

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

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

Date: Thursday, 24 April 2008

Time: 9.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

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

FOR PRESENTATION

7. Town Centre Dispersal Orders - Report and Presentation by Mark Ford (report herewith) (Pages 1 - 4)

FOR MONITORING

8. Neighbourhoods 3rd Quarter Performance Report 2007/08 (report herewith) (Pages 5 - 10)
9. Neighbourhood Investment – Private Sector Investment Plan 2008-11 (report herewith) (Pages 11 - 19)
10. Options for Building New Council-Owned Housing (report herewith) (Pages 20 - 36)

11. Rotherham MBC Smoke Free Legislation Update (report herewith) (Pages 37 - 40)
12. Fwd Plan of Key Decisions (attached) (Pages 41 - 42)

FOR INFORMATION

13. Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods - Minutes of the meetings held on 3, 17 & 31 March 2008 (attached) (Pages 43 - 66)

MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

14. Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel - Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2008 (attached) (Pages 67 - 71)
15. Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee - Minutes of the meetings held on 29 February 2008 & 28 March 2008 (attached) (Pages 72 - 90)

Date of Next Meeting:-

Date Not Specified

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor McNeely

Vice-Chairman – Councillor P. A. Russell

Councillors:-Atkin, Barton, Cutts, Falvey, Goulty, Havenhand, Lakin, Lee, Nightingale, Robinson, Walker and F. Wright

Co-optees:- Hilary Cahill (Housing Tenant Panel), Mr. Keith Stringer (Parish Councils), D. Barker (Parish Councils), Mr. J. Carr (Environment Protection UK), Mr. J. Lewis (Rotherham Chamber) and Mr. D. Willoughby (Housing Tenant Panel Representative)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	24 April 2008
3.	Title:	Rotherham Town Centre Dispersal Order - Review
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

In accordance with Section 30, Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, in May 2007, authority was granted for a Dispersal Order to operate within the boundary of the Rotherham Town Centre Alcohol Exclusion Zone. Initially the order was granted for a six month period, but extended for a further two months to cover the Christmas and New Year period 2007/08.

This report considers the impact of the Dispersal Order on aspects of crime and anti-social behaviour over the relevant periods and draws comparisons with the same periods during 2006/07 when a Dispersal Order was not in place.

A joint presentation with South Yorkshire Police highlighting the impact of the Dispersal Order will be provided at the Scrutiny Panel.

6. Recommendations

That the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel:

- **Notes the positive impact that the Town Centre Dispersal Order, together with other policing and partnership initiatives, has had on crime and anti-social behaviour compared with the same period during 2006/07.**

7. Proposals and Details

In 2007 the Council agreed to an application made by South Yorkshire Police for a Dispersal Order under Section 30, Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to be put in place using the same boundary of the Rotherham Town Centre Alcohol Exclusion Zone. The Dispersal Order was in place from May 2007 to January 2008.

In line with agreed protocols the application was supported, taking into account the perceived disruption by offenders to traders and visitors alike, including:

- Daytime problems caused by street drinking and youths congregating and behaving in intimidating and abusive ways.
- Night time drink related violence.
- Anti-Social Behaviour and offences of violence, including associated intimidation felt by residents, workers and town centre visitors.
- To aid the management of football matches and other town centre events and activities.

During the life of the Dispersal Order its powers were used on 43 separate occasions, involving the 'moving on' of 115 individuals, 21 of which subsequently breached their order. Of this total, use of the power during the hours defined as 'night time economy' was slightly higher – 23 at night compared to 20 during the day. The months of June, July and October saw the highest number of use of the power and individuals dispersed.

During the period there were a total of 12 individuals who repeatedly breached the order, 10 of whom were issued with 2 Dispersal Notices each and 2 who were issued with Dispersal Notices on a number of occasions, including one person who was subject of a notice on 6 separate occasions and one on 5 occasions.

Overview of offences

Detailed reports of the full data analysis have been provided by the Community Information Unit.

- **Criminal Damage**

There was a **9.3%** reduction in offences during the review period compared to the same period in 2006/07.

Daytime offences were reduced, in particular damage to vehicles, but those occurring during the Night Time Economy hours showed little change from similar historic periods.

When compared to the overall damage levels for Rotherham South Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), the Town Centre compares well and has seen decreases where the rest of the SNT has seen increases, with no evidence to suggest that the increase is as a result of displacement.

- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

There was a **6.3%** reduction in recorded incidents during the review period compared to the same period in 2006/07.

Daytime offences were reduced but those occurring during the Night Time Economy hours actually increased to exceed the levels seen in the historic comparison period. One possible reason for this could be the increased visible policing presence of the dedicated Town Centre Policing Team, the presence of which aids public reassurance but which can also increase the number of incidents being viewed and reported.

