

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.

Date: Friday, 30 July 2004

Time: 9.00 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Representation on Outside Bodies/Panels (Page 1)
- to note Environment Scrutiny Panel's nominations

Extra Item (identified at No. 4 to be taken as first item on the agenda):-

4. Licensing Reform (report attached) (Pages 2 - 54)
5. A.L.M.O. Excellence Plan (report herewith) (Pages 55 - 74)
6. Repairs and Maintenance Service Improvement Plan (report herewith) (Pages 75 - 87)
7. Staff Recognition Framework (report herewith) (Pages 88 - 90)
8. Update Report - Petition from the Residents of Henley (herewith) (Pages 91 - 92)
9. Update Report - Petition from Residents at Turner Close, Parkgate (herewith) (Pages 93 - 94)
10. Update Report - Petition from Residents regarding Drainage Problems at Wharton Avenue, Swallownest (herewith) (Pages 95 - 96)
11. Choice Based Lettings (report herewith) (Pages 97 - 117)
12. 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 those paragraphs, indicated below, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:-

13. Update Report - Petition from Residents of Laudsedale Road, East Herringthorpe (herewith) (Pages 118 - 119)
(Exempt under Paragraph 7 of the Act – business affairs of any other person other than the Authority)
14. Disposal of Almond Place Sheltered Scheme, Wath (report herewith) (Pages 120 - 123)
(Exempt under Paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 of the Act – accommodation provided by the Council/services provided by the Authority/negotiation of terms)
15. Multi-Agency Witness Mobility Scheme (report herewith) (Pages 124 - 139)
(Exempt under Paragraph 8 of the Act – supply of goods or services)
16. Development of a Home Improvement Agency (H.I.A.) in Rotherham (report herewith) (Pages 140 - 143)
(Exempt under Paragraph 8 of the Act – supply of goods or services)
17. Public and Private Sector Applications Exceeding Delegated Powers (report herewith) (Pages 144 - 154)
(Exempt under Paragraphs 4, 5 and 8 of the Act – information relates to services provided by the Council, financial assistance provided by the Council and the supply of goods or services)

Extra Item:-

18. Entering into Discussions with N.A.S.S. for Post 2005 Contract (report herewith) (Pages 155 - 161)
(Exempt under Paragraph 9 of the Act – information relates to terms being negotiated for a contract)

**To: Cabinet Member for
Housing and Environmental Services**

Date: 30th July, 2004

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES/PANELS

Minute No. 7 of the Environment Scrutiny Panel held on 1st July, 2004., refers:-

Resolved:- That the Cabinet Member of Housing and Environmental Services be advised of the following nominations to Outside Bodies:-

| | |
|---|--|
| Health, Welfare and Safety Panel | Councillor Hall Substitute – Councillor Nightingale |
| Member Training Panel | Councillor Hodgkiss |
| Yorkshire and Humberside Society for Clean Air | Councillors Atkin, Jackson and Hodgkiss |
| Recycling Group | Councillor Atkin |
| Social Concerns Committee Churches together in Rotherham | Councillor Jackson |
| Yorkshire and Humberside Pollution Advisory Council | Councillors Hall and Jackson |
| Women's Refuge | Councillor P. Russell |
| Members Sustainable Development Group | Councillor Atkin |
| South Yorkshire Trading Standards Sub-Group | Councillor Burke |
| Decent Homes Partnership | Councillors Hall and Nightingale |
| Rotherham Health and Local Authority Partnership Board | Councillor Atkin |

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|-----------|----------------------------|--|
| 1. | Meeting | Cabinet Members |
| 2. | Date of Meeting | 30th July, 2004 |
| 3. | Title | Licensing Reform |
| 4. | Originating Officer | Kathy Maude, Senior Licensing Officer |
| 5. | Issue | |

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the Licensing Act and the steps that the Council is taking in preparing for the forthcoming changes. All local authorities in England and Wales have an obligation to fulfil the new legal requirements with regard to the licensing of all sales or supplies of alcohol, the provision of entertainment, the provision of late night refreshment and any offences relating to alcohol and connected purposes.

- **Information**

The first appointed day is the earliest date that any applications can be made for “dummy” Premises and Personal Licences under the new system. They will remain “dummies” until the second appointed day when they will become effective licences. “Dummy” licences can either be for new grants, or for existing premises wishing to continue to trade, with or without variation to their existing licence. Failure to obtain a new “dummy” licence will result in premises operating unlawfully on the second appointed day.

During the transitional period (the time between the first and second appointed days), Licensing Justices will retain control over liquor licensing. Councils will retain control over public entertainment, cinematography, late-night refreshment, etc. A licence granted by the Magistrates and/or the Council under the old system during the transitional period will cease to have any effect on the second appointed day, unless a new application for a licence under the Licensing Act 2003 has been successfully made to come into force at that time.

- **Scheme of Delegation**

Guidance and regulations to assist local authorities in setting up their committees and the appropriate scheme of delegation are expected in August.

- **Training**

Once a licensing committee has been established, training will be required to enable Members to carry out their duties effectively. Some awareness training sessions have already taken place. However, a detailed, specific training course will be provided around December time for members of the committee.

6. Summary

The Act requires RMBC to prepare and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy before RMBC carries out any function in respect of applications made under the Act. The policy must be determined with a view to promoting the four licensing

objectives set out in the Act. These are: the prevention of crime and disorder; public safety; the prevention of public nuisance; and the protection of children from harm.

The Statement of Licensing Policy is a statement of how RMBC, as the licensing authority, intends to exercise the licensing functions imposed upon it by the Act. It may state RMBC's general approach to the making of licensing decisions and the regulation of licensable activities. It should provide transparency for all those affected by the licensing regime which means not only applicants for licences, but also local residents who are able to make representations to RMBC in opposition to any application for a licence.

A Statement of Licensing Policy must be prepared and published every three years. During the three year period, the policy must be kept under review and revised as appropriate.

7. Consultation

Preliminary consultation and awareness has taken place in the form of newsletters to the trade, meetings with representatives from other local authorities and other relevant agencies. A Reachout questionnaire has also been undertaken to gain the views of the public of Rotherham in respect of licensing issues.

The Act contains a list of mandatory consultees that the local authority must consult with, prior to publishing a Statement of Licensing Policy. These are:

- 1) The chief officer of police for the area
- 2) The fire authority
- 3) Such persons as RMBC consider to be representative of holders of existing licences in respect of premises situated in the authority's area. This means holders of the following licences:
 - a justices licence (on or off sales)
 - a canteen licence
 - a licence under the Private Places of Entertainment (Licensing Act) 1967
 - a licence under the Theatres Act 1968
 - a licence under the Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969
 - a public entertainment licence
 - a licence under the Cinemas Act 1985
- 4) Such persons as RMBC consider to be representative of clubs registered within the meaning of the Licensing Act 1964 in respect of any premises situated in the authority's area
- 5) Such other persons as RMBC considers to be representative of businesses and residents in its area

The views of all the above should be given appropriate weight when the policy is determined.

The Act allows consultation with other persons/bodies but does not require it. This is a matter for each licensing authority to consider bearing in mind that if they exceed the statutory requirements they must absorb the costs themselves.

A draft RMBC Statement of Licensing Policy has been prepared by those Officers with responsibility for compliance with the requirements of the Act. Once the appropriate consultation has taken place the draft document will be finalised.

The Government have now published a final version of the Guidance document as required by the Act, therefore, RMBC can now begin the consultation process.

The Guidance document sets out the matters that must be included within the Statement of Licensing Policy.

8. Timing

The First Appointed Day is 7th February, 2005, with the Second Appointed Day likely to be in November 2005. This means that there will be a period of just six months for RMBC to commence and complete the consultation, amend the existing draft policy, obtain approval of the final version of the Statement of Licensing Policy from full Council and publish the Statement. The Statement **must** be published before RMBC can carry out any of its licensing functions (which includes processing applications).

The six month time limit is, therefore, an extremely short period of time in which to complete these matters particularly in view of the fact that the final version of the Statement needs to be considered and approved by Cabinet and the Council.

In addition, it is imperative that the consultation process is not rushed. The reason for this is that Statements of Licensing Policy will be open to applications for judicial review. Such proceedings would prove costly, could require substantial re-wording of the Statement of Licensing Policy and re-consideration of affected licensing decisions. The most likely challenge to the Statement of Licensing Policy is likely to be an accusation of a failure to take into account "relevant considerations".

9. Background

In Rotherham there are approximately 800 premises that will require a licence. In addition to this, new personal licences are to be introduced, adding at least one and possibly two or more personal licence holders per premise. Certain premises are proposed to be exempt from premises licence fees: church halls, chapel halls or similar and village halls, parish and community halls, for the provision of regulated entertainment only.

10. Argument

There is no alternative option since this is a statutory requirement and the Authority will have to fulfil its legal obligations.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

The consequences of the Statement of Licensing Policy not being ready within the six month period would be nothing short of disastrous. If the Statement was not ready, the effect would be that applications which are quite properly made after the six month period could not be considered if the Statement had not been published.

Applications made but not determined within time limits set out in the Act are either deemed granted or refused depending on the circumstances. This could, therefore, lead to a host of appeals against the “decision” to the Magistrates’ Court, which if successful would result in orders for costs against RMBC.

The fees are yet to be determined and are expected to be published in August.

12. Finance

The fees will be determined by central government and are intended to recover the full administration and enforcement costs. The amount of revenue that the local authority will receive in respect of this function cannot at present be quantified. Nevertheless, the Government has stated that the Audit Commission (or similar) will conduct a review of licence fees after the first year to assess whether the new scheme is, as promised, self-financing. The estimated costs of additional staff for the local authority, to cover the additional work, has been detailed in a previous report.

An extra £70,000 has been allocated to the Licensing Section for this year, to assist in meeting any additional costs, consultation exercises, additional staff, etc.

13. Sustainability

The new legislation promotes public safety and the prevention of crime and disorder.

14. Wards Affected

All.

15. References

Licensing Act 2003
Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003
LACORS News

16. Presentation

The Council is committed to establishing a quality service as required by this legislation.

17. Recommendations

In order that the consultation process may commence on Monday, 2nd August, 2004, it is recommended that Members grant authority to Officers to consult upon the draft Statement of Licensing Policy (copy attached), and with not less than the persons / bodies listed in the schedule of proposed consultees.



LICENSING STATEMENT OF POLICY

LICENSING ACT 2003

Draft Document for Consultation

**Licensing Office
Howard Building
College Lane
Rotherham
S65 1AX**

Tel: 01709 823163

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
LICENSING POLICY

INDEX

| <u>Section</u> | <u>Content</u> | <u>Page No</u> |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1. | Preamble | 4-5 |
| 2. | Scope of Policy | 5 |
| 3. | Consultation | 5-6 |
| 4. | Summary of Process | 6-7 |
| 5. | Promotion of Licensing Objectives | 7 |
| 6. | Licence Conditions | 7-8 |
| 7. | The Prevention of Crime & Disorder | 8-9 |
| 8. | Public Safety | 9 |
| 9. | Safer Clubbing | 9 |
| 10. | Safer Clubbing In Clubs | 10 |
| 11. | People with Disabilities | 10 |
| 12. | Other Mechanisms | 10-11 |
| 13. | The Prevention of Public Nuisance | 11 |
| 14. | Protection of Children From Harm | 11-14 |
| 15. | Portman Group Code of Practice | 14-15 |
| 16. | Cumulative Impact | 15-17 |
| 17. | Licensing Hours | 17 |
| 18. | Shops, Stores and Supermarkets | 17 |
| 19. | Club Premises Certificates | 17-18 |
| 20. | Application for a Temporary Event Notice | 18 |
| 21. | Responsible Authorities | 18-19 |

| | | |
|------------|---|--------------|
| 22. | Applications | 19 |
| 23. | Integrating Strategies | 19-20 |
| 24. | Duplication | 20 |
| 25. | Enforcement | 20-21 |
| 26. | Live Music, Dancing and Theatre | 21 |
| 27. | Promotion of Racial Equality | 21 |
| 28. | Administration, Exercise & Delegation of Functions | 21-22 |
| 29. | Advice | 22 |
| 30. | Table of Recommended Delegation of Functions | 23 |

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

ROTHERHAM LICENSING COMMITTEE

1. Preamble

- 1.1 With a population of around 248,000 people, Rotherham Borough is made up of a diverse and vibrant mix of people, cultures and communities.
- 1.2 The majority of Rotherham (75%) is rural in nature, and the Borough benefits from a wealth of natural and built environments. One of its greatest strength's lies in its central location, with direct access to the M1, M18 and A1, the two universities in Sheffield and excellent rail access via Doncaster and Sheffield.
- 1.3 Rotherham is also home to some of the countries most highly regarded leisure and nightlife providers and is a popular destination for the provision of food, drink, cultural activities and entertainment. The Council recognises that licensed premises in the district are a major contributor to employment and in attracting visitors, making Rotherham a vibrant town and community.
- 1.4 Part of our aim is to make the town a pleasant, safe and prosperous place in which to live, work, learn and relax.
- 1.5 The Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has carried out a comprehensive consultation process prior to and during the writing of its Licensing Policy Document. This process will continue in accordance with the Act.
- 1.6 This document sets out Rotherham's Licensing Policy, which will guide the Licensing Committee when considering applications for the sale of alcohol, regulated entertainment, late night refreshment, cinematographic and theatrical performances.
- 1.7 This document should be read in conjunction with the Council's Licensing Guidance Notes.
- 1.8 The aim of the policy is to promote the four licensing objectives set out in the Licensing Act 2003, namely:-
 - The prevention of crime and disorder;
 - Public safety;
 - The prevention of public nuisance; and
 - The protection of children from harm

- 1.9 The licensing authority wish to promote the above whilst still encouraging a sustainable entertainment and leisure industry. The Council recognises both the needs of local residents for a safe and healthy environment in which to work and live and the importance of safe and well run entertainment and leisure facilities to the town.
- 1.10 The policy aims to provide guidance to applicants, responsible authorities and interested parties on the general approach to licensing in the town. Although each and every application will be dealt with separately and on its own individual merits, the Council in writing this policy is offering guidance on the wider considerations that will be taken in to account.
- 1.11 The policy comes into force on (?? January), 2005, and will be reviewed at least every three years, and / or if any amendments and / or additions are required to the policy at any time within those three years.
- 1.12 The policy document and guidance contained therein which are appropriate to Rotherham are intended for the guidance of the Licensing Committee as well as to assist applicants in presenting their application.
- 1.13 The policy is not intended to limit the power or fetter the discretion of the Licensing Committee who will listen to and determine on its own individual merits any application placed before them.

2. **SCOPE OF POLICY**

- 2.1 The policy covers applications, reviews, transfers and variations of licences for the following licensable activities:
 - The sale by retail of alcohol
 - The supply of alcohol by or on behalf of a club to, or to the order of a member of that club
 - The provision of regulated entertainment, and
 - The provision of late night refreshment
- 2.2 Any application for a licence, certificate, variation or review, will be dealt with on its own individual merits and by reference to the four licensing objectives.

3. **CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 The local authority is committed to consulting with as wide and varied an audience as possible regarding this and any future policies or any amendments in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003.
- 3.2 Before publishing this policy statement, or any review, or amendments, the licensing authority has consulted with the following:-
 - (a) The Chief of Police for the area

- (b) The Fire Authority
- (c) Such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of holders of the following existing licences in respect of premises situated in the authority's area:
- justices' licences (off- and on- licences);
 - canteen licences issued under the Licensing Act 1964;
 - licences issued under Schedule 12 to the London Government Act 1963 (licensing of public entertainment in Greater London);
 - licences issued under the Private Places of Entertainment (Licensing) Act 1967;
 - licences issued under the Theatres Act 1968;
 - licences issued under the Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969;
 - licences issued under Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (licensing of public entertainments outside Greater London);
 - licences issued under section 1 of the Cinemas Act 1985; and
 - licences issued under Part 2 of the London Local Authorities Act 1990 (night café licensing).
- (d) Such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of clubs registered (within the meaning of the Licensing Act 1964) in respect of any premises situated in the authority's area.
- (e) Such other persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of businesses and residents in its area.

The period of consultation was ??? weeks.

- 3.3 The views of the above consultees who responded were given due consideration when writing this policy.
- 3.4 The licensing authority may depart from this policy if the individual circumstances of any case merit such a decision in the interests of the promotion of the licensing objectives.

4. **A SUMMARY OF PROCESS**

- 4.1 Each application for a licence will be considered:-
- On its own individual merits
 - In accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 together with any amendments and supporting Regulations
 - With reference to the guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003
 - In accordance with this policy

4.2 Nothing in this statement of policy will:-

- Prevent any person from applying under the 2003 Act for any of the permissions and from having that application considered on its own individual merits
- Prevent any person or stop any person from making representations on any application or from seeking a review of a licence or certificate where the 2003 Act permits them to do so.

5. **PROMOTION OF LICENSING OBJECTIVES**

5.1 The Licensing Objectives are:-

- i) the prevention of crime and disorder,
- ii) public safety,
- iii) the prevention of public nuisance, and
- iv) the protection of children from harm.

5.2 Each objective is of equal importance.

5.3 Each applicant must provide with their application full details as to how they will promote each of the four licensing objectives detailed above.

6. **LICENCE CONDITIONS**

6.1 Conditions include any limitations or restrictions attached to a licence or certificate and are essentially the steps the holder of a licence or certificate will be required to take at all times when licensable activities are taking place at the premises.

6.2 The licensing authority will only impose conditions on licences and certificates where necessary for the promotion of one or more of the licensing objectives and will not impose them for any other purpose.

6.3 The Government have provided pools of example conditions which relate to the licensing objectives and which are to be treated as a potential pool of conditions which may be tailored and attached as necessary conditions for premises licences and Club Premises Certificates. Copies of these pools of conditions are attached to this policy at Annexes 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'. The licensing authority will not consider these as standard conditions and will not apply them universally. However, the pools of example conditions cannot cover every scenario and conditions not appearing in the pool may be attached by the licensing authority where necessary for the promotion of one or more of the licensing objectives.

6.4 The licensing authority will ensure that conditions attached to licences or certificates are tailored to the individual style and characteristics of the particular premises and events concerned.

6.5 The licensing authority will impose mandatory conditions where alcohol is to be supplied as required by the Licensing Act 2003.

6.6 Conditions attached to licences and certificates by the licensing authority will focus on matters within the control of individual licences and centre on the premises and places used for the licensable activities and their vicinity. Whether or not incidents can be regarded as being “in the vicinity” of licensed premises is a question of fact and will depend on the particular circumstances of the case. In addressing this matter the licensing authority will focus primarily on the direct impact of the activities taking place at the licensed premise on members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned.

7. **THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER**

7.1 Under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, as the licensing authority, must have regard to the likely effect of the exercise of its licensing function and do all it can to prevent crime and disorder within the town. In doing so the Council will have regard to the likely impact of licensing and related crime and disorder in the city when considering the location, operation and management of all proposed licence applications reviews and variations.

7.2 All applicants will be expected to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the licensing authority in their Operating Schedule how they intend to promote the prevention of crime and disorder as an objective.

7.3 It is recommended that applicants seek advice from South Yorkshire Police when addressing this issue as well as taking in to account local planning and transport policies, tourism, cultural and crime prevention strategies.

7.4 This will include suitable training to be extended to all bar staff and security staff so that persons supplying drugs, and users, will be deterred from using licensed premises for illegal purposes and that all incidents of crime and disorder in licensed premises is reduced.

7.5 In addition the licensing authority encourages the use of toughened glass or plastic drinking glasses in pubs and bars across the town.

7.6 The licensing authority may request the provision of CCTV in certain premises to a standard agreed with the South Yorkshire Police, to help promote the prevention of crime and disorder.

7.7 The provision of registered door supervisors (registered with the Security Industry Authority) in agreed numbers and locations may also be required.

7.8 The licensing authority support the aims of Pub and Club Watch schemes. Pub and Club Watch Schemes are designed to discourage troublemakers

from pubs and clubs in the town by information sharing and are also a useful body to represent licensees. Persons responsible for any premises where alcohol is available for sale or supply and consumption on those premises are encouraged to be a member of a Pub & Club Watch Scheme or any similar scheme approved by the South Yorkshire Police.

- 7.9 Conditions attached to Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificates, in order to promote the prevention of crime and disorder as a licensing objective, will, so far as possible, reflect local crime prevention strategies

8. **PUBLIC SAFETY**

- 8.1 The licensing authority recognises that licensed premises will cover a wide range of premises and activities, each with their own particular safety risks/issues.

- 8.2 The premises must be constructed or adapted and operated to safeguard occupants against those risks/issues.

- 8.3 The licensing authority expects applicants to provide in their application an operating schedule, which satisfactorily addresses these risks/issues.

- 8.4 Applicants for a licence or certificate under this legislation are reminded that one of the four licensing objectives is Public Safety and will therefore be required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the licensing authority in their operating schedule how they intend to deal with this issue.

- 8.5 Applicants are advised to seek guidance from the Councils' Health and Safety specialist on Rotherham 01709 823161.

- 8.6 The licensing authority may require the provision of Electrical Safety Certificates, Gas Certificates, Fire Safety Certification, Risk Assessments, Health and Safety Policy including safe capacities appropriate for the type of premise and usage.

- 8.7 The licensing authority may attach conditions to licences to promote the Public Safety Objective and to promote general safety. These conditions will be based on the applicants operating schedule and drawn from the model pool of conditions relating to this objective or tailored specifically for those premises.

