services provided as part of Supporting People review process	L	Financial impact of reviews are likely to fall at the end of the three year interim period (2005/06), but services may be required to change service delivery practices and methods during the interim period which may impact on workload and staff priorities. Supporting People Lead Officer to be kept closely linked to implementation and monitoring of strategy.

Strategic Links

A number of plans and strategies are relevant to the Homelessness Strategy and have been utilised in the review.

The Homelessness Strategy is written with reference to principles within all relevant documents but particular links are identified with the following strategies and plans:

Strategy	Strategic Link
Yorkshire and the Humber Regional Housing Strategy 2003	Promoting social inclusion and diversity. Partnership working. Influencing and responding to changing housing markets. Provision of affordable homes to enable mixed income communities. Fair access to housing for all groups.
Rotherham Community Strategy	Improving health and well being for all. Diversity – ensure provision is responsible to meets of a diverse population. Access and opportunity – opportunities for vulnerable people to live independent and fulfilling lives.
Corporate Plan	Supporting vulnerable people and improving life chances for all. Improving quality of life. Reducing inequalities.
Housing Strategy	An appropriate supply of housing that meets needs in the borough at a price that people can afford to pay.
Shadow Supporting People Strategy	Ensuring that vulnerable people have the opportunity to improve their quality of life by providing supported accommodation and, therefore, greater independence. Delivering high quality and strategically planned housing-related services which are cost effective, reliable and complement existing care services. Developing a working partnership between Social Services, Housing, Health, Probation and other support providers.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting** CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

2. **Date of Meeting** 10 May 2004

3. **Title** Petition by the residents of the Ann Rhodes Centre
Sheltered Accommodation Scheme

4. **Originating Officer** Glenn Lamb
R&M Team Assistant Co-ordinator
Tel Ext 2208

5. **Issue**

The residents who reside within this sheltered scheme have raised a petition asking to have their properties brought forward within scheme.

6. **Summary**

The residents of the Ann-Rhodes Centre sheltered scheme feel that as one of the first sheltered schemes to be built in the Rotherham area, they have been let down by the Council regarding refurbishment of their properties.

The residents are paying between £53 to £58 per week rent. The residents would like to think that their properties were in a better condition than they are now.

7. **Clearance/Consultation**

Housing Services staff have been in consultation with Councillor Hodgkiss regarding this issue, ie when the properties will be on the Decent Homes Scheme. The Area Housing Manager has also been kept fully informed with this situation.

8. **Timing**

Petition requires a completed reply as per Council procedures.

9. **Background**

In July 2000 the Government announced an increase in resources for housing. They set a target that by 2010 all social housing would meet set standards of decency. The Government also announced that these works must take place on the most deprived areas first.

The Programme is based on work being carried out in the most deprived areas of the Borough first, within different Enumeration districts.

10. **Argument**

The Decent Homes programme is due to last until 2010, with some areas receiving works before others. The flow of works within estates must be carried out to ensure maximum efficiency from the current funding available.

Within the Decency Standard there is no discrimination against the age of properties which receive works, therefore properties which are relatively new build may still require works to bring them to the required standard. The properties within the Ann Rhodes complex are due to be surveyed to assess the level of Decency within this

financial year, 2004/05. Any works identified will be programmed in to be completed within the next financial year, 2005/06.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

The Decent Homes Scheme is dependent on maintaining an adequate funding stream. Future funding at this time is unknown, dependent upon a successful ALMO bid, and the acquisition of a high star rating.

Although the residents feel that their properties require improvement, until they are surveyed it is not known what level of works will be required.

12. Finance

The amount of funding available for this current financial year is £8.824,000.

13. Sustainability

Before any works are carried out to bring properties up to the Decency Standard, clarification is sought to ensure that the area enjoys a long-term sustainable future. The Area Management team currently ascertains the level of sustainability within an individual area.

14. Wards Affected

Ward 5

15. References

Petition

16. Presentation

Not applicable

17. Recommendations

THAT THE CABINET MEMBER:

- **NOTES THE ACTION TAKEN**
- **RECEIVES A FURTHER REPORT WHEN THE SURVEY RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE**
- **CONSIDERS OPTIONS FOR INCLUSION WITHIN THE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE PLAN GIVEN THE TIMESCALE FOR APPROVING THE PLAN**

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting** CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

2. **Date of Meeting** 10 May 2004

3. **Title** VOID PROPERTY MONITORING for 5 April 2004 to 30 April 2004

4. **Originating Officer** Dave Abbott
Housing Manager, Tel Ext. 2294

5. **Issue**
The report is intended to update Members on void property relet performance and associated issues.

6. **Summary**
Performance on relet times and rent loss on void properties needs to improve this year for the Service to meet its performance targets, and the needs and aspirations of tenants in Rotherham.

7. **Clearance/Consultation**
In addition to this report, the 'Tenants Vacant Property Policy Panel' meets every six weeks to consider reports on performance and allocation issues.

8. **Timing**
In order to keep Members informed on this key issue, a report will be produced for the first meeting of each month.

9. **Background**
The new targets for 2004/05 set for HES68 and BVPI 69 are 20 days and 1.3% respectively. The report shows that performance on rent loss is 1.56%, and the overall time to let dwellings from 5 April 2004 to 30 April 2004 is 24.44 days.

10. **Argument**
Improved performance will reduce the blight of empty properties and increase the capacity of the service to maximize performance.

11. **Risks and Uncertainties**
Failure to relet tenancies in a timely manner will affect the sustainability of communities and increase rent loss, which in turn reduces the ability of the Service to deliver quality housing management services.