- **Violent Crime**

During the shorter review period of 22 November 2007 – 6 January 2008 there was an overall reduction of recorded violent crime of **37.6%** compared to the period 23 November 2006 – 7 January 2007. Although the number of some offences have seen an increase, assaulting a police officer, some public order categories and wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, the low numbers involved are not considered statistically significant.

The most significant reductions were seen in offences of assault occasioning actual bodily harm (**52%** reduction) and all public order offences (overall **33%** reduction).

Whilst it is not possible to attribute the overall reductions solely to the implementation of the Dispersal Order, the town centre did see reductions in the levels of daytime criminal damage, anti-social behaviour and significant reductions in offences of violence. Incidents in street drinking were also reduced on the previous year and 2 persistent offenders were identified.

8. Finance

There were no financial implications in respect of the Town Centre Dispersal Order due to it being 'policed' using existing resources.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Statistical evidence shows that there was an overall decrease in incidents of criminal damage, anti-social behaviour and offences of violence during the relevant review periods compared to the same periods in 2006/07.

The introduction of the order made a contribution to the reduction and increased the powers of the Police to make early interventions at potential 'hotspots', however, the use of the Dispersal Order powers by the police can not be taken in isolation. In addition to the use of the Dispersal Order powers and normal policing/enforcement activity, a number of other initiatives were introduced to combat town centre crime and anti-social behaviour. These included:

- Dedicated Town Centre Policing Team resulting in more pro-active/visible policing of the relevant area.
- Taxi Marshalling Scheme covering the Christmas and New Year period
- Voluntary early closure of town centre licensed premises on Friday 21 December 2007 (Last Friday before Christmas)
- Introduction of polycarbonate drinking glasses

These should be considered when assessing the effectiveness of the Dispersal Order during 2007/08 against the same period in 2006/07 when these initiatives were not in place.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Full use of available tools and powers to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour has clear linkages to the Outcomes Framework for Adult and Social Care and importantly these include:

- ***Improved Quality of Life*** – *Helping to reduce the problem of crime and anti-social behaviour and make Rotherham safer in a way which contributes to the reduction of the fear of crime.*
- ***Freedom from Discrimination or Harassment*** – *Allowing people who work in and visit the town centre to do so without fear of harassment*

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Data analysis – Rotherham Community Information Unit.

Contact Name : *Steve Parry, Safer Rotherham Partnership Co-Ordinator, Ext 4565, Email address: steve.parry@rotherham.gov.uk*

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	24th April, 2008
3.	Title:	Neighbourhoods 3rd Quarter Performance Report 2007/08 All Wards Affected
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report outlines the 2007/08 key performance indicator 3rd quarter results and efficiency outturns for the Neighbourhoods elements of the Directorate.

6. Recommendations

That Scrutiny is asked to note the results.

7. Proposals and Details

At the end of the quarter, 25 (90%) of key performance indicators are currently on track to achieve their year end targets. This compares to 79% on target at the end of the last quarter.

The 3 indicators that have been rated as 'off target' are;

2010 Rotherham Limited

- xBVPI 72 Urgent repairs completed in time
- BV 212 Average void relet times

Neighbourhoods

- CPA 31 Business satisfaction with trading standards

Exception Report

Day to day repairs (ALMO)

The indicators have been affected by the flooding (see section on flooding later on in this report). 2010 Rotherham have reorganised the repair delivery teams to better match capacity and demand. Performance has been steadily improving for the last two quarters.

Management of the empty properties (ALMO)

2010 Rotherham have advised that the target of 15 days will not be achieved. Current performance levels of 35 days place this indicator in the lower middle quartile for All England authorities. Some of this deterioration is down to properties undergoing major works which take longer to turn around. A recovery plan is in place which began to show a small improvement in December. Performance clinics have been undertaken in December with individual champions where personal targets were set. Over time is being used to boost performance levels.

Planned Maintenance (ALMO)

Planned maintenance levels are not currently on track to meet this year's target of 40%, which compares to the Audit Commission's best practice levels of 60%. 2010 Rotherham are projecting a 38% outturn. To achieve a balanced repairs and maintenance budget, £1m of planned repairs is being held back. The repairs and maintenance improvement plan was reported to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods on 21 January 2008 and the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel on 13 December 2007.