9. **SAFER CLUBBING**

“Safer Clubbing” concerns drugs and nightclubs. The Home Office, in conjunction with the Department of Health and the DCMS, has also produced the Safer Clubbing Guide that provides comprehensive new advice for nightclub owners, dance event promoters and existing local authority licensing departments on how to ensure the health and safety of anyone attending dance events in England. The Guide can be viewed in full on www.drugs.gov.uk.

10. **SAFER CLUBBING IN CLUBS**

- 10.1 The Government has outlined its commitment to addressing drugs in clubs in 1998 in its strategy “Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain”. In 2001 the Home Office and the London Drug Policy Forum produced guidance entitled “Safer Clubbing” which, building on the earlier success of “Dance Till Dawn Safely”, was nationally welcomed and proved an extremely useful document for licensing officers, club managers and promoters. The aim of reducing the potential harm through better management of dance venues was affirmed in the 2003 “Updated Drug Strategy” which may be viewed with the “Safer Clubbing” at www.drugs.gov.uk.
- 10.2 A key element of the strategy describing in “Safer Clubbing” is the use of necessary and appropriate licensing conditions to control the environment at relevant premises. A check-list of the most important measures described in “Safer Clubbing” are produced in Annex ‘E’ (modified to refer to the provisions of the 2003 Act). This licensing authority commends this document for use by the Police, all responsible authorities and all authorised persons under the 2003 Act.

11. **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

- 11.1 The licensing authority will assume the presence of people with disabilities on licensed premises. Facilities for people with disabilities should be provided at places of entertainment and applicants are therefore encouraged to provide facilities enabling their admission.
- 11.2 Applicants are reminded of the duties imposed by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- 11.3 The licensing authority recognises both the importance of proper steps to ensure the safety of people with disabilities at places of entertainment and the need to avoid the imposition of conditions to a licence which would enable an operator to justify the exclusion of persons with disabilities from the premises by reference to such conditions.

12. **OTHER MECHANISMS**

- 12.1 The local authority recognises that licensing law is not a mechanism for the general control of anti social behaviour by individuals once they are away from the premises and therefore, beyond the direct control of the individual club or business holding the licence, certificate or authorisation concerned.
- 12.2 Other mechanisms for addressing problems relating to unlawful behaviour and badly behaved consumers include:
- Planning Controls

- Positive measures to create a safe and clean town centre environment in partnership with local businesses, transport operators and other departments of the local authority
- The provision of CCTV surveillance in town centres, ample taxi ranks, provision of public conveniences open late at night, street cleaning and litter patrols;
- Powers of local authorities to designate parts of the local authority area as places where alcohol may not be consumed publicly
- Police enforcement of the normal law concerning disorder and anti social behaviour including the issuing of fixed penalty notices
- The prosecution of any personal licence holder or member of staff at such premises who is selling alcohol to people who are drunk
- The confiscation of alcohol from adults and children in designated areas
- Police powers to close down instantly for up to 24 hours any licensed premises or temporary event on grounds of disorder; the likelihood of disorder or excessive noise emanating from the premises
- The power of the police, other responsible authorities or a local resident or business to seek a review of the licence or certificate in question

13. **THE PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE**

- 13.1 The licensing authority would remind applicants that a major concern for residents in premises close to licence outlets and a regular cause of complaint is noise nuisance.
- 13.2 Applicants for a licence under this legislation are reminded that one of the four licensing objectives is the prevention of public nuisance, and therefore will be required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the licensing authority in their operating schedule how they intend to deal with this issue.
- 13.3 This could include steps to prevent noise breakout, noise nuisance and light pollution arising from the premises and also litter, urinating in the street and general disturbance from customers in the vicinity of the premises.
- 13.4 Applicants are advised to seek guidance from Councils' Noise Nuisance Officers and/or a suitably qualified Noise Consultant.
- 13.5 The licensing authority may impose stricter conditions with regard to noise control in areas which have denser residential accommodation but will not limit opening hours without regard to the individual merits of the application.

14. **THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HARM**

- 14.1 The licensing authority judges the Area Child Protection Committee as being the body that represents those who are responsible for, or interested in, matters relating to the protection of children from harm and recognises the Area Protection Committee as being competent to advise the licensing authority on such matters. Notice of applications should therefore be

forwarded to the Area Child Protection Committee as one of the Responsible Authorities.

- 14.2 The wide range of premises that will fall to be licensed under this Act means that children will visit many of these either as part of a family group or on their own.
- 14.3 Applicants for a licence under this legislation are reminded that one of the four licensing objectives is the protection of children from harm, and therefore will be required to demonstrate in their operating schedule how they intend to deal with this issue.
- 14.4 The licensing authority, in addition to the usual consultees will consult with the Area Child Protection Committee on any application which raises concerns regarding access for children.
- 14.5 Where children are to be admitted to the premises the licensing authority require CRB checks for staff who supervise children and may request extra staffing or stewarding etc, risk assessments and clear notification of the times and the areas of the premises to which children will be admitted.
- 14.6 The licensing authority fully support the Rotherham Tobacco Control Strategy.
- 14.7 Applicants can in their submission make it clear that any of the following limitations will be in place for the protection of children from harm.

Note: Age restriction re classification of films
No access – Sex Shows
No access – Adult Entertainment

- 14.8 The Licensing Committee cannot and will not impose any condition requiring children to be admitted to the premises. This will remain a matter for the individual licensee.
- 14.9 It is advisable that applicants having completed their own risk assessment etc. seek the views of the key responsible authorities, including

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Crime and Disorder | - | South Yorkshire Police |
| Noise / Health and Safety | - | Environmental Health |
| Fire Safety | - | South Yorkshire Fire Service |

- 14.10 The Act does not prohibit the access of children to licensed premises including those selling alcohol for consumption on the premises. However, the licensing authority may limit the access of children to any premises where necessary for the prevention of physical, moral or psychological harm to them.
- 14.11 The licensing authority recognises the vast array of entertainment/leisure facilities targeted at family entertainment, these include cinemas, theatres,

concert venues, pubs, restaurants, cafes, takeaways, fast food outlets and certain nightclubs.

14.12 The licensing authority encourages applications from licensees that make venues family friendly and safe for children. However, the licensing authority would have concerns about access to children where:-

- There have been convictions for serving alcohol to minors or where there is a reputation for underage drinking;
- There is known association with drug dealing or drug taking;
- There is a strong element of gambling on the premises; and
- Entertainment of an adult or sexual nature is commonly provided.

14.13 In order to accommodate children in premises where licensable activities take place the licensing authority will assess each individual case on its own merits and impose certain restrictions where these are considered necessary for the prevention of harm to children. These may include:-

- A restriction on the hours when children may be present (e.g. no children after 9:00 p.m.);
- A restriction on the age of children to be admitted to the premises (e.g. over 14 years of age only);
- A limitation or exclusion of children when certain activities are taking place (e.g. no children when entertainment of an adult or sexual nature is taking place);
- A requirement for accompanying adults (e.g. all children must be accompanied by a person over 18 years of age); and
- A full exclusion of children when licensable activities are taking place (complete bans are likely to be rare).

Children and Cinemas

14.14 The licensing authority will require licensees to ensure in the case of premises giving film exhibitions that children will be restricted from viewing films unless that film is classified for that age group by the British Board of Film Classification (BFC) or the local authority.

14.15 In the case of premises giving film exhibitions, the licensing authority will require applicants/licensees to include in their operating schedules to the satisfaction of the licensing authority, arrangements for ensuring that children will be restricted from viewing films unless that film is classified for that age group by the British Board of Film Classification or the licensing authority itself.

14.16 In all premises licences and club premises certificates authorising the exhibition of films for the admission of children, the licensing authority will impose a condition restricting the admission only to children who meet the required age limit set out in any certificate issued by the BFC or the licensing authority itself as required by the Licensing Act 2003.

Proof Of Age Scheme

- 14.17 Applicants and licensees should note that the licensing authority are concerned that under 18's are allowed to purchase alcohol and are frequently involved in drink related disorder. To prevent illegal purchases of alcohol the authority recommends that all licensees join a proof of age scheme such as that operated by the Portman Group or the national proof of age scheme called the "Citizens Card", and ensure that there is prominently displayed in licence premises "under 18" warning signs. The licensing authority expect that all staff responsible for the sale of alcohol receive information and advice on the licensing laws relating to children and young persons in licensed premises.
- 14.18 Licensees must be aware that if they are convicted of an illegal sale their licence may be reviewed.

Staffing Levels

- 14.19 Where regulated entertainment is to be provided and children will be present on the premises, the licensing authority will impose conditions requiring a sufficient ratio of adult staff to be present on the premises to control the access and egress of children and to protect them from harm. The number of attendants to assist persons entering or leaving the premises (excluding the licensee and/or the premises supervisor) must be stated in the operating schedule and must be of a level to ensure the safety of those attending the premises.
- 14.20 The 2003 Act details a number of offences designed to protect children in licensed premises. The licensing authority will work with the Police to ensure that the law is enforced.
- 14.21 The licensing authority may attach conditions to licences to protect children from harm. These conditions will be based on the applicants operating schedule and tailored specifically for those premises in relation to this objective.

15. PORTMAN GROUP CODE OF PRACTICE

- 15.1 The Portman Group operates, on behalf of the alcohol industry, a Code of Practice on the Naming, Packaging and Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks. The Code seeks to ensure that drinks are packaged and promoted in a socially responsible manner and only to those who are 18 years old or older. Complaints about products under the Code are considered by an Independent Complaints Panel and the Panel's decisions are published on the Portman Group's website, in the trade press and in an annual report. If a product's packaging or point-of-sale advertising is found to be in breach of the Code, the Portman Group may issue a Retailer Alert Bulletin to notify retailers of the decision and ask them not to replenish stocks of any such product or to display such point-of-sale material, until the decision has been complied with.

The Code is an important weapon in protecting children from harm because it addresses the naming, marketing and promotion of alcohol products sold in licensed premises in a manner which may appeal to or attract minors. This licensing authority commends this Code.

16. **CUMULATIVE IMPACT**

- 16.1 When considering an application for a licence the licensing authority will not take “need” in to account. (“Need” relates to the commercial demand for another licensed premise. It is not a matter for the licensing authority to take into account when determining applications for licences. It is a matter for planning committees and the market to decide upon.) However, the cumulative impact of licensed premises on the promotion of the Licensing Objectives will be considered by the licensing authority.
- 16.2 Although the licensing authority will not consider need it recognises that serious problems of nuisance and disorder can arise where there is a concentration of premises as a result of the increased capacity of those premises taken together and this has a resulting impact on the surrounding area.
- 16.3 Cumulative impact means the potential impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives of a significant number of licensed premises concentrated in one area. It is concerned with the serious problems of nuisance and disorder that can arise where there is a concentration of premises and reflects the increasing capacity of all those premises taken together and the resulting impact on the surrounding area. The cumulative impact of licensed premises on the promotion of the licensing objectives is a proper matter for the licensing authority to consider.
- 16.4 Where the licensing authority receives representations from a responsible authority, or interested party, that an area has become saturated with licensed premises, making it a focal point for large groups of people to gather and circulate, creating exceptional problems of disorder and nuisance over and above the impact from any individual premises, the licensing authority may, where satisfied that the imposition of conditions may not address the issue, adopt a “Special Saturation Policy” of refusing new licences. This is because the area is already saturated with certain types of licensed premises and the granting of any further licences would undermine one of the licensing objectives.
- 16.5 However, such a policy would not be absolute and the circumstances of each application will be properly considered by the licensing authority on its own merits.
- 16.6 The licensing authority will take the following steps in considering whether to adopt a Special Saturation Policy:-

- Identification of serious and chronic concern from a responsible authority or representatives of residents about crime and disorder or nuisance
 - Assessment of the causes
 - Consideration of whether it can be demonstrated that crime and disorder and nuisance is arising and is caused by the customers of licensed premises and if so identifying the area from which problems are arising and the boundaries of that area
 - Adopting a policy about future licence applications from that area
- 16.7 The effect of adopting a Special Saturation Policy would be to create a rebuttable presumption that applications for new premises licences or club premises certificates or material variations will normally be refused, if relevant representations to that effect are received, unless it can be demonstrated that the operation of the premises involved will not add to the cumulative impact already being experienced. Applicants will, therefore, need to address the Special Saturation Policy issues in their operating schedule in order to rebut such a presumption.
- 16.8 A Special Saturation Policy would not relieve responsible authorities or interested parties of the need to make a relevant representation to the licensing authority before the licensing authority may consider giving effect to the Special Saturation Policy.
- 16.9 The licensing authority will consider representations from responsible authorities and/or interested parties based on the impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives in the licensing authority's area generally of the grant of the particular application before them.
- 16.10 The onus would be on the party making the representation for providing evidence to back up any assertion that the addition of the premises in question would produce the cumulative impact claimed.
- 16.11 The licensing authority recognises and will take into account the diversity of licensed premises and the different impact on the local community of premises with different styles and characteristics. Accordingly the licensing authority recognises that within any such policy it may be able to approve licences that are unlikely to add significantly to the saturation and will consider each application on its own individual merits.
- 16.12 The licensing authority will review any Special Saturation Policy at least every three years to measure its effectiveness and to confirm whether it is still needed.
- 16.13 The licensing authority will not use such policies solely as grounds for removing a licence when representations are made about an existing licensed premise or refuse variations to a licence, except where those variations are directly relevant to the policy, such as an application to significantly increase the capacity.

16.14 The licensing authority does not consider that a particular concentration of licensed premises in a particular area is already causing a cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.

16.15 The absence of a Special Saturation Policy does not prevent any responsible authority or interested party making representation on a new application for the grant of a licence on the grounds that the premises will give rise to a negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.

17. **LICENSING HOURS**

17.1 The licensing authority recognises that longer licensing hours for the sale of alcohol will avoid large numbers of people leaving premises simultaneously. This should reduce friction at late night fast food outlets, taxi ranks and other sources of transport, which can lead to disorder and disturbance.

17.2 The licensing authority will not set fixed trading hours within designated areas. This will prevent significant numbers of people crossing boundaries to seek premises with later opening hours, with the resulting concentration of disturbance and noise being reduced.

17.3 The licensing authority will deal with each application on its own individual merits. However, applicants will be expected to demonstrate in their operating schedule to the satisfaction of the licensing authority how they will promote the four licensing objectives.

17.4 The licensing authority may impose stricter conditions in respect of noise control where premises are situated in mainly residential areas.

18. **SHOPS, STORES AND SUPERMARKETS**

18.1 The licensing authority will normally licence shops, stores and supermarkets to sell alcohol for consumption off the premises at any times the premises are open for shopping.

18.2 However, there may be good reason for restricting those hours, for example following Police representations made in respect of isolated shops known to be the focus of disorder and disturbance.

19. **CLUB PREMISES CERTIFICATES**

19.1 The licensing authority recognizes that non-profit making clubs have made an important and traditional contribution to the life of many communities, that their activities take place on private premises to which the public do not generally have access and that they operate under codes of discipline applying to members and their guests.

- 19.2 The licensing authority will bear these matters in mind in determining what conditions should be included in certificates.
- 19.3 In considering any representations from responsible authorities and interested parties the licensing authority will not impose any conditions to a certificate unless it has been demonstrated that they are strictly necessary for the promotion of the Licensing Objectives.
- 19.4 The licensing authority recognizes that the indirect costs of conditions attached to certificates will be borne by individual members of the Club and cannot be recovered by passing on those costs to the general public.
- 19.5 The licensing authority will not impose conditions which interfere with the arrangements for granting membership or voting within the Club.

20. **APPLICATIONS FOR TEMPORARY EVENT NOTICES**

- 20.1 Whilst the Licensing Act 2003 provides that any temporary event notice must be given to the licensing authority no later than ten working days notice before the day on which the temporary event period begins, the licensing authority requests that any temporary event notice be given to the licensing authority as early as possible and **at least 28 days before** the day on which the temporary event period begins. This will allow the licensing authority to help organisers of temporary events plan the events safely.
- 20.2 If it is not possible to give a temporary event notice to the licensing authority at least 28 days before the day on which the temporary event period begins, the licensing authority strongly encourages temporary event notice givers to give the temporary event notice to the licensing authority at the earliest possible time.

21. **RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES**

- 21.1 Applicants for Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificates or variations to Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificates are required to give notice of their application to each of the Responsible Authorities.
- 21.2 Addresses to which notice of applications may be sent to each of the Responsible Authorities are:

South Yorkshire Police Headquarters, Main Street, Rotherham. For the attention of PS A. Eyre, Licensing Sergeant.

RMBC, Health & Safety, Howard Building, College Lane, Rotherham, S65 1AX

RMBC, Noise Pollution, Howard Building, College Lane, Rotherham, S65 1AX

RMBC, Planning, Bailey House, Rotherham

RMBC, Social Services, Children Protection and Planning Section, Floor 4,
Crinoline House, Effingham Square, Rotherham, S65 1AW

District Fire Safety Officer, Dearne District Fire Safety Office, Broadway,
Barnsley, S70 6RA

In the case of vessels, the following should also be included:-

Navigation Authority
British Waterway Board
Environmental Agency
Secretary of State

- 21.3 If any notice is sent to any responsible authority at any addresses other than those listed above the licensing authority may deem that the notice has not been given.
- 21.4 It is for an applicant to show that a notice has been given to each responsible authority and accordingly the licensing authority recommends that notice of any application is given by recorded delivery or by means which generates a receipt.

22. **APPLICATIONS**

- 22.1 The licensing authority requires all applications to be made in the correct form and in accordance with, and having satisfied, the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Regulations.
- 22.2 Any application not made in accordance with, or not having satisfied the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003 or the Regulations may be returned to the applicant for resubmission. The licensing authority will not consider that any such application has been properly made and accordingly will not consider that the time limits set out in the Licensing Act 2003 have commenced.

23. **INTEGRATING STRATEGIES**

- 23.1 The licensing authority shall secure the proper integration of this policy with local crime prevention, planning, transport, tourism and cultural strategies by:-
- Liaising and consulting with the South Yorkshire Police, Community Safety Forum and the Crime and Disorder Partnership;
 - Liaising and consulting with the Planning authority;
 - Liaising and consulting with the Highways authority;
 - Liaising and consulting with the Rotherham Town Centre Management Team and the Rotherham Tourism Team;

- Having regard to any future documents issued relating to the Private Security Industry Act 2001, for example liaison or information sharing protocols;
- Liaising and consulting with the Trading Standards Team, for example with regard to test purchasing codes of practice
- Having regard to the Home Office Safer Clubbing Guide

23.2 The licensing authority in dealing with the Licensing Act 2003, will adopt a multi disciplinary approach to ensure proper integration of local and national strategies to promote the licensing objectives.

23.3 This will include working closely with other agencies to ensure proper integration of local Crime, Prevention, Planning, Transport, Tourism and Cultural Strategies.

23.4 The licensing authority will agree protocols with the Police to enable them to report to the Committee responsible for transport matters on the need for swift and safe dispersal of people to avoid concentrations that can produce disorder and disturbance.

23.5 Arrangements will be made by the licensing authority for the Licensing Committee to receive reports from time to time on the:-

- Needs of the local tourist economy
- Cultural strategy for the area
- Employment situation in the area and the need for new investment and employment where appropriate.

23.6 The licensing authority will ensure that reports are sent from the Licensing Committee to the Planning Committee advising them of the situation regarding licensed premises in the area and including the general impact of alcohol related crime and disorder to assist them in the decision making.

24. **DUPLICATION**

24.1 The licensing authority recognises that there should be a clear separation of the Planning and Licensing functions. Licensing applications will not be a re-run of the planning application.

24.2 The licensing authority will so far as possible avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes, for example many aspects of Fire Safety will be covered by existing and future legislation.

25. **ENFORCEMENT**

25.1 Once licensed it is vital that premises are operated and maintained in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003, the four licensing objectives and any

conditions imposed by the licensing authority. The licensing authority will, therefore, take enforcement action where necessary to ensure this.

- 25.2 The licensing authority will establish with South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Fire Service protocols relating to the enforcement of the 2003 Act.
- 25.3 The licensing authority will have particular regard to the following principles; the targeting of high risk premises or activities which require greater attention; consistency of approach; transparency and proportionality.
- 25.4 The licensing authority will operate a light touch inspection regime for well managed and well maintained premises.

26. **LIVE MUSIC, DANCING AND THEATRE**

- 26.1 The licensing authority recognises and will take proper account of the need to encourage and promote live music, dancing and theatre for the wider cultural benefit of the community, particularly children.
- 26.2 When considering applications for such events the licensing authority will carefully balance the cultural needs with the necessity of promoting the licensing objectives.

27. **PROMOTION OF RACIAL EQUALITY**

- 27.1 The Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, places a legal obligation on Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination; and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- 27.2 The Council has developed a Race Equality Scheme. The Race Equality Scheme makes clear how the Council will meet the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. If you require a copy please contact Luisa Fletcher, Corporate Equalities Unit, Chief Executive's Office, Bailey House, Rawmarsh Road, Rotherham S60 1RU Telephone 01709 822871.

28. **ADMINISTRATION, EXERCISE AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS**

- 28.1 The licensing authority has established a Licensing Committee to administer the wide range of licensing decisions and functions which the Council will be involved in.
- 28.2 The Licensing Committee has delegated certain decisions and functions and established a number of sub committees to deal with them. This will provide an efficient and cost effective service for all parties involved in the licensing function.