12. **Finance**
No additional resources required. Improved performance will increase rental income.

13. **Sustainability**

The actions taken to improve performance including the introduction of Local Letting strategies, which alongside future Choice Based Lettings will enhance sustainability, because people will choose the area and type of property they live in.

14. **Wards Affected**

All

15. **References**

Audit Commission guidance

16. **Presentation**

Void Performance Monitoring Report for the Period 05/04/04 – 30/04/04

17. **Recommendations**

**THAT THE CABINET MEMBER NOTES THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND CURRENT
PROGRESS**

Void Performance Monitoring for the Period 05.04.04– 30.04.04

1. The Number and Type of Voids

1.1 The number of voids on 30th April 2004 increased by fourteen from the start of the period to 384 or 1.62% of the stock. The majority of voids, 228 or 59.38% are those currently excluded from HES 68; these include properties such as those awaiting renovation.

1.2 The number of voids that meet the criteria to be included within the HES 68 increased by twelve during the period to 156. This equates to 0.66% of the stock.

2. Performance Against BVPI 68

2.1 The definition for HES 68 is, the average re-let times for dwellings let in the financial year. The time is calculated from the day the authority becomes aware that a property is to become void up to the day a tenant is signed up for a property and receives the keys.

2.2 **The overall performance against this indicator is 24.44 days** during the period, a deterioration on the end of year performance for 2003/04. Three Neighbourhood Housing Offices are operating within the target of 20 days. The steps taken to improve performance during the period are highlighted in section 5.

2.3 The performance on allocating open access properties has 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 24.39 days.

2.4 **The current level of performance, based on the 2003/04 comparative ALMO data, would place the authority in the top quartiles of All England ALMO's and 4th best . The top quartile was anything below 30 days average.**

2.5 A new Local Performance Indicator was introduced for 2003/04 - HES14. This indicator measures the precise average time taken to let a void from when one tenancy terminated until the next one starts. This indicator excludes all those properties that are excluded from HES.68. Performance based on this indicator is 20.68 days during the period.

3. Terminations, Lettings and Properties Available to Let

3.1 **Terminations & Lettings** There were 105 terminations in the period of which 97 met the criteria to be included in HES 68 and 126 lettings. The cumulative figures for this year are 105 terminations and 126 lettings. In addition there have been 12 new tenancies created by mutual exchanges since April 2004.

3.2 Property Available to Let

The number of available to let properties at the start of the period is 40.

4. Performance against BVPI 69

4.1 Definition for HES 69 is the percentage of rent lost through local authority dwellings becoming vacant

4.2 The amount of rent income lost on voids up to 30 April 2004 has improved from year end to **1.56%**. This level of performance, based on the 2001/02 comparative data, would continue to place the authority in the upper quartile for Metropolitan Authorities.

4.3 Up to date comparative data is currently being collected, for this discontinued BVPI, by Housemark. It is anticipated that this will be available in June 2004.

5. Actions Taken to Improve Performance in the Period

HES.68

- Cabinet approval given to commence a Furnished Tenancy Scheme from the 1st May, 2004. The scheme will create more sustainable tenancies by providing furnished accommodation to those who may not otherwise be able to furnish a home.
- Moving in starter packs commenced. The scheme will help create more sustainable tenancies by providing basic items to help set up home with a loan.
- The Houseproud Survey was extended from the Going Local Pilot area to all parts of the borough. The survey measures the quality and satisfaction with the service.
- Cabinet approval was given to commence rehousing residents from Dalton house as part of the first step to developing an Extra Care Sheltered Housing Scheme, in partnership with Hallam Housing Society. This will help meet need and reduce the number of long term voids.
- The Open Access website and displays have been updated to improve accessibility. The Open Access List were also issued to 150 customers and the Tenants and Residents Associations

6. District Performance and Issues

6.1 The teams retain a target of letting one more property than is terminated each week. The table in Appendix 1 identifies the performance of the district offices during the period.

6.2 Although Local Letting strategies have had a significant impact on the letting long term voids, there are still pockets of one bed sheltered accommodation

that prove difficult to let. Examples are Maltby and the Going Local Pilot where a one bed bungalow in a good condition has been offered 12 times and still remains void.

- 6.3** Individual voids which require extensive works while not meeting the Decent Homes criteria have a disproportionate affect on performance at the start of the year because there are fewer voids.

7. Sustainability

The 'sustainability of tenancies' indicator (HES5) measures the percentage of terminating tenancies in the year that have lasted longer than 12 months. The 2003/2004 target has been revised from 80% to 90% because it was not sufficiently challenging. Performance for the twelve-month period up to 30th April 2004 was 95.82%. This figure does not include tenancies terminating within 12 months due to transfers, mutual exchanges and deaths. If these were included the figure would be 93.69%.

Appendix 1 – Status of Voids by Area Office as at 30/04/04

District	BVPI 68	League Position	Properties Terminated in Period	Properties Let in Period	Properties Available to Let 30/04/04	Open Access Properties Signed up in Period
Maltby	22.41 days	4th	17	12	0	0
Dinnington	18.25 days	2nd	5	8	3	0
Wath	26.33 days	5th	10	9	13	2
Swinton	18.50 days	3rd	1	8	5	4
Rawmarsh	29.57 days	9th	12	22	7	0
Going Local Pilot	27.74 days	7th	23	18	3	2
East Herringthorpe	28.07 days	8th	9	12	2	0
Town Centre	26.44 days	6th	19	23	7	0
Aston	11.27 days	1st	9	14	0	2
TOTAL			105	126	40	10

NB The termination figure includes properties in the Canklow Regeneration Scheme

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