Private sector housing (Neighbourhoods)

The recent Private Sector Stock Condition Survey shows that we have exceeded the Government's Public Sector Agreement (PSA) target of 70% vulnerable

households living in decent homes for the next three years by 5.8%. Low level investment into private sector housing has prevented us from achieving a maximum 4 out of 4 score for 'housing'. Vacancy levels are around 3,000 in the private sector and achieving a better score on BVPI 64 will help us achieve the maximum score in CPA 2008 (which is announced in February 2009). This indicator is now performing much better following remedial action put in place during the last quarter. The outturn is anticipated to be around 50 private properties brought back into use against an original target of 20 properties. In addition, there has been 2072 energy efficiency improvements made in the private sector and 64 enforcement activities to contribute to improving decency levels.

Food, Health and Safety Team Plan

The new National Indicator Set is due to come into force on 1 April 2008. This contains a number of food and animal health indicators previously not captured within these performance reports. This report contains current performance against the food and animal health programme to help prepare for the introduction of the new performance framework and deliver against an action within the service plan.

The food hygiene programmes are currently ahead of target with 28 Food Hygiene Improvement Notices being served. The premises which had the rating poor or very poor on the 'Scores on the Doors' Scheme have been offered free training and coaching sessions to help these businesses produce food safety management systems. The Animal health programme was on target and the 'smoke free' legislation is continuing to be implemented successfully across Rotherham.

Gershon Performance

Neighbourhoods has a target of £503,400 within the Council's Annual Efficiency Statement for 2007/08. This action relates to matching disabled people to an adapted property database meaning that we avoid removal costs and the cost of adapting other properties. Performance has met target, with £535,090 efficiencies made so far this year.

Work is continuing to take place to improve efficiency management by 2010 Rotherham.

Management of data quality

The Council's 2006/07 performance data was subject to an external audit by KPMG between July and September 2007. All indicators passed the audit and the Council received the highest possible 'performing strongly' rating in December. 9 out of the 10 indicators selected as part of the audit process were managed by the Neighbourhoods elements of the Directorate. Many of the performance indicators that KPMG choose to examine were CPA measures, meaning that any amendments or qualifications could have had a negative impact on the Council's overall CPA rating.

Impact of the June 2007 floods

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods requested more details relating to the impact that the floods had on the performance indicators contained in these quarterly reports at the meeting on the 26th November 2007. The majority of the indicators affected are managed by 2010 Rotherham. The one indicator managed by Neighbourhoods relates to xBVPI 203 (the % change in the number of families in temporary accommodation). 66 households approached the Council for temporary accommodation and 8 households currently remain in temporary accommodation awaiting offers of accommodation in different areas. However, this only had a minor impact (3% reduction) on our performance against this indicator. Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate lost 4339 hours due to flood activity.

2010 Rotherham have reported that the impact on empty property relet times (BVPI 212) increased during this period by 2 days. 30 properties were held back for 4 weeks as emergency accommodation and lettings staff were also involved in the recovery effort meaning other vacant properties were not let in the initial days following the floods. 105 staffing days were lost in this service.

The repairs service was inevitably the area most affected. For example, gas and electricity checks, organising sand bags and dehumidifiers and providing electricity to caravans. It is important to highlight that this included owner occupiers as well. During the crisis, traffic chaos meant that repair work to non-affected properties were not completed on time or to the original appointment made with the customer. A total of 3411 working hours were lost during this time. 2010 Rotherham have estimated that the impact on xBVPI 72 (Urgent repairs completed on time) was a decrease of 0.5% which would have otherwise meant that performance would have been on track to improve from last year. An additional £1m will have been spent by the end of the year on bringing decent homes properties back up to standard again.

The total cost of Neighbourhoods and 2010 Rotherham contribution to the floods was £1.6m. £280k is eligible under the Government's Bellwin scheme and this covers staff time and some repair work. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) repairs were not Bellwin funded. £123k of guttering and roofing costs have been charged to the HRA and £1.2m has been charged to the Housing Investment Programme. Internal audit are reviewing the potential for further capital costs for other flood damaged properties.

Our relationship manager from the Audit Commission has advised that they would take into account the negative impact that the floods had on all Council's affected throughout the Country in determining overall star ratings. The CPA framework for assessing performance of Council's is now much more based on performance indicators rather than inspection.

8. Finance

The financial elements have been identified under the appropriate sections of the report and are based on information contained within the Council's accounts.

Improving performance is the key to demonstrating good use of resources and sustaining the Councils General Fund Account and Housing Revenue Account (for tenants and leaseholders). The decent homes budget is currently on target against the profile, with £53m expenditure to date against the decent homes programme budget of £69.8m.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The main risk is associated with the forthcoming re-inspection of 2010 Rotherham and the scope of this inspection covers housing related services provided by the Council. The re-inspection will take place between the 16th and 23rd June 2008. The risks are the lack of efficiency gains, the low level of planned maintenance and the implementation of a Board approved improvement plan. The Chief Executive's Performance and Quality Team have been commissioned by 2010 Rotherham to provide additional support. There is an improvement plan in place for the strategic housing functions delivered by the Council.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Key performance indicators contribute to the Councils Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) score.