- 28.3 The grant of non-contentious applications has been further delegated to officers.
- 28.4 The table on the following page sets out the agreed delegation of decisions and functions to Licensing Committee, Sub-Committees and Officers.
- 28.5 Any such matters delegated in this way will be listed for comment at the next committee meeting.
- 28.6 The agreed delegation of decisions and functions is without prejudice to the ability of officers to refer an application to a sub-committee, or a sub-committee to full committee if considered appropriate in the particular circumstances.

29. **ADVICE**

Advice about whether or not activities require a licence may be obtained from the Senior Licensing Officer, RMBC, Licensing Section, Howard Building, College Lane, Rotherham, Telephone 01709 823163, Fax, 823154 or e mail trading.standards@rotherham.gov.uk

Recommended delegation of functions

| Matter to be dealt with | Full Committee | Sub Committee | Officers |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Application for personal Licence | | If an objection made | If no objection made |
| Application for personal Licence with unspent Convictions | | All cases | |
| Application for premises Licence/club premises Certificate | | If a representation made | If no representation made |
| Application for provisional Statement | | If a representation made | If no representation made |
| Application to vary premises Licence/club premises Certificate | | If a representation made | If no representation made |
| Application to vary designated personal licence holder | | If a police objection | All other cases |
| Request to be removed as designated personal licence holder | | | All cases |
| Application for transfer of premises licence | | If a police objection | All other cases |
| Applications for Interim Authorities | | If a police objection | All other cases |
| Application to review premises licence/club premises certificate | | All cases | |
| Decision on whether a complaint is irrelevant, frivolous, vexatious, etc. | | | All cases |
| Decision to object when local authority is a consultee and not the lead authority | | All cases | |
| Determination of a police representation to a temporary event notice | | All cases | |

Annex 'A'

Conditions relating to the Prevention of Public Nuisance

It should be noted that provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Noise Act 1996 provide some protection to the general public from the effects of noise nuisance. In addition, the provisions in Part 8 of the Licensing Act 2003 enable a senior police officer to close down instantly for up to 24 hours licensed premises and premises carrying on temporary permitted activities that are causing nuisance resulting from noise emanating from the premises. These matters will be considered before deciding whether or not conditions are necessary for the prevention of public nuisance.

General

When applicants for premises licences or club premises certificates are preparing their operating schedules or club operating schedules, responsible authorities are considering such applications and licensing authorities are considering applications following the receipt of relevant representations from a responsible authority or interested party, the following options will be considered as measures that, if necessary, would promote the prevention of public nuisance.

Whether or not any risk assessment shows them to be necessary in the individual circumstances of any premises will depend on a range of factors including the nature and style of the venue, the activities being conducted there, the location of the premises and the anticipated clientele of the business involved.

Necessary conditions for licences and certificates will also depend on local knowledge of the premises.

Hours

The hours during which the premises are permitted to be open to the public or to members and their guests can be restricted (other than where they are protected by the transitional provisions of the Licensing Act 2003) by the conditions of a premises licence or a club premises certificate for the prevention of public nuisance.

Conditions imposing restrictions on the times when certain licensable activities take place even though the premises may be open to the public at such times may be necessary. For example, the playing of recorded music after a certain time might be prohibited, even though other licensable activities are permitted to continue.

Conditions imposing restrictions on the parts of premises that might be used for certain licensable activities at certain times may be necessary. For example,

Annex 'A'

while the provision of regulated entertainment might be permitted while the premises are open to the public or members and their guests, regulated entertainment might not be permitted in garden areas of the premises after a certain time.

Noise and vibration

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the prevention of public nuisance, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- noise or vibration does not emanate from the premises so as to cause a nuisance to nearby properties. This might be achieved by a simple requirement to keep doors and windows at the premises closed, or to use noise limiters on amplification equipment used at the premises;
- prominent, clear and legible notices are displayed at all exits requesting the public to respect the needs of local residents and to leave the premises and the area quietly;
- the use of explosives, pyrotechnics and fireworks of a similar nature which could cause disturbance in surrounding areas are restricted; and
- the placing of refuse – such as bottles - into receptacles outside the premises takes place at times that will minimise the disturbance to nearby properties.

Noxious smells

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the prevention of public nuisance, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- noxious smells from licensed premises are not permitted so as to cause a nuisance to nearby properties and the premises are properly vented.

Light pollution

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the prevention of public nuisance, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- flashing or particularly bright lights on or outside licensed premises do not cause a nuisance to nearby properties.

Annex 'B'

Conditions relating to the Protection of Children from Harm

It should be noted that it is unlawful under the 2003 Act to permit unaccompanied children under the age of 16 to be present on premises exclusively or primarily used for supply of alcohol for consumption on those premises under the authorisation of a premises licence, club premises certificate or a temporary event notice when open for the purposes of being used for the supply of alcohol for consumption there. In addition, it is an offence to permit the presence of children under 16 who are not accompanied by an adult between midnight and 5am at all premises supplying alcohol for consumption on those premises under the authorisation of any premises licence, club premises certificate or temporary event notice. Conditions duplicating these provisions are, therefore, unnecessary.

Access for children to licensed premises - in general

Restrictions on the access of children under 18 to premises where licensable activities are being carried on should be made where it is necessary to protect children from harm.

Precise policy and details will be a matter for the licensing authority. Conditions attached to premises licences and club premises certificates may reflect the concerns of responsible authorities and interested parties who have made representations but only where the licensing authority considers it necessary to protect children from harm.

Whilst applications in relation to premises licences and club premises certificates must be judged by the licensing authority on their individual merits and characteristics, the Secretary of State recommends (unless there are circumstances justifying the contrary) that:

- for any premises with known associations (having been presented with evidence) with or likely to give rise to heavy or binge or underage drinking, drugs, significant gambling, or any activity or entertainment (whether regulated entertainment or not) of a clearly adult or sexual nature, there should be a strong presumption against permitting any access at all for children under 18 years. Applicants wishing to allow access for children to premises where these associations may be relevant, when preparing operating schedules or club operating schedules or variations of those schedules for the purposes of obtaining or varying a premises licence or club premises certificate should:
 - explain their reasons; and
 - outline in detail the steps that they intend to take to protect children from harm on such premises.
- for any premises, not serving alcohol for consumption on the premises, but

Annex 'B'

where the public are allowed on the premises after 11.00pm in the evening, there should be a presumption against the presence of children under the age of 12 unaccompanied by adults after that time. Applicants wishing to allow access when preparing operating schedules or variations of those schedules or club operating schedules for the purposes of obtaining or varying a premises licence or club premises certificate should:

- explain their reasons; and
- outline in detail the steps that they intend to take to protect children from harm on such premises.
- in any other case, subject to the premises licence holder's or club's discretion, the expectation would be for unrestricted access for children subject to the terms of the 2003 Act. An operating schedule or club operating schedule should indicate any decision for the premises to exclude children completely, which would mean there would be no need to detail in the operating schedule steps that the applicant proposes to take to promote the protection of children from harm. Otherwise, where entry is to be permitted, the operating schedule should outline the steps to be taken to promote the protection of children from harm while on the premises.

Age Restrictions – specific

Under the 2003 Act a wide variety of licensable activities could take place at various types of premises and at different times of the day and night. Whilst it may be appropriate to allow children unrestricted access at particular times and when certain activities are not taking place, the licensing authority following relevant representations made by responsible authorities and interested parties will consider a range of conditions that are to be tailored to the particular premises and their activities where these are necessary.

The licensing authority will consider:

- the hours of day during which age restrictions should and should not apply. For example, the fact that adult entertainment may be presented at premises after 8.00pm does not mean that it would be necessary to impose age restrictions for earlier parts of the day;
- types of event or activity in respect of which no age restrictions may be needed, for example;
- family entertainment; or
- non-alcohol events for young age groups, such as under 18s dances,
- Similarly, types of event or activity which give rise to a more acute need for age restrictions than normal, for example;
- during "Happy Hours" or on drinks promotion nights;
- during activities outlined in paragraph 1 above.

Annex 'B'

Age restrictions – cinemas

The Secretary of State considers that, in addition to the mandatory condition imposed by virtue of section 20, requiring the admission of children to films to be restricted in accordance with recommendations given either by a body designated under section 4 of the Video Recordings Act 1984 or by the licensing authority itself, conditions restricting the admission of children to film exhibitions should include:

- a condition that where the licensing authority itself is to make recommendations on the admission of children to films, the cinema or venue operator must submit any film to the authority that it intends to exhibit 28 days before it is proposed to show it. This is to allow the authority time to classify it so that the premises licence holder is able to adhere to any age restrictions then imposed;
- a condition that when films are classified, by either the film classification body as specified in the licence or the licensing authority, they should be classified in the following way:
 - U Universal – suitable for audiences aged four years and over
 - PG – Parental Guidance. Some scenes may be unsuitable for young children.
 - 12A – Passed only for viewing by persons aged 12 years or older or persons younger than 12 when accompanied by an adult.
 - 15 – Passed only for viewing by persons aged 15 years and over.
 - 18 – Passed only for viewing by persons aged 18 years and over.
- that conditions specify that immediately before each exhibition at the premises of a film passed by the British Board of Film Classification there shall be exhibited on screen for at least five seconds in such a manner as to be easily read by all persons in the auditorium a reproduction of the certificate of the Board or, as regards a trailer advertising a film, of the statement approved by the Board indicating the classification of the film;
- a condition that when a licensing authority has made a recommendation on the restriction of admission of children to a film, notices are required to be displayed both inside and outside the premises so that persons entering can readily be made aware of the classification attached to any film or trailer. Such a condition might be expressed in the following terms:

“Where a programme includes a film recommended by the licensing authority as falling into the 12A, 15 or 18 category no person appearing to be under the age of 12 and unaccompanied, or under 15 or 18 as appropriate, shall be admitted to any part of the programme; and the licence holder shall display in a conspicuous position a notice in the following terms –

**PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF [INSERT APPROPRIATE AGE]
CANNOT BE ADMITTED TO ANY PART OF THE PROGRAMME**

Annex 'B'

Where films of different categories form part of the same programme, the notice shall refer to the oldest age restriction.

This condition does not apply to members of staff under the relevant age while on-duty provided that the prior written consent of the person's parent or legal guardian has first been obtained."

Theatres

The admission of children to theatres, as with other licensed premises, is not expected to normally be restricted unless it is necessary to promote the licensing objective of the protection of children from harm. However, theatres may be the venue for a wide range of activities. The admission of children to the performance of a play is expected to normally be left to the discretion of the licence holder and no condition restricting the access of children to plays should be attached. However, theatres may also present entertainment including, for example, variety shows, incorporating adult entertainment.

A condition restricting the admission of children in such circumstances may be necessary. Entertainment may also be presented at theatres specifically for children (see below).

The Licensing authority will consider whether a condition should be attached to a premises licence which requires the presence of a sufficient number of adult staff on the premises to ensure the well being of children present on the premises during any emergency.

Performances especially for children

Where performances are presented especially for unaccompanied children in theatres and cinemas conditions are anticipated to be needed which require:

- an attendant to be stationed in the area(s) occupied by the children, in the vicinity of each exit, provided that on each level occupied by children the minimum number of attendants on duty should be one attendant per 50 children or part thereof.

The licensing authority will, having regard to any representations made by responsible authorities on the issue, also consider whether or not standing should be allowed. For example, there may be reduced risk for children in the stalls than at other levels or areas in the building.

Children in performances

There are many productions each year that are one-off shows where the cast is made up almost entirely of children. They may be taking part as individuals or as

Annex 'B'

part of a drama club, stage school or school group. The age of those involved may range from 5 to 18.

The Children (Performances) Regulations 1968 as amended set out requirements for children performing in a show. Licensing authorities should familiarise themselves with the requirements of these Regulations and not duplicate any of these requirements.

However, if it is necessary to consider imposing conditions, in addition to these requirements, for the promotion of the protection of children from harm then the licensing authority will consider the matters outlined below.

- **Venue** – the backstage facilities should be large enough to accommodate safely the number of children taking part in any performance.
- **Fire safety** – all chaperones and production crew on the show should receive instruction on the fire procedures applicable to the venue prior to the arrival of the children.
- **Special effects** – it may be inappropriate to use certain special effects, including smoke, dry ice, rapid pulsating or flashing lights, which may trigger adverse reactions especially with regard to children.
- **Care of children** – theatres, concert halls and similar places are places of work and may contain a lot of potentially dangerous equipment. It is therefore important that children performing at such premises are kept under adult supervision at all times including transfer from stage to dressing room and anywhere else on the premises. It is also important that the children can be accounted for at all times in case of an evacuation or emergency.

The Portman Group Code of Practice on the Naming, Packaging and Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks

The Portman Group operates, on behalf of the alcohol industry, a Code of Practice on the Naming, Packaging and Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks. The Code seeks to ensure that drinks are packaged and promoted in a socially responsible manner and only to those who are 18 years old or older. Complaints about products under the Code are considered by an Independent Complaints Panel and the Panel's decisions are published on the Portman Group's website, in the trade press and in an annual report. If a product's packaging or point-of-sale advertising is found to be in breach of the Code, the Portman Group may issue a Retailer Alert Bulletin to notify retailers of the decision and ask them not to replenish stocks of any such product or to display such point-of-sale material, until the decision has been complied with. The Code is an important

Annex 'B'

mechanism in protecting children from harm because it addresses the naming, marketing and promotion of alcohol products sold in licensed premises in a manner which may appeal to or attract minors.

Where appropriate and necessary, consideration will be given to attaching conditions to premises licences and club premises certificates that require compliance with the Portman Group's Retailer Alert Bulletins.

Proof of Age cards

Proof of age cards are discussed under Annex in connection with the prevention of crime and disorder. However, where necessary and appropriate, a requirement for the production of proof of age cards before any sale of alcohol is made could be attached to any premises licence or club premises certificate for the protection of children from harm. Any such requirement should not be limited to recognised "proof of age" cards, but allow for the production of other proof, such as photo-driving licences and passports. The Secretary of State strongly supports the PASS accreditation system (see paragraph 12.8 of the Guidance) which aims to approve and accredit various proof of age schemes that are in existence. This ensures that such schemes maintain high standards, particularly in the area of integrity and security, and where appropriate and necessary, conditions may refer directly to PASS accredited proof of age cards, photodriving licences, student cards and passports. As for conditions relating to crime and disorder, it should be noted that many adults in England and Wales do not currently carry any proof of age. This means that the wording of any condition will require careful thought. For example, the requirement might be to ensure sight of evidence of age from any person appearing to those engaged in selling or supplying alcohol to be under the age of 18 and who is attempting to buy alcohol. This would ensure that most minors – even those looking older – would need to produce proof of age appropriately before making such a purchase. Under such an arrangement only a minority of adults might be affected, but for the majority there would be no disruption to their normal activity, for example, when shopping in a supermarket.

Proof of age cards can also ensure that appropriate checks are made where the presence of children is restricted by age at certain times, such as 16.

Annex 'C'

Conditions relating to the Prevention of Crime and Disorder

It should be noted in particular that it is unlawful under the 2003 Act:

- knowingly to sell or supply or attempt to sell or supply alcohol to a person who is drunk*
- knowingly to allow disorderly conduct on licensed premises*
- for the holder of a premises licence or a designated premises supervisor knowingly to keep or to allow to be kept on licensed premises any goods that have been imported without payment of duty or which have otherwise been unlawfully imported*
- to allow the presence of children under 16 who are not accompanied by an adult between midnight and 5am at any premises licensed for the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises, and at any time in premises used exclusively or primarily for the sale and consumption of alcohol*

Conditions enforcing these arrangements are therefore unnecessary.

General

When applicants for premises licences or club premises certificates are preparing their operating schedules or club operating schedules, when responsible authorities are considering such applications and when licensing authorities are considering applications following the receipt of any relevant representations from a responsible authority or interested party, the following options should be considered as measures which, if necessary, would promote the prevention of crime and disorder.

Whether or not any risk assessment shows these options to be necessary in the individual circumstances of any premises will depend on a range of factors including the nature and style of the venue, the activities being conducted there, the location of the premises and the anticipated clientele of the business involved. It should also be borne in mind that club premises operate under codes of discipline to ensure the good order and behaviour of members.

Necessary conditions for the licence or certificate will also depend on local knowledge of the premises.

Under no circumstances should the following measures be regarded as standard conditions to be automatically imposed in all cases. They are designed to provide a range of possible conditions drawn from experience relating to differing situations and to offer guidance.

Any individual preparing an operating schedule is at liberty to volunteer any measure, such as those described below, as a step he or she intends to take to promote the licensing objectives. When incorporated into the licence or certificate as a condition, they become enforceable under the law and a breach of such a condition could give rise to prosecution.

Annex 'C'

Text/Radio pagers

Text and radio pagers connecting premises licence holders, designated premises supervisors, managers of premises and clubs to the local police can provide for rapid response by the police to situations of disorder which may be endangering the customers and staff on the premises.

Such pagers provide two-way communication, both enabling licence holders, managers, designated premises supervisors and clubs to report incidents to the police, and enabling the police to warn those operating a large number of other premises of potential troublemakers or individuals suspected of criminal behaviour who are about in a particular area.

Pager systems can also be used by licence holders, door supervisors, managers, designated premises supervisors and clubs to warn each other of the presence in an area of such people.

The Secretary of State recommends that text or radio pagers should be considered appropriate necessary conditions for public houses, bars and nightclubs operating in city and town centre leisure areas with a high density of licensed premises. Following individual consideration of the particular circumstances of the venue, such conditions may also be appropriate and necessary in other areas for the prevention of crime and disorder.

A condition requiring the text/radio pager links to the police will include the following elements:

- a requirement that the text/pager equipment is kept in working order at all times;
- a requirement that the pager link be activated, made available to and monitored by the designated premises supervisor or a responsible member of staff at all times that the premises are open to the public;
- a requirement that any police instructions/directions are complied with whenever given; and
- a requirement that all instances of crime or disorder are reported via the text/radio pager link by the designated premises supervisor or a responsible member of staff to an agreed police contact point.

Door supervisors

Conditions relating to the provision of door supervisors and security teams may be valuable in:

- preventing the admission and ensuring the departure from the premises of the drunk and disorderly, without causing further disorder;
- keeping out excluded individuals (subject to court bans or imposed by the licence holder);
- searching and excluding those suspected of carrying illegal drugs, or carrying

Annex 'C'

offensive weapons; and

- maintaining orderly queuing outside of venues prone to such queuing.

Where door supervisors conducting security activities are to be a condition of a licence, which means that they would have to be registered with the Security Industry Authority, conditions may also need to deal with the number of such supervisors, the displaying of name badges, the carrying of proof of registration, where and at what times they should be stationed on the premises, and whether at least one female supervisor should be available (for example, if female customers are to be the subject of body searches). Door supervisors also have a role to play in ensuring public safety (see Annex).

Bottle bans

Glass bottles may be used as weapons inflicting more serious harm during incidents of disorder. A condition can prevent sales of drinks in glass bottles for consumption on the premises.

A condition requiring that no sales of beverages in glass bottles for consumption on the premises will be expressed in clear terms and include the following elements:

- no bottles containing beverages of any kind, whether open or sealed, shall be given to customers on the premises whether at the bar or by staff service away from the bar;
- no customers carrying open or sealed bottles shall be admitted to the premises at any time that the premises are open to the public

In appropriate circumstances, the condition could include exceptions, for example, as follows:

- but bottles containing wine may be sold for consumption with a table meal by customers who are seated in an area set aside from the main bar area for the consumption of food.

Plastic containers and toughened glass

Glasses containing drinks may be used as weapons during incidents of disorder and in untoughened form, can cause very serious injuries. Consideration will therefore be given to conditions requiring either the use of plastic containers or toughened glass which inflicts less severe injuries where considered necessary. Location and style of the venue and the activities carried on there would be particularly important in assessing whether a condition is necessary. For example, the use of glass containers on the terraces of some outdoor sports grounds may obviously be of concern, and similar concerns may also apply to indoor sports events such as boxing matches. Similarly, the use of such plastic

Annex 'C'

containers or toughened glass during the televising of live sporting events, such as international football matches, when high states of excitement and emotion fuelled by alcohol might arise, may be a necessary condition.

It should be noted that the use of plastic or paper drinks containers and toughened glass may also be relevant as measures necessary to promote public safety (see Annex).

CCTV

The presence of CCTV cameras can be an important means of deterring and detecting crime at and immediately outside licensed premises. Conditions will not just consider a requirement to have CCTV on the premises, but also the precise siting of each camera, the requirement to maintain cameras in working order, and to retain recordings for an appropriate period of time.

Advice to individuals conducting risk assessments when preparing operating schedules on the use of CCTV to prevent crime may be provided by South Yorkshire Police

Open containers not to be taken from the premises

Consideration will be given to a condition preventing the taking of alcoholic and other drinks from premises in open containers (eg glasses and opened bottles). This may be necessary to prevent the use of these containers as offensive weapons in surrounding streets after individuals have left the premises.

Restrictions on drinking areas

It may be necessary to restrict the areas where alcoholic drinks may be consumed in premises after they have been purchased from the bar. An example would be at sports ground where the police consider it necessary to prevent the consumption of alcohol on the terracing of sports grounds during particular sports events. Such conditions should not only specify these areas, but indicate the circumstances in which the ban would apply and times at which it should be enforced.

Capacity limits

Although most commonly made a condition of a licence on public safety grounds, consideration will also be given to conditions which set capacity limits for licensed premises or clubs where it may be necessary to prevent overcrowding which can lead to disorder and violence. Where such a condition is considered necessary, consideration will also be given to whether door supervisors would be needed to ensure that the numbers are appropriately controlled.

Annex 'C'

Proof of age cards

It is unlawful for children under 18 to attempt to buy alcohol just as it is unlawful to sell or supply alcohol to them. To prevent such crimes, it may be necessary to require a policy to be applied at certain licensed premises requiring the production of "proof of age" before such sales are made. This should not be limited to recognised "proof of age" cards, but allow for the production of other proof, such as photo-driving licences, student cards and passports. The Secretary of State strongly supports the PASS accreditation system (see paragraph 12.8 of the Guidance) which aims to approve and accredit various proof of age schemes that are in existence. This ensures that such schemes maintain high standards, particularly in the area of integrity and security, and where appropriate and necessary, conditions may refer directly to PASS accredited proof of age cards, photo-driving licences and passports. It should be noted that many adults in England and Wales do not currently carry any proof of age. This means that the wording of any condition will require careful thought.

For example, the requirement might be to ensure sight of evidence of age from any person appearing to those selling or supplying alcohol to be under the age of 18 and who is attempting to buy alcohol. This would ensure that most minors – even those looking older – would need to produce proof of age appropriately before making such a purchase. Under such an arrangement only a minority of adults might be affected, but for the majority there would be no disruption to their normal activity, for example, when shopping in a supermarket.

Crime prevention notices

It may be necessary at some premises for notices to be displayed which warn customers of the prevalence of crime which may target them. Some premises may be reluctant to volunteer the display of such notices for commercial reasons. For example, in certain areas, a condition attached to a premises licence or club premises certificate might require the displaying of notices at the premises which warn customers about the need to be aware of pickpockets or bag snatchers, and to guard their property. Similarly, it may be necessary for notices to be displayed which advise customers not to leave bags unattended because of concerns about terrorism. Consideration could be given to a condition requiring a notice to display the name of a contact for customers if they wish to report concerns.

Drinks promotions

Conditions tailored to the individual circumstances of particular premises, which address irresponsible drinks promotions may be imposed where they are necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives.

Signage

Annex 'C'

It may be necessary for a condition to be imposed requiring the normal hours under the terms of the premises licence or club premises certificate at which licensable activities are permitted to take place to be displayed on or immediately outside the premises so that it is clear if breaches of the terms of the licence or certificate are taking place.

Similarly, it may be necessary for a condition to be imposed requiring any restrictions on the admission of children to be displayed on or immediately outside the premises so that the consequences of breaches of these conditions would also be clear and to deter those who might seek admission in breach of those conditions.

Large capacity venues used exclusively or primarily for the “vertical” consumption of alcohol (HVVDs)

Large capacity “vertical drinking” premises, sometimes called High Volume Vertical Drinking establishments (HVVDs), are premises with exceptionally high capacities, used primarily or exclusively for the sale and consumption of alcohol, and have little or no seating for patrons.

Where necessary and appropriate, conditions may be attached to premises licences for the promotion of the prevention of crime and disorder at such premises (if not volunteered by the venue operator and following representations on such grounds) which require adherence to:

- a prescribed capacity;
- an appropriate ratio of tables and chairs to customers based on the capacity;
- and
- the presence of SIA registered security teams to control entry for the purpose of compliance with the capacity limit.

Conditions relating to Public Safety (including fire safety)

It should be noted that conditions relating to public safety should be those which are necessary, in the particular circumstances of any individual premises or club premises, and should not duplicate other requirements of the law. Equally, the attachment of conditions to a premises licence or club premises certificate will not in any way relieve employers of the statutory duty to comply with the requirements of other legislation including the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, associated regulations and especially the requirements under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 to undertake risk assessments. Employers should assess the risks, including risks from fire, and take measures necessary to avoid and control these risks. Conditions enforcing those requirements would therefore be unnecessary.

General

When applicants for premises licences or club premises certificates are preparing their operating schedules or club operating schedules, responsible authorities are considering such applications and licensing authorities are considering applications following the receipt of relevant representations from a responsible authority or interested party, the following options should be considered as measures that, if necessary, would promote public safety. Additional matters relating to cinemas and theatres are considered in Annex . It should also be recognised that special issues may arise in connection with outdoor and large scale events.

Whether or not any risk assessment shows any of the measures to be necessary in the individual circumstances of any premises will depend on a range of factors including the nature and style of the venue, the activities being conducted there, the location of the premises and the anticipated clientele of the business involved.

Necessary conditions for the licence or certificate will also depend on local knowledge of the premises.

In addition, to considering the points made in this Annex, those preparing operating schedules or club operating schedules, licensing authorities and responsible authorities should consider:

- Model National and Standard Conditions for Places of Public Entertainment and Associated Guidance ISBN 1 904031 11 0 (Entertainment Technology Press – ABTT Publications)
- The Event Safety Guide – A guide to health, safety and welfare at music and similar events (HSE 1999) (“The Purple Book”) ISBN 0 7176 2453 6
- Managing Crowds Safely (HSE 2000) ISBN 0 7176 1834 X

Annex D

- 5 Steps to Risk Assessment: Case Studies (HSE 1998) ISBN 07176 15804
- The Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (The Stationery Office, 1997) ("The Green Guide") ISBN 0 11 300095 2
- Safety Guidance for Street Arts, Carnival, Processions and Large Scale Performances published by the Independent Street Arts Network, copies of which may be obtained through:

www.streetartsnetwork.org/pages/publications

- The London District Surveyors Association's "Technical Standards for Places of Public Entertainment" ISBN 0 9531229 2 1
- The following British Standards should also be considered:
- BS 5588 Part 6 (regarding places of assembly)
 - BS 5588 Part 9 (regarding ventilation and air conditioning systems)
 - BS 5588 Part 9 (regarding means of escape for disabled people)
 - BS 5839 (fire detection, fire alarm systems and buildings)
 - BS 5266 (emergency lighting systems)

However, in consulting these texts, which were prepared prior to the coming into force of the Licensing Act 2003, those creating operating schedules or club operating schedules, licensing authorities and responsible authorities should again note that under no circumstances should any conditions be regarded as standard for all premises.

Any individual preparing an operating schedule or club operating schedule is at liberty to volunteer any measure, such as those described below, as a step he or she intends to take to promote the licensing objectives. When incorporated into the licence or certificate as a condition, they become enforceable under the law and a breach of such a condition could give rise to prosecution.

Disabled people

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- when disabled people are present, adequate arrangements exist to enable their safe evacuation in the event of an emergency; and
- disabled people on the premises are made aware of those arrangements.

Escape routes

Conditions may be imposed relating to the maintenance of all escape routes and exits including external exits. These might be expressed in terms of the need to ensure that such exits are kept unobstructed, in good order with non-slippery and even surfaces, free of trip hazards and clearly identified. In restaurants and other

Annex D

premises where chairs and tables are provided this might also include ensuring that internal gangways are kept unobstructed.

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- all exits doors are easily openable without the use of a key, card, code or similar means;
- doors at such exits are regularly checked to ensure that they function satisfactorily and a record of the check kept;
- any removable security fastenings are removed whenever the premises are open to the public or occupied by staff;
- all fire doors are maintained effectively self-closing and shall not be held open other than by approved devices (for example, electromagnetic releases operated by smoke detectors);
- fire resisting doors to ducts, service shafts, and cupboards shall be kept locked shut; and
- the edges of the treads of steps and stairways are maintained so as to be conspicuous.

Safety checks

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- safety checks are carried out before the admission of the public; and
- details of such checks are kept in a Log-book.

Curtains, hangings, decorations and upholstery

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- hangings, curtains and temporary decorations are maintained in a flame-retardant condition;
- any upholstered seating meets on a continuous basis the pass criteria for smouldering ignition source 0, flaming ignition source 1 and crib ignition source 5 when tested in accordance with section 5 of BS 5852:1990;
- curtains, hangings and temporary decorations are arranged so as not to obstruct exits, fire safety signs or fire-fighting equipment; and
- temporary decorations are not used without prior notification to the licensing authority / fire authority.

Annex D

Accommodation limits

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- arrangements are made to ensure that any capacity limit imposed under the premises licence or club premises certificate are not exceeded; and
- the licence holder, a club official, manager or designated premises supervisor should be aware of the number of people on the premises and required to inform any authorised person on request.

Fire action notices

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- notices detailing the actions to be taken in the event of fire or other emergencies, including how the fire brigade should be summoned, are prominently displayed and protected from damage and deterioration.

Outbreaks of fire

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- the fire brigade must be called at once to any outbreak of fire, however slight, and the details recorded in a Fire Log-book.

Loss of water

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- the local Fire Control Centre are notified as soon as possible if the water supply to any hydrant, hose reel, sprinkler, drencher or other fire extinguishing installation is cut off or restricted.

Access for emergency vehicles

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

Annex D

- access for emergency vehicles is kept clear and free from obstruction.

First aid

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- adequate and appropriate supply of first aid equipment and materials is available on the premises;
- if necessary, at least one suitably trained first-aider shall be on duty when the public are present; and if more than one suitably trained first-aider that their respective duties are clearly defined.

Lighting

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- in the absence of adequate daylight, the lighting in any area accessible to the public, members or guests shall be fully in operation when they are present;
- fire safety signs are adequately illuminated;
- emergency lighting is not altered;
- emergency lighting batteries are fully charged before the admission of the public, members or guests; and
- in the event of the failure of normal lighting, where the emergency lighting battery has a capacity of one hour, arrangements are in place to ensure that the public, members or guests leave the premises within 20 minutes unless within that time normal lighting has been restored and the battery is being re-charged; and, if the emergency lighting battery has a capacity of three hours, the appropriate period by the end of which the public should have left the premises is one hour.

Temporary electrical installations

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- temporary electrical wiring and distribution systems are not provided without [notification to the licensing authority at least ten days before commencement of the work] [prior inspection by a suitable qualified electrician];
- temporary electrical wiring and distribution systems shall comply with the recommendations of BS 7671 or where applicable BS 7909; and
- where they have not been installed by a competent person, temporary electrical

Annex D

wiring and distribution systems are inspected and certified by a competent person before they are put to use.

With regard to the first bullet above, it should be recognised that ten days notice may not be possible where performances are supported by outside technical teams. For example, where temporary electrical installations are made in theatres for television show performances. In such circumstances, the key requirement is that conditions where necessary should ensure that temporary electrical installations are only undertaken by competent qualified persons, for example, employed by the television company.

Indoor sports entertainments

In certain premises where existing legislation does not provide adequately for the safety of the public or club members and guests, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- if necessary, an appropriately qualified medical practitioner is present throughout a sports entertainment involving boxing, wrestling, judo, karate or other sports entertainment of a similar nature;
- where a ring is involved, it is constructed and supported by a competent person and inspected by a competent authority and any material used to form the skirt around the ring is flame-retardant;
- at any wrestling or other entertainments of a similar nature members of the public do not occupy any seat within 2.5 metres of the ring; and
- at water sports entertainments, staff adequately trained in rescue and life safety procedures are stationed and remain within the vicinity of the water at all material times (see also *Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools* issued jointly by the Health and Safety Commission and Sport England).

Alterations to the premises

Premises should not be altered in such a way as to make it impossible to comply with an existing licence condition without first seeking a variation of the premises licence proposing the deletion of the condition relating to public safety in question. The applicant will need to propose in a new operating schedule reflecting the proposed alteration to the premises how he or she intends to take alternative steps to promote the public safety objective. The application for variation will enable the responsible authorities with expertise in safety matters to consider whether the proposal is acceptable.

Special effects

The use of special effects in venues of all kinds being used for regulated entertainment is increasingly common and can present significant risks. Any

Annex D

special effects or mechanical installation should be arranged and stored so as to minimise any risk to the safety of the audience, the performers and staff.

Specials effects which should be considered include:

- dry ice machines and cryogenic fog;
- smoke machines and fog generators;
- pyrotechnics, including fireworks;
- real flame;
- firearms;
- motor vehicles;
- strobe lighting;
- lasers (see HSE Guide The Radiation Safety of lasers used for display purposes [HS(G)95] and BS EN 60825: Safety of laser products);
- explosives and highly flammable substances.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to require that certain special effects are only used with the prior notification of the licensing authority or [inspection by] the fire authority.

Theatres, cinemas, concert halls and similar places (promotion of public safety)

In addition to the points made above, there are particular matters in the context of public safety and fire safety which should be considered in connection with theatres and cinemas. The principle remains that conditions must be necessary and should be established through risk assessment and standardised conditions should be avoided. The points which follow are for consideration and do not represent a mandatory list.

Premises used for closely seated audiences

Attendants

(a) The number of attendants on each floor in a closely seated auditorium should be as set out on the table below:

| Number of members of the audience Present on a floor | Minimum number of attendants required to be present on that floor |
|--|---|
| 1 - 100 | One |
| 101 - 250 | Two |
| 251 - 500 | Three |
| 501 - 750 | Four |
| 751 -1000 | Five |

And one additional attendant for each additional 250 persons (or part thereof)

Annex D

(b) Attendants shall not be engaged in any duties that would hinder the prompt discharge of their duties in the event of an emergency or entail their absence from that floor or auditorium where they are on duty.

(c) Any attendant shall be readily identifiable to the audience (but this need not entail the wearing of a uniform).

(d) The premises shall not be used for a closely seated audience except in accordance with seating plan(s), a copy of which is available at the premises and shall be shown to any authorised person on request.

(e) No article shall be attached to the back of any seat which would reduce the clear width of seatways or cause a tripping hazard or obstruction.

(f) A copy of any certificate relating to the design, construction and loading of any temporary seating shall be kept available at the premises and shall be shown to any authorised person on request.

Standing and sitting in gangways etc

(a) Sitting on floors shall not be permitted except where authorised in the premises licence or club premises certificate.

(b) Waiting or standing shall not be permitted except in areas designated in the premises licence or club premises certificate.

(c) In no circumstances shall anyone be permitted to-

- (i) sit in any gangway;
- (ii) stand or sit in front of any exit; or
- (iii) stand or sit on any staircase including any landings.

Drinks

Except as authorised by the premises licence or club premises certificate, no drinks shall be sold to or be consumed by a closely seated audience except in plastic and paper containers

Balcony Fronts

Clothing or other objects shall not be placed over balcony rails or upon balcony fronts.

Special effects

Any special effects or mechanical installation should be arranged and stored so as to minimise any risk to the safety of the audience, the performers and staff.

Annex D

Specials effects include:

- dry ice machines and cryogenic fog;
- smoke machines and fog generators;
- pyrotechnics, including fireworks;
- real flame;
- firearms;
- motor vehicles;
- strobe lighting;
- lasers (see HSE Guide The Radiation Safety of lasers used for display purposes [HS(G)95] and BS EN 60825: Safety of laser products);
- explosives and highly flammable substances.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to require that certain special effects are only used with the prior notification of the licensing authority or [inspection by] fire authority.

Scenery

Any scenery should be maintained flame-retardant.

Safety curtain

Where a safety curtain is provided, it should be arranged so as to protect the audience from the effects of a fire or smoke on stage for sufficient time to enable the safe evacuation of the auditorium.

Where a stage with a proscenium arch is not equipped with a safety curtain, any curtains provided between the stage and the auditorium should be heavyweight and be made of non-combustible material or inherently or durably treated flame-retarded fabric.

Ceilings

All ceilings in those parts of the premises to which the audience are admitted should be inspected by a suitably qualified person who will decide when a further inspection would be necessary and a certificate concerning the condition of the ceilings forwarded to the licensing authority.

Seating

Where the potential audience exceeds 250 all seats in the auditorium should, except in boxes accommodating not more than 8 persons, be either securely fixed to the floor or battened together in lengths of not fewer than four or more than twelve.

Annex D

Premises used for film exhibitions**Attendants - premises without a staff alerting system**

Where the premises are not equipped with a staff alerting system the number of attendants present should be as set out in the table below:

| | |
|--|--|
| Number of members of the audience present on the premises | Minimum number of attendants required to be on duty |
| 1-250 | Two |
| And one additional attendant for each additional 250 members of the audience present (or part thereof) | |
| Where there are more than 150 members of an audience in any auditorium or on any floor | At least one attendant shall be present in any auditorium or any floor |

Attendants – premises with a staff alerting system

(a) Where premises are equipped with a staff alerting system the number of attendants present should be as set out in the table below:

| Number of members of the audience present on the premises | Minimum number of attendants required to be on duty | Minimum number of other staff on the premises who are available to assist in the event of an emergency |
|---|---|--|
| 1-500 | Two | One |
| 501-1000 | Three | Two |
| 1001-1500 | Four | Four |
| 1501 or more | Five plus one for every 500 (or part thereof) persons over 2000 on the premises | Five plus one for every 500 (or part thereof) persons over 2000 on the premises |

(b) Staff shall not be considered as being available to assist in the event of an emergency if they are:

- (i) the holder of the premises licence or the manager on duty at the premises; or
- (ii) a member of staff whose normal duties or responsibilities are likely to significantly affect or delay his response in an emergency situation; or

Annex D

- (iii) a member of staff whose usual location when on duty is more than 60 metres from the location to which he is required to go on being alerted to an emergency situation.
- (c) Attendants shall as far as reasonably practicable be evenly distributed throughout all parts of the premises to which the public have access and keep under observation all parts of the premises to which the audience have access.
- (d) The staff alerting system shall be maintained in working order.

Minimum lighting

The level of lighting in the auditorium should be as great as possible consistent with the effective presentation of the film; and the level of illumination maintained in the auditorium during the showing of films would normally be regarded as satisfactory if it complies with the standards specified in BS CP 1007 (Maintained Lighting for Cinemas).

Flammable films

No flammable films should be allowed on the premises without the prior consent of the licensing authority/fire authority.

The Safer Clubbing Checklist for club owners, managers and event promoters

The role of club owners, managers and event promoters is to ensure that all aspects of their venue are designed and run in ways which maximise the safety of customers, performers and staff.

Key activities of club owners, managers and event promoters include:

- Communicating all safety requirements clearly to performers ensuring that they are familiar with and understand the safety requirements for the venue.
- Developing a constructive working relationship with licensing authority officers and police officers with licensing responsibilities.
- Developing a venue drug policy in consultation with licensing and police officers.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities within the drug policy and that they receive training and support to discharge these fully.
- Employing door supervisors from a reputable company and with SIA accreditation.
- Employing experienced and fully trained first aiders.
- Providing free and easily accessible supplies of cold water and ensuring the provision of water is supervised to prevent contamination of water by others.
- Liaising with appropriate drug service personnel to provide training to staff, and information, advice and support to clubbers.
- Considering inviting and supporting drug outreach work, including integrating outreach workers into the staff team.
- Sharing intelligence on drug use and drug dealing with police officers and other local venues.
- Informing clubbers of their rights and responsibilities, and encouraging feedback on safety issues.
- Considering the provision of safe transport home.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the law and the responsibilities of the club to work within it.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting** Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services
2. **Date of Meeting** 30 July 2004
3. **Title** ALMO EXCELLENCE PLAN
4. **Originating Officer** Barbara Goodson
Transformation Team Officer
Ext. 2290

5. **Issue**
To report on the progress of the ALMO Excellence Plan.

6. **Summary**

The ALMO Excellence Plan drives forward and monitors the transformation of housing management and repairs services into an ALMO structure with the objective of delivery of excellent customer services through Neighbourhood Management.

The objectives have been divided into five key points:

- ALMO is established and in place by 31 March 2005.
- Tenants are at the heart of our decision process and play a principal role in shaping future service delivery.
- Delivering a continuously improving, high performing, customer focused service.
- The ALMO has a long term strategy for the delivery of neighbourhood management beyond the delivery of decent homes
- Ensuring our services demonstrate value for money to our customers, through the application of competition and procurement

7. **Clearance/Consultation**

- The Plan was discussed at PAMT on 27 May 2004 and approved
- It was passed at the ALMO Project Board meeting on 15 July 2004

8. **Timing**

The Audit Commission will carry out an indicative ALMO inspection in September 2004. Up-to-date plans will assist them in their assessment of how much progress has been made.

9. **Background**

The plan will help shape the ALMO structure, reorganise service, and deliver excellent customer service through Neighbourhood Management. It includes recommendations from the Repairs and Maintenance Inspection in February 2004, areas of weakness identified in the Best Value Review of Housing Management, and gaps which were identified by the 'Preparing for an Indicative ALMO inspection' focus group.

The improvement priorities in the plan have been identified within the Programme Area Performance Plan and the Housing Services Service Business Plan which also link with the Corporate Plan and Strategic Partnerships and Public Service Agreements.

The plan is used to monitor and record progress. It is regularly updated to reflect the milestones and measures achieved and ensures that there is a continual improvement in the delivery of customer service.

10. **Argument**

The ALMO Excellence Plan will support the objective of achieving a two/three star rating of services to enable the ALMO to access funding it needs to achieve Decency by 2010.

11. **Risks and Uncertainties**

Failure to keep to the milestones in the plan will hamper the implementation of ALMO in April 2005, and the ALMO Inspection in November 2005. Not achieving this will mean that we will not achieve the two star rating needed to receive the £233 million to Deliver Decent Homes by 2010. These risks are being managed through fortnightly updates from the Lead Task Managers, with regular one to one meetings to discuss progress and identify any risks at an early stage. The 'Housing Futures Improvement Group' meets regularly to enable Lead Task Managers to discuss any issues they are experiencing with their tasks and a further opportunity to identify any risks. Information from these meetings is reported to PAMT on a regular basis.

12. **Finance**

There is an administration cost to monitor and produce the Excellence Plan.

13. **Sustainability**

The Plan will be regularly updated against the rigorous monitoring process that is in place. It will continue to drive forward and achieve the step change improvements that are needed to become an excellent service to shape the ALMO structure for 2005.

14. **Wards Affected**

All

15. **References**

N/A

16. **Presentation**

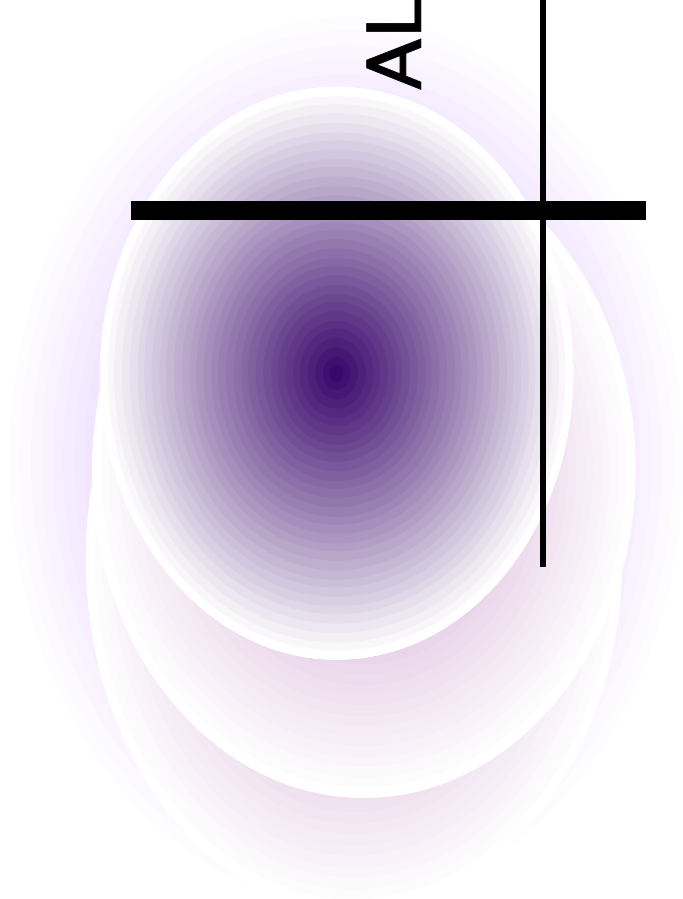
The ALMO Excellence Plan is attached.

17. **Recommendations**

CABINET MEMBER IS ASKED TO NOTE THE ALMO EXCELLENCE PLAN

INSERT COVER OF PLAN

ALMO Excellence Plan



ALMO EXCELLENCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The improvement plan is designed to achieve step change improvements that are **specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic** and timed to coincide with the government and corporate agenda. They are outcome based and while having a lead officer are service owned to achieve maximum delivery. All key stages will require signing off by Executive/ Lead Officer agreement and will be strictly performance monitored.

The plan will shape the ALMO structure in 2005 and reorganise our service to deliver an excellent customer service through Neighbourhood Management. It will do this by acting on the recommendations of the Repairs and Maintenance Inspection in February 2004 and develop areas of weakness identified in the Best Value Review of Housing Management. Other pieces of work such as 'Preparing for an Indicative ALMO inspection' has focused our work on gaps in the service. Our Customers will be at the heart of our decision making, so that the service meets their needs and expectations.

The improvements within this plan include other priorities and plans identified within the Programme Area Performance Plan and **Housing Services Service Business Plan*** which link with the Community, Strategy, Corporate Plan, Strategic Partnerships and Public Service Agreements.

Each key outcome is broken down into a range of tasks, with a task manager identified to deliver the changes.

The plan is used as a monitoring tool to record progress and is regularly updated and amended as service provision evolves and improves. Some action points have been amalgamated and others discarded or introduced over time to reflect these changes.

Key Objectives:

- **ALMO is established and in place by 31st March 2005**
- **Tenants are at the heart of our decision making process and play a principle role in shaping future service delivery**
- **Delivering a continuously improving, high performing, customer focused service**
- **The ALMO has a long term strategy for the delivery of neighbourhood management beyond the delivery of decent homes**
- **Ensuring our services demonstrate value for money to our customers, through the application of competition and procurement**

| Key Objective 1 ALMO is established and in place by 31 st March 2005 | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|-------------|---------------|---|----------------------|
| Key:-Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 1.1 | Green | Establish an Arms Length Management Organisation | April 05 | Alison Palmer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Project Board made up of 3 tenants, 3 Staff, 3 Elected members, 2 Union Reps. 1 from the Corporate centre and 1 from Government Office (Jul 03) Establish 3 Area ALMO Boards (Oct 04) Develop an advertising/marketing/ branding strategy for the ALMO (Oct 04) Monitoring and design arrangements are in place to establish Arms Length Management Organisation (April 05) ALMO Inspection to achieve 2 star rating (Nov 05) Draw down funding (Jan 06) | |

| Key Objective 1 ALMO is established and in place by 31 st March 2005 | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|-------------|--------------|--|----------------------|
| Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 1.2 | | Restructure Housing Services based on Neighbourhood management principles. | Oct 04 | Simon Bunker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate Pilot Project and implement good practice across Neighbourhood Offices (June 04) Re-draw Service Area boundaries and allocate staff resources per management area (July 04) Establish 7 Neighbourhood Management teams (July 04) Complete business process re-engineering exercise within R&M (Dec 04) Each Neighbourhood management area to deliver one council approach to service delivery (Mar 05) Achieve Top Quartile Customer Satisfaction rating (Mar 05) Systematic Review of Services provided on an area basis | |

| Key Objective 1 ALMO is established and in place by 31 st March 2005 | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|-------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 1.3 | | Review Neighbourhood Management arrangements to scope delivery | March 05 | Tom Cray Andrew Baichin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Programme Area Vision (Jun 04) Strategy is developed across neighbourhoods with other service providers (July 04) Carry out a BV Review of Neighbourhood Management BVR Neighbourhood Management to scope delivery (Sept 04) Review commences (Oct 04) Review completed (Dec 04) Improvement Plan (Mar 05) Housing and Neighbourhood Management Services to achieve appropriate accreditation (April 06) | |
| 1.4 | Green | Effective budget management is in place for ALMO | Aug 04 | Anne Ellis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with key dates in Business Planning cycle (Apr 04) Review budget management arrangement (Jul 04) Support Budget Holders to enable systems to be in place to demonstrate VFM and monitor (Aug 04) Identify training issues for Budget holders (Oct 04) Medium Term financial Strategy (March04) | |
| 1.5 | | Effective Budget Management is in place for the ALMO | | Dave Middleton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmes are in place to ensure capital money is spent effectively and efficiently (Aug 04) | |

| Key Objective 2 Tenants are at the heart of our decision making process and play a principle role in shaping future service delivery. | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|-------------|---------------|---|----------------------|
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| Outcome Measure : BV75 achieves top quartile by March 2005 | | | | | | |
| Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Green | Establish ALMO project board to oversee development | Jul 03 | Alison Palmer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board established made up of 3tenants, 3 Staff, 3 Elected members, 2 Union Reps. 1 from the Corporate centre and 1 from Government office (Jul 03) Pre- arranged meetings for next 12 months (Apr 04) Establish 3 Area ALMO Boards (Oct 04) | |

| Key Objective 2 Tenants are at the heart of our decision making process and play a principle role in shaping future service delivery. | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------|----------------|--|----------------------|
| Outcome Measure : BV75 achieves top quartile by March 2005 Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 2.2 | | Ensure that the tenants are at the heart of the ALMO investment planning process | March 05 | Alison Palmer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear scope of functions delivered by the Council (Aug 04) • Building tenants capacity to discuss policy issues before they go to strategic level (Sept 04) • Investment Planning / Consultation Strategy (March 05) | |
| 2.3 | Green | Improve communications and liaison with residents on a neighbourhood basis | Mar 05 | Andrew Balchin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and Review Consultation and Communication Strategy Action Plan (May 04) • Develop a Community Empowerment Action Plan (July 04) • Increase tenant newsletter to Bi-monthly (Aug 04) • Review and refine policy panels (Sept 04) • Implement a Tenant Consultation Panel (Aug 04) • Carry out Monthly Customer Satisfaction Survey (Dec 04) • BV75 Survey achieve top quartile (Mar 05) • Strengthen the relationships between TARA's and Area Assemblies (April 05) • Increase the number of active Tenants involved in the service and make representative of the Borough (Dec-05) | |
| 2.4 | | Develop effective mechanisms for | Aug 04 | Andrew Balchin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Compacts are in place (Aug 04) • Develop Neighbourhood Plans (Aug 04) | |

| Key Objective 2 Tenants are at the heart of our decision making process and play a principle role in shaping future service delivery. | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|---|-------------|----------------|---|----------------------|
| Outcome Measure : BV75 achieves top quartile by March 2005 Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| | | neighbourhood plans and the Councils Community planning processes and empower local residents to influence and shape service delivery | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Structure in place to manage through the Community Planning process (Aug 04) | |
| 2.5 | | Ensure programmes and services are designed to promote community cohesion and achieve equality of access | Sept 04 | Andrew Balchin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of Community consultation to design services (July 04) Services compliant with Equality and Diversity Strategy (Sept 04) | |
| 2.6 | | Identify key strategic and policy issues that need to be addressed by the strategic housing authority | Sept 04 | Brian Marsh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear scope of functions delivered by the Council (Sept 04) | |

| Key Objective 3 Delivering a continuously improving, high performing, customer focused service | |
|--|--|
| Outcome Measure: 3* ALMO by November 2005 Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | |

| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
|------------|---------------------------|--|-------------|--------------|---|----------------------|
| 3.1 | | Continue Business Process Re-engineering to streamline the delivery of customer focused services | Mar (05) | Simon Bunker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key processes and service procedures are tackled through BPR (Mar 05) BPR rolled out excluding technology (Mar 05) KPI's are developed to measure efficiency (Mar 05) | |
| 3.2 | Amber | Improve Income Collection, dealing with arrears recovery and debt counselling | Mar 06 | Simon Bell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Former Tenant Arrears Debt Collection Agency (Jun 04) Increase take up Direct Debit and Standing Orders for rent payments (increase take up to 16.5% of all rent payments) (Dec 04) Roll out ARBA (automated rent recovery module) (Dec 04) Reduce the level of FTA to 0.98% (Mar 05) BV66a / HES66b Top Quartile (Mar 05) 15% pay by DD/SO Set top quartile targets 05 Best in Class (Mar 06) | |
| 3.3 | | Working with safer Rotherham partnership to reduce and tackle Anti Social Behaviour in Rotherham | Mar 06 | Helen Nixon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and Develop the Policy and action plan for tackling ASB (Sept 04) Action plan to develop working partnerships with RSL's (Sept 04) Implement actions from the ASB Strategy (Mar 05) | |

| Delivering a continuously improving, high performing, customer focused service | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| Key Objective 3 | | | | | | |
| Outcome Measure: 3* ALMO by November 2005 | | | | | | |
| Key:-Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G_r) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 3.4 | | Carry out a review of Estate Management including Estate Maintenance | Sept 04 | Barry Deakin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop response to targets and service standard with Street Pride and Environmental Health with baseline date (Apr 04) Benchmark using House Mark, DEFRA and ENCAMS (Apr 04) Establish Stakeholder group to review procedures (Apr 04) Produce Estate Management Procedure Guide (June 04) Establish a baseline and set challenging targets (Aug 04) Business Process Re-engineering of the service in partnership with RBT (Sept 04) Estate Management Unit to conduct Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments (Oct 04) | |
| 3.5 | | Deliver a '3 star – excellent' repairs and maintenance service to support sustainability and regeneration of neighbourhoods | Dec 06 | Gary Whitaker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement all recommendations from the Repairs and Maintenance re-inspection (Mar 05) | This Action is the Repairs & Maintenance Service Improvement Plan |

| Delivering a continuously improving, high performing, customer focused service | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------|---------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Key Objective 3 | | | | | | |
| Outcome Measure: 3* ALMO by November 2005 | | | | | | |
| Key:-Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G_r) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 3.6 | Green | Develop and implement a multi-agency single assessment process to promote independent living | Dec 04 | Andrew Leigh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 'Local Lettings Policies' (Dec 03) Introduce furnished homes scheme (Apr 04) Implement 'Choice Based Lettings' scheme (Oct 04) HES5 – Target 98% (Mar 05) | |
| 3.7 | | Produce a long term strategy to address the repair and maintenance needs of Rotherham's housing stock | Jun-04 | Paul Edwards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Annual Maintenance Plan to ensure it underpins the Decent Homes Program and supports the Sustainability Model (Mar 05) Suite of documents drawing together all policies and procedures relating to repairs and maintenance (Jun 04) | |
| 3.8 | | Increase income through Neighbourhood Management providing a repairs service to owner occupiers | | Paul Ruston | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify area's of capacity within the DSO which will enable us to generate additional income | |

| Key Objective 4 | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| The ALMO has a long term strategy for the delivery of neighbourhood management beyond the delivery of decent homes | | | | | | |
| Outcome Measure: Succession strategy is in place that delivers services by the ALMO beyond the 2010 decent homes target. | | | | | | |
| Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 4.1 | | Implement a succession strategy for Neighbourhood Management delivery beyond achieving Decent Homes Targets to support Neighbourhood Renewal | Mar 05 | Alison Palmer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery Plan (Dec 04) • Contract (Mar 05) | |
| 4.2 | | Negotiate SLA's and contracts with local authority and other service providers | Mar 05 | Alison Palmer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed through ALMO project group (Dec 04) • SLA'S / contracts in place (Mar 05) | |
| 4.3 | Green | Produce a 'Fit for Purpose' Housing Strategy | July 04 | Brian Marsh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop five ADF's (November 2003) • HMRF Pathfinder Strategy (December 2003) • Draft Housing Strategy (April 2004) • Strategy in place (July 2004) | |

| Key Objective 4 The ALMO has a long term strategy for the delivery of neighbourhood management beyond the delivery of decent homes | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|-------------|-----------------|---|----------------------|
| Outcome Measure: Succession strategy is in place that delivers services by the ALMO beyond the 2010 decent homes target. Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 4.4 | Green | Conduct continuous Stock Condition Survey , implement plan to tackle non-decent homes supported by Maintenance Plan Sustainability Model | May 04 | Dave Middleton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct rolling Stock Condition Survey and update (Apr 04) Conduct Survey (Dec 04) Deliver BV184 Target (Mar 05) Implement plan for non-decent homes (May 05) Programmes are in place to ensure capital money is spent effectively and efficiently (Aug 04) (Linked with 1.4) | |
| 4.5 | | To deliver Best Value Principles | Mar 05 | Janet Greenwood | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete business process re-engineering exercise within R & M (Dec 04) Lead transformation activity to obtain greater efficiency and effectiveness (Mar 05) Programme of review (July 05) | |

| Key Objective 5 <i>Ensuring our services demonstrate value for money to our customers, through the application of competition and procurement.</i> | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------|--------------|---|----------------------|
| Key:- Red - Not on Target, Amber - On Target, Green - Complete | | | | | | |
| Task Ref. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Task | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone | Links to Other Plans |
| 5.1 | | Apply competition / value for money protocols across the Housing Service | Mar 05 | Simon Bunker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish our benchmarking criteria across the service (Jun 04) Value for money exercises carried out by (Aug 04) Improve budget information and invoice processing to demonstrate Value for Money (Aug 04) VFM demonstrated across Housing Management sub programme area (Mar 05) Investment Plan process-ALMO (Mar 05) Apply principals to Housing Management (Dec 05) | |

| Key Objective 5 <i>Ensuring our services demonstrate value for money to our customers, through the application of competition and procurement.</i> | | | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---|
| 5.2 | | Review and revise the bonus scheme | October 2004 | Gary Whitaker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a model (Jun 04) • Consolation with staff and unions (Aug 04) • Implement revised scheme (Oct 04) • Increase multi-skilling so that 40% of workforce are multi-skilled (Dec 04) • Palm held technology (Dec 04) • Increase repairs completed first visit from 75% to 85% (Mar 05) – (HES 8) • 60% of workforce are multi-skilled (Dec 05) |

INSERT BACK COVER OF PLAN

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting** Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services
2. **Date of Meeting** 30 July 2004
3. **Title** REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN
4. **Originating Officer** Gary Whitaker
Specials Projects Manager
Ext. 2205
5. **Issue**
To report the latest version of the Repairs & Maintenance Service Improvement Plan.
6. **Summary**
The Repairs & Maintenance Service Improvement Plan supports the delivery of the strategic objective “Delivering a 3 Star – excellent’ repairs and maintenance service to support sustainability and regeneration of neighbourhoods, delivering an excellent customer focused service”.

The Plan has four key objectives which are broken down into a range of tasks, with task managers identified to deliver the changes as follows:
 - Delivering an accessible repairs and maintenance service for all our customers
 - Providing customers with a faster, high quality and customer focused repairs and maintenance service
 - Delivering Value for Money services through robust financial control and performance management
 - Customers are well informed and are at the heart of the decision making process
7. **Clearance/Consultation**
 - The Plan has been considered by the ALMO Project Board
 - It will be reported to the Audit Commission by 31 July 2004
 - It will be reported to Cabinet Members quarterly
 - All Lead Task Managers submit fortnightly updates on their tasks
8. **Timing**
The Plan will address the actions needed to achieve a three star excellent Repairs and Maintenance service by March 2005.
9. **Background**
The improvements within this plan include other priorities and plans identified to achieve step change along with the Programme Area Performance Plan, Housing Services Service Business Plan and the ALMO Excellence Plan which link with the Community, Strategy, Corporate Plan, Strategic Partnerships and Public Service Agreements. The actions identified within the plan have been developed through a number of reviews and recommendations.

The plan covers:

- Actions which are still being addressed from the Repairs and Maintenance Service Improvement Plan prior to the Audit Commission re-inspection.
- Initiatives which have been developed through learning from other organisations and best practice.
- Actions which have been identified through the 'Learning from Customers' forum as a result of customer feedback.
- Recommendations from the Audit Commission included in the Repairs and Maintenance re-inspection report, dated May 2004.

The Plan is used to monitor and record progress; it is regularly updated to reflect the milestones and measures we have achieved and ensure that there is a continual improvement in the customer service we deliver.

10. Argument

The Plan follows a robust programme of work that will achieve the Programme Area's Aims of moving from a 'One Star' service with 'Promising Prospects', following the Repairs and Maintenance Inspection in February 2004, to a 'Three Star Excellent' Service by March 2005.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure of Task Managers to keep to their timelines with the measures and milestones will mean that we will not achieve a 'three star – excellent' Repairs and Maintenance Service. The impact of not achieving this will mean that we will not get the star rating needed to Deliver Decent Homes by 2010.

The risks are being managed through fortnightly updates from the Lead Task Managers, regular one to ones to discuss progress and identify any risks at an early date. The 'Housing Futures Improvement Group' will also be held on a regular basis for Lead Task Manager to discuss any issues they are experiencing with their tasks and a further opportunity to highlight any risks that may have come to the fore.

12. Finance

There is an administration cost to monitor and produce the Repairs and Maintenance Service Improvement Plan.

13. Sustainability

The Improvement Plan will be regularly updated, reflecting the rigorous monitoring process that is in place.

14. Wards Affected

All

15. References

N/A

16. Presentation

The Repairs and Maintenance Service Improvement Plan is attached.

17. Recommendations

THAT THE CABINET MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO NOTE THE REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Repairs & Maintenance Service Improvement Plan

*Delivering a '3 star – excellent' repairs and maintenance service
to support sustainability and regeneration of neighbourhoods.*

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The improvement plan is designed to achieve step change improvements that are **specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic** and timed to coincide with the government and corporate agenda. They are outcome based and while having a lead officer are service owned to achieve maximum delivery. All key stages will require signing off by Executive/ Lead Officer agreement and will be strictly performance monitored.

The plan will ensure that we deliver the strategic objective 'Delivering a '3 star – excellent' repairs and maintenance service to support sustainability and regeneration of neighbourhoods'. The actions identified within this plan have been developed through a number of reviews and recommendations. The plan covers:

- Actions which are still being addressed from the Repairs and Maintenance Service Improvement Plan prior to the Audit Commission re-inspection.
- Initiatives which have been developed through learning from other organisations and best practice
- Actions which have been identified through the 'Learning from Customers' forum as a result of customer feedback.
- Recommendations from the Audit Commission included in the Repairs and Maintenance re-inspection report, dated May 2004.

The improvements within this plan include other priorities and plans identified within the Programme Area Performance Plan, Housing Services Service Business Plan and ALMO Excellence Plan which link with the Community, Strategy, Corporate Plan, Strategic Partnerships and Public Service Agreements.

The Repairs and Maintenance Service Improvement Plan has four key objectives which are broken down into a range of tasks, with a task manager identified to deliver the changes.

The plan is used as a monitoring tool to record progress and is regularly updated and amended as service provision evolves and improves. Some action points have been amalgamated and others discarded or introduced over time to reflect these changes.

Our 4 Key Objectives are:

- **Delivering an accessible repairs and maintenance service for all our customers**
- **Providing customers a faster, high quality and customer focused repairs and maintenance service**
- **Delivering value for money services through robust financial control and performance management**
- **Customers are well informed and are at the heart of the decision making process**

| Key Objective 1 Delivering an equitable and accessible repairs and maintenance service for all our customers | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| <i>Measure: Satisfaction with ease of access increases from 95% (Mar 04) to 97% (Mar 05) and to 99% (Mar 06)</i> | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone |
| 1.1 | On Target | Provide translation services for all customer repair requests | September 2004 | Dave Abbott | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language line available at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All neighbourhood offices (Aug 04) ▪ Rotherham Connect (Sept 04) ▪ On-site with operatives (Sept 04) |
| 1.2 | On Target | Improve accessibility through developing customer lead office opening times and office accommodation | Oct 2004 | Dave Abbott | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a Accommodation and Accessibility Strategy (Aug 04) ▪ Office opening hours and office accommodation consulted with customers (Aug 04) ▪ Findings analysed and reported to Cabinet (Sept 04) ▪ Implement local opening times and plan for office accommodation re-development (Oct 04) |
| 1.3 | To commence Aug 04 | Identify options for providing a repairs free-phone number | October 2004 | Dave Abbott | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate potential of free-phone number (Aug 04) ▪ Benchmark report on other organisations (Sept 04) ▪ Report findings to Cabinet (Oct 04) ▪ Decision for installation of free-phone facility made (Oct 04) |
| 1.4 | On Target | Ensure that the Repairs and Maintenance Service is E-government compliant | March 2006 | Jean Drakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an E:government strategy and action plan (Sept 04) ▪ Action plan monitored and reported monthly to Programme Area Management Team (Sept 04) ▪ All customer transactions are compliant with e:government (Mar 06) ▪ BV157 is compliant (Mar 06) |

| Key Objective 1 Delivering an equitable and accessible repairs and maintenance service for all our customers | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|--------------|---------------|---|
| Measure: Satisfaction with ease of access increases from 95% (Mar 04) to 97% (Mar 05) and to 99% (Mar 06) | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone |
| 1.5 | On Target | Revise Internet repair reporting facility and increase its usage | October 2004 | Jean Drakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise Internet Reporting facility on-line (Oct 2004) ▪ Increase Internet reporting take up 0% (Mar 04) to 2% (Mar 05) to 5% (Mar 06) |
| 1.6 | To commence Aug 04 | Re-design call centre IT systems to improve the way we deal with vulnerable customers (AC Recommendation) | Dec 2004 | Paul Briddock | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase satisfaction with how the person taking the call listened to you and dealt with your repair from 93% (Mar 04) to 95% (Mar 05) to 97% (Mar 06) ▪ Review current call centre IT system (Aug 04) ▪ Re-designed system in place (Oct 04) ▪ Train all call centre staff on revised system (Nov 04) ▪ All call centre IT systems have access to vulnerability data at point of accessing the property database (Dec 04) |
| 1.7 | On Target | Introduce out of office hours and weekend appointments to provide a repairs service which is based on customer needs (AC Recommendation) | March 2005 | Paul Edwards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve BV185 (Repairs by Appointment made and kept from 66.21% (Mar 04) to 77% (Mar 05) • Increase customer satisfaction for Appointment system from 96% (Mar 04) to 98% (Mar 05) to 100% (Mar 06) • Current system reviewed with improvement plan based on customer consultation (Sept 04) • Evening and Weekend Appointment system in place (Dec 04) • All Servicing and Programmed work is on appointment system (Mar 05) |

| Key Objective 1 Delivering an equitable and accessible repairs and maintenance service for all our customers | | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|--------------|-----------------|--|
| Measure: Satisfaction with ease of access increases from 95% (Mar 04) to 97% (Mar 05) and to 99% (Mar 06) | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone |
| 1.8 | On Target | Implement a customer focused, responsive 24/7 Emergency Repairs call out facility | October 2004 | Chris Laister | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve HES72 (% of urgent repairs completed in time) from 93% (Mar 04) to 97% (Mar 05) and to 98% (Mar 06) ▪ Increase customer satisfaction for Emergency service from 90% (Mar 04) to 94% (Mar 05) and to 96% (Mar 06) ▪ Review current service and develop action plan (Sept 04) ▪ Implement a designated 'telephone number' for reporting out of hours emergency repairs (Oct 04) ▪ Service Standards in place for Emergency service (Oct 04) |
| 1.9 | On Target | Equalities and Diversity is embedded into the Repairs and Maintenance Service (AC Recommendation) | March 2005 | Mahmood Hussain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff, members and tenant representatives are trained on Equality and Diversity issues (Dec 04) ▪ Equality and Diversity Strategy implemented (Sept 04) ▪ Corporate equalities policy in place (Oct 04) ▪ Corporate Equalities Action Plan delivered against to achieve Level 2 (Mar 05) ▪ Monitoring arrangements for CRE Code of Practice is strengthened with data collected acted upon (July 04) ▪ Review all policies and procedures in line with equality and diversity issues (Mar 05) ▪ BV164 (compliance with code of practise) Achieved (Mar 05) |

| Providing a faster, high quality and customer focused repairs and maintenance service <i>Measure: Improve Customer Satisfaction with responsive repairs from 92% (Mar 04) to 94% (Mar 05) and to 96% (Mar 06)</i> | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| Action No. | Task Status | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone |
| 2.1 | Complete | Introduce a salary based pay structure for multi-skilled operatives based on performance, service delivery and increasing 'right first time approach' (AC Recommendation) | July 04 | Gary Whitaker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve HES 8 (repairs completed in first visit) from 75.83% (Mar 04) to 85% (Mar 05) and to 88% (Mar 06) ▪ Increase Customer Satisfaction with standard of repair from 92% (Mar 04) to 95% (Mar 05) and to 98% (Mar 06) ▪ New salary scheme implemented (May 04) ▪ Increase no. of multi-skilled employees from 30% (Apr 04) to 85% (July 04) |
| 2.2 | On Target | Reduce the 10 week process to gain access to carry out gas servicing to 3 weeks (AC Recommendation) | August 2004 | Paul Ruston | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve HES7 (properties gas serviced) from 98.11% (Mar 04) to 100% (Mar 05) ▪ Review and revise policy and procedure for gaining access (Aug 04) |
| 2.3 | On Target | Implement Business Process Re-engineering to improve repair response times | December 2004 | Janet Greenwood | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce HES73 (average time to complete a non-urgent repair) from 14.85 days (Mar 04) to 13 days (Mar 05) to 12 days (Mar 06) ▪ Transformation processes reviewed and evaluated (Aug 04) ▪ BPR roll out programme developed (Sept 04) ▪ Implement 'on-site' handheld technology (Dec 04) |
| 2.4 | On Target | Restructure repairs and maintenance service into 7 teams and a central property services division to deliver a high quality repairs service | December 2004 | Simon Bunker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare and sign off job descriptions (May 04) ▪ Structures approved by staff and trade unions (June 04) ▪ Recruitment process complete (Sept 04) ▪ Teams allocated to new neighbourhood areas (Dec 04) ▪ Roll out lessons learned through Going Local Neighbourhood Management across all other areas (Dec 04) |

| Providing a faster, high quality and customer focused repairs and maintenance service <i>Measure: Improve Customer Satisfaction with responsive repairs from 92% (Mar 04) to 94% (Mar 05) and to 96% (Mar 06)</i> | | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|----------------|-------------------|--|
| Key Objective 2 | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone |
| 2.5 | On Target | Reduce the number of repairs which require variation through accurate repairs diagnosis to contribute to 'right first time' approach | December 2004 | Gary Ingham | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve HES 8 (repairs completed in first visit) from 75.83% (Mar 04) to 85% (Mar 05) and to 88% (Mar 06) • Review effectiveness of repairs diagnostic tool in Rotherham Connect (Aug 04) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish current level of variation (Aug 04) ▪ Set targets to decrease level of variation by 5% each quarter (Sept 04) |
| 2.6 | On Target | Introduce an equitable system of decoration allowance for customers moving into an empty property (AC Recommendation) | September 2004 | Andrew Leigh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review current Decoration Allowance procedure (Aug 2004) ▪ Benchmark other LA's (Aug 2004) ▪ Develop new Decoration Allowance policy and procedure, with service standard (Sept 04) |
| 2.7 | On Target | Revise the offer procedure to reduce the level of refusals for empty properties and improve void relet times (AC Recommendation) | December 2004 | Andrew Leigh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce level of refusals from xx% (Mar 04) to xx% (Mar 05) ▪ Improve HES 68 (average void relet time) from 22.84 days (Mar 04) to 20 days (Mar 05) and to 15 days (Mar 06) ▪ Review current offer procedure (Aug 04) ▪ Implement revised offer procedure (Sept 04) ▪ Introduce Choice Based Lettings (Dec 04) |
| 2.8 | On Target | Attain appropriate quality accreditation (ISO9001) for repairs and maintenance service | September 2005 | Mark Johnson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Processes identified and project plan in place (Sept 04) ▪ Application submitted (Dec 04) ▪ ISO9001 achieved (Sept 05) |
| 2.9 | On Target | Attain Charter Mark accreditation for the repairs and maintenance service | March 2006 | Marie Ingham | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application submitted (Dec 05) ▪ Charter Mark accreditation achieved (Mar 06) |
| 2.10 | On Target | Deliver a consistent PDR process to ensure that | September 2004 | Odette Stringwell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise the Corporate PDR process (Apr 04) ▪ Implement the Corporate PDR process (May 04) |

| Key Objective 2 Providing a faster, high quality and customer focused repairs and maintenance service <i>Measure: Improve Customer Satisfaction with responsive repairs from 92% (Mar 04) to 94% (Mar 05) and to 96% (Mar 06)</i> | | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|-------------|-------------------|--|
| Action No. | Task Status | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/ Milestone |
| 2.11 | On Target | <p>individuals contribute towards service targets and objectives (AC Recommendation)</p> <p>Reduce sickness levels through monitoring and robust reporting systems and mechanisms to ensure that the optimum service is delivered to the customer (AC Recommendation)</p> | March 2005 | Odette Stringwell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry our PDR's of all HES workforce (Sept 04) ▪ Clear performance targets for service delivery at individual level introduced (Sept 04) ▪ Reduce sickness level for HES from 5%(Mar 04) to 2%(Mar 05) ▪ Implement quarterly sickness reporting to Cabinet (July 04) ▪ Implement weekly performance monitoring system to identify and tackle individual cases (July 04) ▪ Monthly sickness report presented to PAMT (July 04) |

| Key Objective 3 | | The Repairs and Maintenance Service demonstrates value for money to its customers | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--|----------------|---------------|---|--|
| Action No. | Task Status | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/Milestone | |
| 3.1 | On Target | Review the options for future procurement of the repairs and maintenance service (<i>AC Recommendation</i>) | March 05 | Gary Whitaker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry out thorough review of options (Aug 04) ▪ Develop a clear and transparent process for market testing (Sept 04) ▪ Delivery plan approved by Cabinet and in place (Sept 04) ▪ Delivery plan reported to Cabinet, demonstrating VFM in all areas on a monthly basis ▪ Completion of competition process (Mar 05) | |
| 3.2 | On Target | Robust budget monitoring and management systems are in place to ensure that money is spent appropriately and systems are in place to forecast overspends. (<i>AC Recommendation</i>) | September 2004 | Anne Ellis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HES 12 (performance on capital spend) 100% (Mar 04), 100% (Mar 05) • Robust budget commitment process implemented and at local level (Sept 04) ▪ Financial commitment accounting in place (July 04) ▪ Robust mechanisms in place for recharges to HRA (July 04) ▪ Commissioning costs for all aspects of the R & M Service is available (July 04) ▪ Evaluation of the HRA carried out to identify VFM and efficiency gains (Aug 04) ▪ Cost centre based information developed (Sept 04) | |
| 3.3 | On Target | Increase the level of programmed repairs to reduce overall costs and deliver value for money | March 2006 | Robin Walker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HES 9 (% of programmed/responsive repairs) – 55/45 (Mar 05), 60/40 (Mar 06) | |
| 3.4 | On Target | Reduce the level of emergency repairs to reduce overall costs and better utilise resources | March 2005 | Robin Walker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce emergency from 27% to 17% (Mar 05), from 17% to 10% (Mar 06) | |

| Customers are at the heart of the decision making process and play a principle role in shaping future service delivery | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| Measure: BV75 Tenants Satisfied with Involvement Opportunities – Top Quartile (Mar 2005) | | | | | | |
| Action No. | Task Status (R, A, G,) | Action | Target date | Task Manager | Measure/Milestone | |
| 4.1 | On Target | Increase the representation of tenants on forums and panels with support mechanisms (AC Recommendation) | December 2004 | Sneh Soni | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a quarterly tenants forum (Sept 04) ▪ Increase 'active' tenants to 100 (Dec 04) ▪ Support mechanism developed to allow tenants to participate (Dec 04) | |
| 4.2 | On Target | Develop wider tenant participation to support repairs and maintenance objectives (AC Recommendation) | April 2005 | Sneh Soni | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active tenants are representative of the borough (Dec 04) ▪ Revise and implement Repairs and Maintenance Policy Panel with wider representation (Sept 04) ▪ Deliver against actions detailed in the Community Empowerment Strategy Action Plan (April 05) | |
| 4.4 | On Target | Develop a clear strategy to increase customer involvement from BME communities and other hard to reach groups (AC Recommendation) | Dec 2004 | Mahmood Hussain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategy developed (Oct 04) ▪ Establish forums for Hard to Reach Groups (Dec 04) | |
| 4.4 | On Target | Increase the level of customers consulted on the repairs and maintenance service and ensure that feedback is used to develop service improvement | July 2004 | Dave Roddis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that 10% of all repairs customers are consulted (April 04) • Monthly 'Learning from Customer forum' in place (April 04) ▪ Customer Satisfaction cards left on all repairs (June 04) ▪ Quarterly 'Service Improvement' week introduced for customer feedback through Open House (July 04) ▪ Service Improvements resulting from customer feedback is reported quarterly in Open House (July 04) | |

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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

2. **Date of Meeting** 30 July 2004

3. **Title** Staff Recognition Framework

4. **Originating Officer** John Mansergh
Performance & Development Officer
Performance & Quality Unit
Tel Ext 2220

5. **Issue**

To develop a Staff Recognition Framework that motivates and recognises staff for their contribution to H&ES strategic objectives.

6. **Summary**

The proposed framework is a formal recognition process, but recognises there needs to be an element of flexibility within the system that recognises individuals or teams at key points in time. Although not an exhaustive list, these will usually be informal methods such as an email from Head of Service recognising the turn around in a team's performance on relet times, or a letter from the Executive Director thanking staff for 100% attendance or efforts during inspections.

This framework also promotes innovation and the spread of best practice, allowing teams to develop their own recognition practices. There have already been examples of this in the Going Local Pilot area, where management used a team building away day to boost performance, and in the Waste Management DSO where there are Crew of the Year awards for best performance. The key to the framework is to align recognition to performance.

The recognition framework contains 4 key formal recognition practices. These are:

Away Days – are focused development sessions for managers. The away days ensure clarity over the delivery of key messages and are focused on the business needs of managers and the Programme Area. Recognising performance, quality and customer involvement is cascaded from the management team to the whole of the workforce.

VIP Awards – are held on an annual basis recognising the achievements for young people, employees who have achieved vocational qualifications and celebrates the achievements of our operatives who have completed their apprenticeships with the Council.

HEART awards – As part of our drive to becoming a better employer, the HEART values have evolved and our programme area will continue to feed into this corporate process. There are Council awards for employee of the month and team of the month. We have already been successful in winning the May and June's employee of the month awards

this year. The Learning and Development Group will ensure the monthly supply of nominations.

Lunchtime Motivational Sessions – target a group of employees as recognition for their achievements and successes. Inspirational speakers lead the sessions and are designed to develop people's skills and focus on their career development. One example is developing the aspirations for promotion amongst women, so there is a more diverse and representative workforce at managerial and senior levels within the Council.

Annual Conference - The conference will be an opportunity to involve the workforce in reviewing performance and rewarding staff who have made a significant contribution to the aims and objectives of the Programme Area. The awards have been proposed by the working group following consultation with other managers. They focus around the key themes of the Programme Area Performance Plan, looking at:

- apprentices;
- attendance;
- award chosen by our customers;
- best employee;
- best team;
- engaging partners;
- innovation;
- long service;
- young person.

The conference will take place in April 2004.

7. **Clearance/Consultation**

A working group will gauge staff opinion and develop the recognition practices. The Learning and Development Group will monitor satisfaction and participation, measure equality of access and manage the process so the framework remains fit for purpose. The Communications working group will ensure the process is both an inclusive and a two-way process, by utilising the best available communication tools.

8. **Timing**

Some recognition practices have taken place for several months, but the approach has been uncoordinated. The Programme Area acknowledges that all of this positive practice needs to be integrated into a framework which is visual, effective, transparent and represents value for money.

9. **Background**

The Council is building on its success in achieving Investors In People in 2003, pursuing "Raising the Standard Action Plans", re-launching a revised Performance and Development Review process, and building on the Annual VIP Awards by introducing monthly team and individual HEART awards. The framework seeks to co-ordinate this so that we can measure it for cost effectiveness. This has corporate support and by recognising the contribution of front-line workers, will help the Council retain IIP accreditation.

10. **Argument**

Recognition programmes are a part of a healthy organisational culture that values staff for the work they accomplish and the ways they effectively work together to meet strategic objectives. All staff are encouraged to recognise excellent performance of colleagues as individuals and as participants in team efforts.

The recognition practices are transparent and fair, and accessible to all staff. A programme has been devised providing award criteria and a process for defining eligibility. The framework will also be used as a celebration and is designed as a morale boosting tool, recognising success but empowering further broad based action. The framework has potential business-related benefits, with clear links to other strategic plans (Performance Management, Change Management, Learning and Development) as well as assisting corporate issues such as the HEART commitments and retaining IIP accreditation. It may also help improve morale, addressing an issue within the 2003 Employee Opinion Survey.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

All the recognition practices within the framework possess potential risks and uncertainties that may have a damaging impact on cost, service and reputation. Risks are associated with transparency and equality of opportunity. These risks are managed through effective communication of clear recognition criteria, and a process for defining eligibility.

12. Finance

There is no budget allocated within the accounts for recognition events. They would be financed through the Training Budget and performance managed by the Learning and Development Manager within the new structure. Interim arrangements will be managed by the Performance and Development Officer, aligning recognition with performance.

13. Sustainability

Recognising the contribution of staff should help to improve the performance levels of the business. The ability to recruit, develop and retain staff are key commitments within the strategic policy framework, and H&ES are developing a sound reputation for a continuous outcome focused culture.

14. Wards Affected

All

15. References

Learning and Development Plan
Performance Management Framework
Change Management Plan
The Year Ahead Statement 2004-05
Raising the Standard Action Plan
Employee Opinion Survey 2003

16. Presentation

N/A

17. Recommendations

THAT CABINET MEMBER IS ASKED TO AGREE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STAFF RECOGNITION FRAMEWORK.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. **Meeting** CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
2. **Date of Meeting** 30 July 2004
3. **Title** UPDATE REPORT - PETITION FROM THE RESIDENTS OF HENLEY
4. **Originating Officer** Paul Walsh
Neighbourhood Housing Manager
Town Centre & East Herringthorpe Neighbourhood Offices.
Tel Ext 3471
5. **Issue**
To provide an update report on the present position with regard to the petition submitted by the residents of Henley, concerning anti-social behaviour.
6. **Summary**
A report was presented to the meeting of 22 December 2003 (Minute No 177 refers), regarding a petition received from the residents of Henley, concerning nuisance and anti-social behaviour from local youths. The report highlighted the action being taken in response to the petition, and the further action which would be undertaken. Cabinet Member requested a further report be presented on progress on this matter.
7. **Clearance/Consultation**
All residents who signed the petition were contacted by the Anti-social Behaviour Team and Housing Services officers, who discussed the nature of the complaints, gathered further evidence and distributed monitoring sheets.
8. **Timing**
None
9. **Background**
Investigations were conducted by the Anti-social Behaviour Team and Housing Services officers, in response to complaints from residents. As a result of those investigations, Housing Services and South Yorkshire Police served three Acceptable Behaviour Contracts on the youths identified. Following this action, the situation abated. However, the situation has been monitored since, with further work being undertaken by South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Housing Association, to address tenancy issues. The area is now a regular agenda item on the monthly multi-agency Safer Estates meetings. South Yorkshire Police have indicated that they have been in contact with local residents, as part of an ongoing operation and the situation has improved significantly. In addition, local ward member surgeries have now been established jointly with Housing Services and South Yorkshire Police, as a further means of monitoring.

10. **Argument**

None

11. **Risks and Uncertainties**

Whilst there is no guarantee that the problems encountered will not re-emerge, the situation has improved since the ABC's were served. However, should any problems re-occur, they will be dealt with in accordance with recognised anti-social behaviour procedures, in partnership with South Yorkshire Police.

12. **Finance**

None

13. **Sustainability**

The successful elimination of anti-social behaviour will assist in the sustainability of the local neighbourhood, improve community confidence and reduce levels of reported crime. The work being undertaken to address this problem contributes towards Priority 9 (reduce anti-social behaviour) and 10 (increase public reassurance and reduce the fear of crime) of the Borough's strategy to reduce crime and disorder.

14. **Wards Affected**

Rotherham West Ward

15. **References**

A copy of the Acceptable Behaviour Contract is held on the case file.

16. **Presentation**

Following investigations and action by the Anti-social Behaviour Unit, a successful outcome has been achieved in dealing with the issues raised by the petitioners. This demonstrates Rotherham MBC's continued commitment to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and make Rotherham the best place to live, learn and work.

17. **Recommendations**

THAT THE REPORT BE RECEIVED AND NOTED

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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

2. **Date of Meeting** 30 July 2004

3. **Title** Petition from residents at Turner Close, Parkgate
Follow up report

4. **Originating Officer** Jill Jones
Neighbourhood Manager
Tel Ext 74-205

5. **Issue**

In the Spring of 2003 a petition was received from the residents of Turner Close, Parkgate requesting improved security measures on their site as they were experiencing youth nuisance and increased incidents of domestic burglary.

6. **Summary**

The initial report presented previously, highlighted the residents concerns regarding levels of crime and the fear of crime, as well as the youth nuisance issues. Residents initially requested that metal security grilles be fitted to porchways, fencing be erected around the bungalows, and security doors be fitted.

7. **Clearance/Consultation**

Discussion with the residents, ward members, police, neighbourhood wardens, neighbourhood manager, estates officer, area housing panel, neighbourhood watch and the buildings and renovations team took place.

8. **Timing**

The petition was received in January 2003 and the work was carried out in the summer of that year.

9. **Background**

Statistics were examined which support the claims and increased reports of crime that had been recorded by the police. The crime reduction officer made an assessment, and costings were obtained to replace external doors and to fit fencing around the bungalows.

It was agreed to fit the following:

- ◆ security doors to all the bungalows
- ◆ 1m high metal fencing around the site
- ◆ dawn to dusk lights to all bungalows
- ◆ alarm box on the community centre

The neighbourhood wardens and the police also worked together to fit alarms to doors and windows (buzzer type.) Additional patrols by the police and the neighbourhood wardens were also requested.

10. Argument

The increased levels of crime and the fear of crime have been controlled by the work which was carried out and a neighbourhood watch group has been developed.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

The fitting of security doors would provide residents with a feeling of security, and the fencing would provide a barrier which prevented people crossing the site as they wished, which unnerved the residents. The fear of crime would also reduce.

12. Finance

The majority of the funding was provided from Housing Investment Programme funding. External funding was obtained by the neighbourhood warden unit and the police for the door and window alarms, and lighting was paid for from the Area Housing Panel budget.

13. Sustainability

Since the work has been completed residents have expressed a sense of security and well being and have become more settled. The demand for these properties has improved and there have been very few requests to transfer from the scheme.

14. Wards Affected

Rawmarsh (formerly Rawmarsh East)

15. References

Original cabinet report. Minute 302 of 27 January 2003 refers.

16. Presentation

17. Recommendations

TO NOTE THE REPORT

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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

2. **Date of Meeting** 30 July 2004

3. **Title** PETITION REGARDING DRAINAGE PROBLEMS AT WHARTON AVENUE, SWALLOWNEST

4. **Originating Officer** Andrew Hindle
Aston Neighbourhood Manager, Tel Ext. 3488

5. **Issue**

To consider whether remedial works should be undertaken to remedy drainage problems at Wharton Avenue, Swallownest, following a petition from twelve residents.

6. **Summary**

Rainwater runs off a Council-owned steep grass embankment at the front of 62 to 78 Wharton Avenue, Swallownest, causing the gardens to become waterlogged. During prolonged or severe rainfall, water occasionally penetrates the properties. This has prompted a petition from the residents asking the Council to remedy the problem, the solution to which would incur significant expenditure.

7. **Clearance/Consultation**

Aston Neighbourhood Office has met with the principal petitioner and Rotherham MBC's Senior Drainage Technician to discuss the problem and potential solutions. The cost has been discussed with Housing and Environmental Services' Finance and Accountancy section. Additionally, Ward 6 Members have been consulted and have made no comment.

8. **Timing**

The petition requires a completed reply as per council procedures.

9. **Background**

The embankment causing the problem is on Housing Services land, covers an area of approximately 550 square metres and has a gradient of 60 degrees or more in places. Consequently, when it rains, the gardens of 62 to 78 Wharton Avenue flood, with water penetrating the properties via the front door, when rainfall is severe and/or prolonged. The nine properties involved are high demand traditional brick built houses with one owner-occupier and eight council tenants affected.

The residents complained about the problem four years ago, which led to the installation of two soakaways. These have proved ineffective and since January 2004 the gardens have flooded approximately 30 times, with the houses flooded twice as a result of water breaching the front doors which have six-inch deep thresholds. This problem causes damage to carpets, internal decoration and external brickwork, with water taking approximately two days to drain away following rainfall, which is exacerbated in freezing conditions.

The work required to remedy this problem involves the installation of approximately 34 metres of channel grate along the full length of the embankment, which will be connected to the main drain, and is not work classified as the tenant's responsibility.

10. **Argument**

Carrying out the remedial work would be consistent with the Council's priority of creating a place to live that is clean, safe and sustainable through the maintenance of homes and public space. Consulting and taking peoples' views into account in response to the petition is also consistent with the Council's priority of creating a place with active and involved communities. Furthermore, the work would comply with the Council and Programme Area Priority of being a responsive, flexible, accessible and customer focused quality service provider that recognises individual circumstances.

11. **Risks and Uncertainties**

The cost of remedial work has only been estimated and the External Drainage Repair Budget may be negatively affected should the estimate for the cost of the work prove inaccurate. Additionally, non-contribution by the owner-occupier could prevent the work from being completed, which could potentially damage the council's property.

12. **Finance**

The Council's Senior Drainage Technician has estimated the cost of remedial work at approximately £5,000. This would be charged to the External Drainage Repair Budget.

13. **Sustainability**

Performing remedial work will improve the safety, security and design of the properties in question, which may positively impact on the life span of the property and encourage tenants to sustain their tenancies.

14. **Wards Affected**

Ward 2

15. **References**

None

16. **Presentation**

Performing remedial drainage work would positively impact on the lives of a significant number of residents on Wharton Avenue, contributing to the sustainability of the area.

17. **Recommendations**

THAT CABINET MEMBER NOTES THE REPORT

1. **Meeting** CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
2. **Date of Meeting** 30 July 2004
3. **Title** Proposal to Implement a Choice-Based Lettings Policy
4. **Originating Officer** Simon Bunker
Head of Housing Services
Tel Ext 3402
5. **Issue**
Housing Services proposes to implement a choice based lettings policy.
6. **Summary**
The attached report sets out the background to the concept of choice based lettings, and details the issues that will need to be addressed, with particular reference to continuing to meet the housing needs of vulnerable people in a fair and equitable manner.
7. **Clearance/Consultation**
Consultation has been carried out with Wath and Swinton Area Housing Panel, ROPES (support for older people), the Homelessness Review and Strategy Group, the Domestic Violence Forum. It has also been discussed at the BME conference held in June 2004, and at the Homelessness Multi-agency event in 2003.
8. **Timing**
The Audit Commission issued guidance in its publication – “ALMO inspections and the delivery of excellent housing management services” in March 2003, in which it clarified that choice based lettings would be a key feature of any ALMO. In September 2004, Rotherham will receive its ALMO indicative inspection, so it is important that a strategy is in place to deliver choice based lettings by 1 April 2005 when the ALMO is scheduled to commence.
9. **Background**
See attached report and supporting documents.
10. **Argument**
An effective choice-based lettings scheme is an essential pre-requisite of an ALMO delivering excellent housing management services.
11. **Risks and Uncertainties**
Any change in allocations policy must ensure that the needs of vulnerable people are still addressed, and that the Council’s statutory obligations are met. Policies must be delivered in a transparent way to ensure they are fair, and seen to be fair. Certain types of property will necessarily still need to be allocated on the basis of need due to its limited supply or adaptation.
12. **Finance**
Implications arising from administrative costs of publicising and implementing the scheme.

13. Sustainability

Choice-based lettings will significantly contribute to sustaining communities and neighbourhoods, by emphasising that people can choose for themselves where they want to live, rather than have the housing provider do it for them. In this way, people are more likely to remain in their tenancy and their neighbourhood because they have been responsible for making that choice.

14. Wards Affected

All

15. References

“Quality and Choice: A decent home for all” – DETR, December 2000

“ALMO inspections and the delivery of excellent housing management services” – Audit Commission, March 2003.

“Piloting Choice-Based Lettings” ODPM, May 2004

16. Presentation

See attached report.

17. Recommendations

- **CABINET MEMBER TO APPROVE THE PROPOSALS FOR A CHOICE BASED LETTINGS POLICY.**
- **THAT OFFICERS CARRY OUT FURTHER FEASIBILITY WORK ON A PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A PROPERTY SHOP, ABLE TO PROVIDE OTHER KEY SERVICES.**

ROTHERHAM HOUSING
SERVICES

Choice-based Letting Scheme:

Proposal for Implementation

30 July 2004

Content

1. Executive Summary
2. Background Information
3. The Rotherham Strategic Context
4. Features of Pilot CBL's
5. Principles of Rotherham CBL's
6. Scheme Details
7. Equality Impact Assessment
8. Community Cohesion
9. Scheme Monitoring
10. Conclusion
11. Recommendation

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Government has set out its approach to lettings policy in its White Paper of 2000, "Quality and Choice: A decent home for all". Choice-based lettings (CBL's) have been piloted in 27 areas of the country, been evaluated as successful, and have been complemented by changes to the Homelessness Act. The Audit Commission has defined them as a measure of excellence for ALMO's.

1.2 The proposals for a CBL actively support key elements of the various strategies adopted within Rotherham, including the Community Strategy, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, and Housing Strategy.

1.3 There have been 27 pilot CBL's set up which have been evaluated and defined as successful. Measures of success include higher numbers and types of applicants using the service, higher levels of customer satisfaction due to the simplified and transparent processes used, and improved performance on voids management.

1.4 The principles of Rotherham's CBL are set out, including a commitment to simplicity and transparency of processes, the need to use recent Housing Needs data to inform scheme development, the mainstreaming of diversity issues and need to safeguard the interests of vulnerable applicants, customer focused rather than process driven, e-enabled, and providing a 'fit' with other key parts of the service.

1.5 The details of the scheme set out to address work to be done prior to commencement, any restrictions on the principle of choice, how applicants will access the service and issues of eligibility and ill-eligibility, how vulnerable applicants will be supported to use the service, how the service will prioritise bids, letting selection criteria, feedback, risk issues, resource implications, and roles of key staff.

1.6 The report makes clear that the service must address diversity and community cohesion issues in Rotherham, and clarifies the importance of service monitoring, performance measures, and evaluation.

1.7 It concludes that a Choice-Based Lettings policy must be adopted for several reasons, all supportive of the Borough's strategies to sustain communities and neighbourhoods.

2. Background Information

2.1 In December 2000, the Government published its White Paper on the future of housing, "**Quality and Choice: A decent home for all**". Chapter 6 dealt with promoting choice through lettings in social housing, and set out three measures:

- to legislate to facilitate more choice-based lettings (CBL) approaches;
- to support and evaluate pilot schemes to test CBL approaches,
- to promote CBL more generally.

In addition, the Homelessness Act 2002 amended Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996, to enable revision to the allocation of social housing. The amendments to Part 6 facilitate allocation schemes which offer tenants a more active role in choosing accommodation.

2.2 Providing choice and responsibility to individuals to address their housing needs is the cornerstone of Government policy, requiring social housing providers to re-evaluate their current allocation schemes. **The Government has set a target that requires all Allocation Schemes to be choice-based by 2010.**

2.3 The paper made clear that lettings policies must be married to the problems which can arise where there is a concentration of poor and vulnerable households within areas of social deprivation, and the consequent need to promote sustainable communities. The link is made to education, and the need for housing services to consult with education departments about lettings policies' impacts on local schools. There is a further need therefore that all social housing providers consider jointly, the approach to lettings policy to make best use of stock and to ensure service excellence.

2.4 A programme of 27 CBL pilots was set up between April 2001 and March 2003, examining different approaches to providing choice in various housing market contexts. The ODPM produced its evaluation ***"Piloting Choice Based Lettings"*** in May 2004. Key findings from the pilots were:

- Numbers of households registered for social housing increased following the launch of CBL, including more working households and members of minority communities;
- Customers welcomed the transparency of CBL – customer feedback indicated pilots established more transparent and simple systems that were perceived to increase choice;
- CBL requires the active participation of customers – customers felt the benefits outweighed the additional effort on their part;
- The continued prioritisation of vulnerable households ensures they are able to access housing, including the most popular;
- All Authorities who participated in the pilots have indicated their enthusiasm and intended continuation;
- The most obvious failing was an inability to engage with the private sector. The evaluation points to the lack of an accreditation scheme as the principle cause (Rotherham has recently approved its own Landlord Accreditation Scheme);
- CBL advertising cycles impose discipline on housing services which resulted in improved performance, especially on re-let times;
- The most frequent cause of problems was procurement and implementation of IT to run CBL systems.

2.5 In March 2003, the Audit Commission published its Housing Guidance Paper ***"ALMO inspections and the delivery of excellent housing management services"***. Clearly linked to Government priorities, it sets out the criteria for defining 'excellence'. The fifth of twelve priorities states, "choice-based lettings established or being planned".

3. The Rotherham Strategic Context

3.1 The proposed CBL scheme should support:

- **Regional Housing Strategy** for Yorkshire and Humberside (2003). CBL's will support Objective 1 – **Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal**; and Objective 4 – **Fair access to quality housing for all groups**. In the former objective, progress towards neighbourhood management, supported by the ALMO will enhance customer choice through being customer driven; in the latter objective, improved partnership working with RSL's on allocations issues like shared waiting lists will be developed.
- Rotherham's **Community Strategy**; CBL's will primarily support Priority 4 ie. **Safe and Inclusive Communities** – ensuring individuals and communities offer a better quality of life.
- **Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy**; CBL's primarily supports Priority 1 – improving the life chances of children and young people, via development of a **Young Person's Housing Strategy** (for development in 2004/05),
- the Corporate Plan; CBL's will primarily support Key Priority 4 – **A place to live**, Key Priority 6 – **A place with active, involved communities**, and Key Priority 7 – **A place for everyone**.
- the **Housing Strategy**, CBL's will support two of the Strategy's main challenges ie. "**Develop Neighbourhoods** – to create neighbourhoods where people want to live now and in the future"; and "**Provide Fair Access & Choice** – to ensure that there is a choice of suitable housing and that it is accessible".
- the **Shadow Supporting People Strategy**; CBL's will support the partnership between social services, housing, health and probation, with particular reference to meeting the needs of hard to reach groups, and the development of supported housing schemes`.
- the **ALMO**; CBL's have been identified as a pre-requisite in defining excellence in housing management by ALMO's, by the Audit Commission.

3.2 Demand for some Council homes in certain areas, using current allocations policies, is diminishing. One bed bungalows and one/two bed ground floor flats have little or no demand. During 2002/03 approximately 9.3% of the total stock had no waiting list, equating to 2332 properties located throughout the Borough. Some estates have a high turnover, mainly due to abandonment and some groups of tenants who are unable to sustain tenancies without support. Turnover of properties in 2003/04 totalled 2039, an average of 169 per month. However, the implementation of Local Lettings Policies, measured by HES14, has demonstrated that turnover can be reduced by more flexible management and sensitive approaches to allocations. Local lettings policies have been successful due to the changes to target client groups eg. HIP figures for 2003/04 show 1,444 'difficult to let' (individual properties) and 1,355 'low demand' (clusters of 50 or more).

Annual terminations for the five year period 1999 - 2004:

| Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1999/2000 | 2000/2001 | 2001/2002 | 2002/2003 | 2003/2004 |
| 2624 | 2454 | 2593 | 2423 | 2039 |

3.3 Generally terminations for the last five years have averaged at 2500, but there has been a significant increase in Right to Buy sales since 2002/03, resulting in reducing termination trends. However, there are also indications that work around sustainability has had a positive effect (See comments re HES 14 in 3.2) CBL is designed to support and add impetus to this trend.

Monthly terminations for 2003/2004 are as follows:

| April | May | June | July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | March |
|-------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 145 | 154 | 141 | 163 | 206 | 211 | 166 | 155 | 146 | 217 | 149 | 186 |

4. Features of Pilot Choice-Based Lettings Schemes

4.1 Pilots operated weekly or fortnight advertising cycles. Most pilots labeled properties in a way that restricted who could apply for them. (Appendix 3 - Property Advertisement.) Labels relating to minimum age were extensively used.

4.2 Advertising models require households to 'bid' for properties. At close of a 'bidding' round, a short list of 'bidders' is drawn up and the household with the earliest date of application is offered the property, (once their details have been verified)

4.3 Most pilots advertised vacant properties regularly through a range of advertising media.

4.4 The effective choice provided by CBL's throughout the pilots depended on local housing markets, and scheme design. **Allowing all applicants to 'bid' for any vacant property while having a large number (of vacancies) relative to demand levels offers applicants the widest range of property from which to choose.** However, most pilots grouped properties, to restrict the types of applicant who are entitled to 'bid' for vacancies. This approach can mean that applicants do not see properties for which they may wish to 'bid', resulting in longer waiting than necessary. The problem is not always a shortage of properties per se, but of vacant properties of a particular type or in a particular location. While frustrating, applicants are aware of what is or is not available, and are experiencing what is – in effect – the rented housing market.

4.5 Publishing feedback on letting outcomes was one of the pilot's weaker areas, From the customers perspective there was considerable demand for individual feedback on what had happened to their 'bids' for accommodation.

4.6 **To protect the interests of vulnerable and excluded groups, information on vacancies and processes must be widely available in appropriate formats including minority languages.** Systems must support those who might have difficulties with the CBL process on their own. Ensuring that timely information on vacancies reaches households is an issue when providing services to excluded households.

4.7 The most common approach to supporting vulnerable and excluded groups was to seek co-operation of a network of statutory and voluntary organisations to assist their clients to use CBL's. An issue with adopting a decentralised approach is that not all vulnerable groups have a representative organisation to provide support. In this context, neighbourhood service provision will play a crucial role.

4.8 The key features of CBL's is that applicants "choose to be considered for a property", rather than officers 'drip-feeding' offers of properties to particular applicants, and that of the scheme adapting changes in legislation affecting housing need.

4.9 **Sheffield City Council** - initially operated their CBL system in the South of the City, but now operate citywide. They found that:

- the refusal rate reduced
- customers liked the system, but preferred adverts with photographs
- customers asked for more information about services in the locality of the property
- they coordinated and managed the pilot through a paper based system which was time consuming; this was replaced with OHMS Needs Module and applicants are able to register expressions of interest online
- to avoid impact on BVPI 68 property advertisements were produced during the termination notice period
- Interest was mainly from residents of Sheffield rather than people living out of the borough, although out of borough applicants were not penalised.
- The properties are advertised weekly. At the close of the bidding period 50% of the properties are allocated to the person with the earliest dated application and 50% are allocated to persons with a priority.i.e homeless, vulnerable and special needs.

4.10 **First Choice Homes Oldham** – an ALMO managing on behalf of Oldham MBC. Thirty per cent of all empty properties are general lets that people can put a bid for. Information on available properties is posted every Thursday morning at all Housing Offices and in the "Instant Homes " Property Shop. Interested applicants enter a bid against the property of their choice. All bidders have to be registered, have a clear rent account and no record of legal action against them. Properties are advertised for seven days. The person who has been on the waiting list for the longest time is the successful bidder.

4.11 First Choice Homes Oldham also operate an immediate access service; this enables customers to access ready (low demand) properties using a quick and easy registration process. Properties are offered on a first come first served basis. Anyone can apply for a home through the Instant Homes shop including exiting tenants and unregistered applicants.

Since opening the shop has:

- Received an average 70 new enquiries per week;
- Established a free phone number, which is the most frequent method of contact. The free phone receives on average 50 calls per day.
- Established a Website, which is increasingly popular as a means of accessing the service and is updated daily.

5. Principles of Rotherham Choice-Based Lettings Scheme

5.1 This proposal is characterised by the clear commitment to providing customers with simple and accessible means to exercise their choice of rented accommodation, making their own decisions about what they live in, and where it is. By so doing, customers are likely to benefit from sustainable tenancies and become part of sustainable communities.

5.2 The Housing Needs Analysis 2003, identified that there are complex and diverse housing needs in the borough. (See appendix 4 “Fair Access and Choice” – Key Factors). This CBL proposal seeks to address these.

5.3 The re-focusing of service provision and rationalisation of policies will address both needs and choice by accepting that demand is changing continuously. Equality and diversity issues need to be ‘mainstreamed’ so that hard to reach groups’ aspirations (or choices) are met, as well as their needs, and that issues of commonality (ie. shared interests of whole communities and neighbourhoods) are addressed through rationalisation.

5.4 The CBL will be customer focused, rather than system driven. Other than the need to be transparent, processes will have to directly contribute to the customer’s successful securing of a home of their choice. They will be seen to be fair and easy to understand by customers.

5.5 The CBL must be e-enabled to benefit from contemporaneous updating, and to enable applicants to access continuously current information. The CBL can operate using a weekly/fortnightly advertising cycle, but this should be a short term measure only.

5.6 The CBL will provide an operational ‘fit’ with the furnished tenancy scheme, launched in May, as applicants will be able to also choose whether their home is furnished, part-furnished or unfurnished.

6. Scheme Details

Prior to commencement:

6.1 Housing Services will need to communicate with all applicants already seeking social rented homes ie. registered on the waiting list. Automatic transfer of such applicants to a CBL database, or following the launch of CBL's, offers them the opportunity to re-register, update their requirements, and be informed of what the CBL is about.

6.2 Communicating the change and explaining how the new system works to members of hard to reach groups and vulnerable individuals will require sensitivity to specific circumstances. There is likely to be increased telephone calls and personal visits to Neighborhood Offices following launch of the CBL scheme, but this can be minimised if appropriate information is prepared and circulated beforehand

6.3 Housing Services will need to make full use of traditional means of communication as well as e-communications. Language and disability issues will need to be factored in.

6.4 Information about vacancies needs to be accessible to all applicants, and those means of access must be widely known and understood. All applicants, and perhaps more importantly potential applicants, must know the service exists and how to use it. Choice will also need to be factored in to the accessing of the service.

6.5 **Advertising vacancies is the key characteristic of the CBL process**, and the range of outlets from which these can be accessed is crucial, and assumes the existence of an effective database. Property Shops (loosely based on estate agent features), are geographically limited, though usually based in busy town centres for maximum exposure, and even where the principles are extended to the reception areas of other Council offices in outlying districts. Use of a website is increasingly the most effective means of access, and has the added bonus of being able to be updated contemporaneously. Many of the pilots chose to update information weekly or even fortnightly because they were using traditional outlets such as local newspapers' weekly property insert. This runs the risk of information being out of date and therefore useless to applicants, and would create peaks and troughs in activity during the advertising cycle and may delay voids turnaround, which daily electronic updating would preclude. However, the Service would have to appreciate that e-communications will not be the favoured means of access with large numbers of the most hard to reach groups eg. the elderly, and any individuals without access to computers or an understanding of how to use them.

6.6 The pilots have considered 'open' or 'closed' systems. Closed means distributing advertisements for vacancies only to applicants who are registered with the CBL, and is considered cost-effective. Open means anyone – registered or not – can access the service. The latter is more in line with the aims of CBL's, is inclusive, and would be the recommended approach.

Restrictions:

6.7 The guiding principle behind CBL's is to minimise the restrictions placed upon choice. However, certain criteria are required to ensure transparency, and that the Council's statutory obligations are met.

6.8 There should be no restriction on the level of information to be made available about vacant properties. As with an estate agency, the purpose is to give applicants as much information as possible to enable them to make an informed – and sustainable – choice. It is intended therefore, applicants will be able to access photographs (inside and out), floor plans, and details of local amenities and distances, as well as 'traditional' lettings information – size, location, age restrictions etc.

6.9 There should be no restrictions on advertising, but clearly this needs to be guided by cost effectiveness. The key vehicle for advertising will be the website. Elsewhere in this report are proposals for a dedicated property shop in the centre of Rotherham, linked to transformation of specific appropriate reception points to be agreed with and linked to the corporate accommodation strategy. Building on the lessons learnt from estate agents, customers will also benefit from property mailing lists, and mailshots. Local RSL's will be offered use of these outlets (it is customary to charge for this).

Bidding:

6.10 Standard procedure would be to enable all applicants to express interest in as many available properties as they wish which are advertised or e-enabled. They may prioritise these if they wish.

6.11 Applicants to whom the authority has a statutory homeless duty, or who have been given a priority assessment, and who do not have a defined special need (eg. a 4-bed or adapted home, or a limited location) will have a time limited period in which to bid for properties. After that, if they have not been successful a review of their priority will be undertaken with the applicant, to ensure there have been no problems that the service was not aware of. The time limit of the priority could be extended if no appropriate property has been advertised. Conversely, if the applicant has ignored or refused appropriate opportunities, they may lose their priority, and will be re-classified with all other general list applicants.

6.12 Applicants will bid via any or all of the recognised channels ie. Telephone through Rotherham Connect, online via the website on either a personal PC or a touchscreen facility available under future 'access to services' arrangements, in person at a future Property Shop and/or council offices, e-mail, SMS text messaging or in writing.

6.13 Applicants will express interest and arrange accompanied viewings. This will not preclude other applicants also expressing an interest, but they will be done in date – and time – order ie. first come, first served. The database will need to show where properties are under consideration, so applicants are aware of the situation when making enquiries. Any applicant who is not yet registered will need to do so, if

their interest is firm, to enable security and eligibility checks to be carried out prior to an offer being made.

Ineligible bids:

6.14 Any restrictions placed upon vacancies (eg. adapted dwelling) need to be clearly publicised to prevent ineligible bids ie. applicants could bid for properties for which they do not meet the requirements.

Non-bidders:

6.15 Opening up the bidding process to all applicants will not necessarily result in all applicants bidding. General list applicants will bid as and when they identify a property they are interested in. However, it will be necessary to monitor non bidding applicants where they have a priority award, to identify their reasons for not doing so when apparently appropriate properties become available. It will also be necessary to monitor bids from applicants to areas which their circumstances would define as unsuitable (eg a domestic violence case bidding to be near an abusive partner from whom they have fled). It is to be expected that areas in high demand will attract significant interest and that large numbers of applicants may become frustrated if they make regular bidders due to the fact that they are accumulating waiting time and do not have immediate need or desire for rehousing, and feedback will need to address this. Evaluation of non-bidders will identify those that have limited support network or are unable to access information on properties available.

Vulnerability:

6.16 It is a given fact that the CBL must not exclude or disadvantage members of "vulnerable groups". The definition of vulnerability is open to interpretation but it can include older people, persons with mobility problems, homeless households, people with disabilities, young people at risk, victims of harassment and fleeing domestic violence, and members of minority communities. This is not exhaustive and extends to other groups and/or individuals who are experiencing extreme difficulty.

6.17 Vulnerability to exclusion or disadvantage could arise from different issues arising from CBL's:

- Lack of access to information on vacant properties
- Lack of access to mechanisms for bidding
- Difficulties making informed choices and identifying an appropriate bidding strategy

Individuals who are vulnerable do not necessarily fit "the norm" and officers and agencies will need to be sensitive to their needs. To avoid people being excluded will require the scheme to be communicated effectively to all internal and external statutory and voluntary agencies who provide support and advocacy services.

6.18 Key types of support required are:

- home visits to explain the revised system and establish the amount of support;

- mailshots of advertising material and bidding documentation to individuals who are housebound or unable to access the system using other means;
- sending advertising material/bidding documentation to advocates and agencies;
- inform applicants to alert them to vacancies that are to be advertised;
- officer time talking through the advertised properties with the applicant
- enabling a proxy to be nominated to bid on the behalf of the applicant;
- viewing a property accompanied by advocate (support worker);
- ensuring materials/documentation meet the requirements of other language users, disabled people, and people with low levels of literacy.

Prioritising and Shortlisting:

6.19 To differentiate priority applicants from general ones, 'time limited priority cards' will be used. Holders of priority cards will have precedence to be shortlisted for vacancies available; however the categories of applicant eligible for a priority card will be tightly defined, and will include:

- homeless
- individual applicants awarded priority assessment
- statutory overcrowded

6.20 Applicants with priority will be encouraged to use the CBL wherever possible, thereby securing accommodation to meet their urgent housing need by their own efforts. As part of this, certain properties which are classed as 'low demand' will all be available to priority and general applicants alike on the 'first come, first served' principle. The aim of prioritising specific applicants, as well as meeting statutory requirements, is to increase their chances of bidding successfully and thus being housed quicker.

6.21 To ensure a balance between need (priority) and choice (unrestricted access), it is proposed that a 50/50 approach to allocation of high demand available property is undertaken. In practice this will mean every available home will be offered alternately to priority and general applicants. In instances where no priority cases are seeking rehousing, or a specific property type, then all offers will be made to the general register. In considering the allocation, regard will be given to the property criteria, and applications with the earliest dates of application.

6.22 All significantly adapted, and 4 bed homes will be allocated outside the CBL system on an assessment of need basis.

Shortlisting Information:

6.23 Once the bidding period is closed, a shortlist for each property will be drawn up from the individuals who have placed bids within the parameters of priority or general applicants. They will be ranked in date order, and information will be forwarded to the landlord for an offer to be made. No assumptions will be made re applicants, and the "gate-keeping role" must not hinder an applicant accessing accommodation.

6.24 Under CBL's, decisions will be transparent, and scrutinised much more closely – including by customers - and are more likely to be challenged.

6.25 Upon letting a vacancy, the short list for that property will be archived to prevent its future use.

Letting Selection:

6.26 Extensive checks on information provided by applicants will not be undertaken when they register, but only after they have made a successful bid, so as to minimise delays between expressing interest and having an offer confirmed. In a case where support needs are identified at the start of the CBL process, the system will rely on self-identification and/or diagnosis by the applicant or their support agency. Checks will be made on previous landlords for outstanding arrears, anti-social behaviour or other serious breaches of tenancy agreements.

6.27 In the case of rent arrears, the rent account should be clear or reducing by agreement for 13 consecutive weeks. Exceptions to this will be considered through the assessment panel. Potentially sensitive lettings will not be made through the CBL system, but be referred for a formal assessment.

6.28 To avoid delays, verification must commence on the day that the Neighbourhood Team receives the shortlist. Decisions to bypass applicants because they fail verification checks may be contested, so officers must ensure their decisions are justified based on pre-determined criteria. An audit trail must support any action undertaken and be recorded on the application, with the applicant immediately informed. Applicants failing to satisfy the verification checks must be given the opportunity to respond immediately, to ensure no blanket exclusion is being undertaken, but will need to be closely managed to ensure undue delays to letting don't accrue.

6.29 Applicants who are repeated bidders then refused offers of accommodation will be offered advice on how to rectify their situation. In cases where applicants make successful bids, are offered vacant properties but then refuse them regularly without good reasons, may be warned that further refusals will result in their applications being suspended.

6.30 Viewing of properties will only be undertaken by applicants shortlisted for the property after bidding has closed, and will be done in order of listing,

Refusals:

6.31 CBL is based on applicants expressing interest in properties rather than being 'drip-fed' properties by officers they may or may not want. There is an expectation that the proportion of properties refused by applicants should therefore decrease, an issue identified by the Audit Commission in their re-inspection of repairs and maintenance services. This will further reduce void times and improve housing management performance.

6.32 Whether the process impacts on refusal rates depends on local factors and stock condition. Information on refusal rates is an important source of data for understanding what is happening in communities and is an early indication of difficulties that may be developing in relation to communities and their sustainability. Analysis of refusal rates will inform community master planning and responses to housing management issues.

Feedback:

6.33 Feedback on outcomes has a crucial role in CBL's. The aim is to promote greater transparency in the allocation of properties. Publishing feedback allows subsequent bidders to assess the local social housing market. In principle this enables applicants to formulate better informed bidding strategies. It should therefore encourage applicants to take a more realistic view of options for meeting their housing needs.

6.34 It is proposed that feedback be undertaken through the same channels as those advertising properties. Individual feedback is impractical, and there are data protection issues, to ensure that individual privacy is not compromised. It is proposed that general feedback be provided on a monthly basis, thereby ensuring the advertising cycle is not compromised. eg.

| Locality | Approximate Waiting Times |
|---|----------------------------------|
| East Herringthorpe | B |
| Canklow | A |
| Brinsworth | I C |
| <u>Key:</u> | |
| A = Vacancies readily available (Direct Homes) | |
| B = Waiting time up to 12 months | |
| C = Waiting time over 12 months and up to 2 years | |

Risk issues:

6.35 The strategy for an effective CBL scheme is assessed as medium risk, and this is identified in the table below.

| Area of Risk | Risk Rating High, Medium or Low | Safeguards |
|--|--|--|
| CBL scheme receives low priority in the Programme Area strategy | Low | Policy is a key definition of housing management excellence to meet requirements of ALMO |
| Level of applications increases beyond the capacity of turnover to meet expectations | Medium | Encourage RSLs and Private Landlords to participate in the CBL scheme |
| Bidding process fails to | | Promote scheme through all |

| | | |
|---|--------|--|
| attract sufficient interest for vacant properties | Medium | means available, |
| Vulnerable applicant groups are less frequent bidders than other households | Medium | Appropriate means of access identified for all potential applicants.. |
| Different types of property attract varied bidding activity | Medium | Bidding patterns monitored and intervention strategies undertaken for property types affected. |
| Homelessness strategy adversely affected | Medium | Monitoring and intervention to ensure statutory obligations are met. |
| Members of BME Communities not participating in CBL's | Medium | Scheme publicity devised to meet information needs of communities. Safeguards built into scheme to maximise access and benefit. |
| Resources are not available to deliver CBL's | Medium | Additional resource requirements assessed and secured. |
| Overwhelming requests for individual feedback on bids submitted | Medium | Feedback delivered monthly to all applicants highlighting supply and demand issues |
| Lack of involvement by RSLs and Private landlords | Medium | Promotion of CBL's through Housing Association Liaison Group and Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme. |
| Excessive level of activity/ contact by applicants following CBL launch | Medium | Deploy staffing resources to meet demand and identify SMART ways of delivering service. |
| Serial bidders who subsequently refuse successful offers | Medium | Possible suspension of application. |
| Negative impact on Void Turnaround time | Medium | Examine processes for inefficiencies and remedy. |
| Inadequacy of IT systems | High | Service with RBT to identify remedies and implement |

Resource implications:

6.36 The largest potential use of resources is if Rotherham chooses to develop its own 'Property Shop'. Local Authorities who have done so report a transformation in the public's perception of them as housing providers, when linked to CBL's. Such service outlets move providers away from being the housing option of last resort for desperate people, and attract people and client groups who have previously not considered council housing as a lifestyle choice. The addition of other landlords

promoting their properties within a single and simplified administrative process is a further attraction. Such shops need to be located in busy commercial/retail centres with significant numbers of passing pedestrians, eg bus and train stations are favoured locations. Provisional costings for such a facility have been identified as follows:

| Item | Expenditure |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Shop Rental | 20,000 |
| Rates | 7,500 |
| Electricity – Standing Charge | 300 |
| Electricity – Consumption | 500 |
| Heating - Gas | 1,000 |
| Water | 1,000 |
| Stationery | 1,500 |
| Alarm System | 2,000 |
| Cleaning | 6,000 |
| Tel lines Rental/Calls | 3,500 |
| Postage | 7,000 |
| Carpets | 4,500 |
| Furniture | 4,000 |
| Decoration/advert displays | 3,000 |
| Purchase/Installation of computers | 6,000 |
| Total | 67,800 |

6.37 Costs of such a shop can be offset by accommodating other key and related services. It is suggested that a separate report be submitted on the issue of developing a Property Shop and how it would be managed from the ALMO, following more detailed work. Other key centres of the Borough need to be considered also eg. Wath, Dinnington, Maltby.

- **Housing Option Team** - Offering independent Housing Advice and a range of Housing Options to customers with the development of their own Personal Housing Plan
- **Furnished Home Scheme** - The Furnished Tenancy Scheme, introduced on 1st May 2004, could operate from this site in conjunction with the Property Shop.
- **Energy and Efficiency Team** - the Energy Team by being based in the shop could assist with the funding. It has a small income from the Energy Saving Trust for work it carries out under the Sth Yorkshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre. It could make a contribution of £2,000 each year to the shop's running costs, and for the first time, Rotherham would have a high profile site for energy efficiency advice. There are similar outlets in Kirklees, Oldham and Leicester, with Sheffield developing a renewable energy centre on its inner ring road.

6.38 Alternatives and additions to such a shop include:

- Weekly/fortnightly property advert mailing list - to distribute to vulnerable applicants who cannot access I.T. or who are unable to visit the Neighbourhood Offices.
- Articles in key publications eg. Open House and Rotherham Matters.
- Newspaper advertisements - to advertise weekly in the local press is expensive. Costs range from £250 for a full page in the ad-mag to £6000 for a full page in the Rotherham Star. Sheffield use the ad-mag weekly and have had a good customer response rate, but Oldham have found that this form of advertising is not necessary as it wasn't widely used by customers. They have found that the Property Shop, a website and – significantly – 'Word of Mouth' are the most effective methods.

6.39 Evidence from the pilots demonstrates that customers view property adverts from a wide range of media sources, and it was clear that the telephone is the most convenient way of accessing the scheme. However, many favour visiting a Neighbourhood Office to view adverts prior to making a bid. Touchscreen facilities are valuable for customers without I.T. skills, and could benefit customers with impaired eyesight.

6.40 The Neighbourhood Team Leader, supported by Neighbourhood Champions, will be the key point of contact and will coordinate lettings for their respective Neighbourhoods. They will ensure:

- Inspection and Property details;
- Presentation of vacant properties in advertising material;
- Co-ordination of other local housing providers in the CBL;
- Overseeing co-ordination and collation of bidding process, including input of bids received by the Neighbourhood Team;
- Assessment and verification of bids following the close of bidding;
- Offering of the property;
- Overseeing marketing initiatives, such as Roadshows
- 'Audit trailing' bid processes.

6.41 The "Housing Options (Advice) Team's " role will be:

- Independent Housing Advice via telephone, interviews etc;
- Offering the widest range of Housing Options to applicants within a Personal Housing Plan;
- Production of promotional materials and information, including managing information displayed on website;
- Inputting the bids received in the Property Shop (if developed) onto the OHMS system;
- Integrate property information from private landlords and RSLs;
- Joint work with advocacy services - health and social care, probation, self help groups etc.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 Rotherham MBC is committed to principles set out in the Equalities Standard for Local Government. A key element of the Equalities Standard involves carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA'S) on all existing, changing and new policies, to ensure they do NOT have an adverse impact on a particular client group.

7.2 It is essential to note the needs of a wide range of groups and individuals to ensure that there is equality of access. As wide a range as possible of organisations and users should be involved in the development process, including health, social services, voluntary bodies and support networks/agencies. These are key links to helping people access this service. Experience of the pilots show that older people are less likely to use the scheme; the intention is to move to assessed need for older people to access Sheltered Schemes.

8. Community Cohesion

8.1 CBL's are intended to improve community cohesion, and will increase opportunities for applicants to move between neighbourhoods and communities. In exercising their choice, it is recognised that some applicants will need support to enable them to maximise the benefits from their decision.

8.2 Choice is a pre-requisite to achieving equality of access to social housing. Through CBL's, applicants will be responsible for decisions on the type and location of accommodation to meet their needs, based on availability. Availability will also be a limit to the decisions that can be made. The exclusion of 4 bed properties from the CBL scheme, with allocation of these via the housing register to larger families based on individual need is the most obvious example of this.

8.3 To enable applicants to make their own decisions, they will require comprehensive information about the system, and how properties will become available for letting, as well as information on the properties themselves. This will be provided with reference to different groups including hard to reach ones, and via a range of accessible methods:

- Promotional material and property adverts displayed at Neighbourhood Offices, other council service outlets, transport interchanges, shopping facilities, places of worship, and interactive websites.
- Weekly (then daily) bulletins of properties available in the area, including property type, current landlord, location and amenities.
- In line with corporate strategy, utilisation of current IT capability eg. touchscreens placed in accessible places.
- Use local media and free press via inserts and 'advertorials', and explore use of local radio, including hospital radio.
- Feedback on successful lettings will also be available via appropriate publications and outlets. This would include the property, the number of valid responses, and

the determined factor, which is the length of time on the waiting list. This would be published with the following week's advertisements, which will be displayed on the Internet, in Neighbourhood Offices and in the local press. It enables customers to judge their likely chances of obtaining a similar property. A frequently asked question and answer leaflet should be developed.

9. Monitoring the Scheme

9.1 The collation of robust data is essential to ensure that operation of CBL improves current performance targets, and is transparently fair. One of the key findings of the pilots has been improved turnaround of empty properties. While Rotherham is already performing strongly on this, the introduction of CBL will clearly help to maintain this.

9.2 A further impact has been the decline in refusal rates, and reductions in transfer requests. This is an output within the repairs SIP that was identified by the 2004 Audit Commission inspection. Another key monitoring task will be to ensure that sufficient properties of appropriate type or quality are let to vulnerable applicants, and to identify applicants who are not bidding.

9.3 CBL supports joint work between the local authority, RSLs and the private sector, so there must be safeguards for data protection, and published assurances to applicants.

9.4 In accordance with the Government's policy targets on E-Government by 2005, we will utilise appropriate IT to provide access the CBL. There are several funding sources, including implementing E-Government and Local Government Pathfinder Schemes

10. Conclusions

10.1 Whilst the CBL concept embraces choice and flexibility, it has also been demonstrated that it supports sustainability of tenancies, by reducing turnover. The corollary of this is greater sustainability of communities and neighbourhoods. The current allocation scheme should therefore be amended in favour of a CBL scheme.

11. Recommendations

- **APPROVAL BE GIVEN TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHOICE-BASED LETTINGS IN ROTHERHAM**
- **THAT OFFICERS CARRY OUT FURTHER FEASIBILITY WORK ON THE PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A PROPERTY SHOP, ABLE TO PROVIDE OTHER KEY SERVICES.**

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