Using the most up to date 2006/07 data, of the 19 best value performance indicators that can be compared nationally, 58% are in the top quartile (above the overall Council average of 25%) and 11% are in the bottom quartile. The indicators that are in the bottom quartile (BVPI 184a, % decent homes and BVPI 63, energy efficiency levels in the Council's housing stock) are linked to housing investment which is now improving strongly from a low starting base.

There have been three indicators that have moved quartile positions during the quarter. % rent collection (BVPI 66a) is now back into top quartile position and the % change in the number of families in temporary accommodation (xBVPI 203) has moved from lower quartile for the first time in two years. Empty property relet times has dropped out of the top quartile position and is now closer to bottom quartile.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The report has been discussed with Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate Management Team and 2010 Rotherham Ltd. The 3rd Quarter Performance results are attached.

Abbreviations

B&B	Bed and Breakfast
BV	Best Value
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CS	Community Services
HMR	Housing Market Renewal
PSA	Public Service Agreement

Contact Name: John Mansergh, Service Performance Manager, Extension 3466,
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Neighbourhoods Performance Results - Quarter 3 (April to December) 2007/08											
Line No.	On Target ?	Measure	Lead Area	Last Year's Result	Quarter 1 Result	Quarter 2 Result	Quarter 3 Result	On track to improve from last year	This year's target	All England Top Quartile	Commentary
1	★	CS 1 Average time taken to provide adaptations in the <u>public</u> sector from referral from social services (smaller is better)	Community Services	130	79	54	47	✓	80	n/a	The ALMO is now providing completion dates quickly allowing Council team plenty of time to plan.
2	★	CS 2 Average time taken to provide adaptations in the <u>private</u> sector from referral from social services (smaller is better)	Community Services	235	96	63	56	✓	80	n/a	Our partner for minor works has improved response times.
3	★	BV 66a % Rent Collection (bigger is better)	2010 Rotherham	98.23%	95.40%	98.30%	99.20%	✓	98.25%	98.57%	Performance is much better than last year (96.93% at this stage in 2006/07).
4	★	BV 66b % of tenants in rent arrears (smaller is better)	2010 Rotherham	3.34%	2.64%	2.66%	3.17%	✓	3.30%	3.89%	Performance is much better than last year (3.19% at this stage in 2006/07), due to effective preventative actions in place.
5	★	BV 66c % of tenants with an legal notice served for rent arrears (smaller is better)	2010 Rotherham	14.09%	2.53%	3.11%	4.21%	✓	14.00%	16.55%	Performance is much better than last year (8.95% at this stage in 2006/07), due to effective preventative actions in place.
6	★	BV 66d % of tenants evicted due to rent arrears (smaller is better)	2010 Rotherham	0.44%	0.06%	0.14%	0.19%	✓	0.40%	0.20%	Performance is much better than last year (0.36% at this stage in 2006/07), due to effective preventative actions in place.
7	▲	xBV 72 Urgent repairs completed in time (bigger is better)	2010 Rotherham	98.78%	98.30%	98.11%	98.21%	✗	99.00%	n/a	Performance has deteriorated due to flooding and reorganisation. Monthly figures are now improving to get ALMO close to target.
8	★	xBV 73 Non-urgent repairs completed in time (smaller is better)	2010 Rotherham	10.14	8.86	9.84	9.37	✓	9.50	n/a	A Repair Team Leader is now working within Connect contact centre to provide better control of repair orders.
9	★	xBV 185 Repairs completed by appointment (bigger is better)	2010 Rotherham	97.85%	97.67%	98.01%	99.11%	✓	97.85%	n/a	Performance is on target but the ALMO have advised that the introduction of handheld technology may initially result with some problems towards the end of March.
10	▲	BV 212 Average Relet Times (smaller is better)	2010 Rotherham	16	13	33	35	✗	15	26	Voids awaiting decent homes works have been included in the indicator and work has taken place let them.
11	★	BV 166a Enforcement score for Environmental Health (100% is best)	Neighbourhood Standards	100%	100%	100%	100%	█	100%	100.00%	A compliance plan has been fully met for the quarter.
12	★	BV 166b Enforcement score for Trading Standards (100% is best)	Neighbourhood Standards	100%	100%	100%	100%	█	100%	100.00%	A compliance plan has been fully met for the quarter.
13	★	CPA 30 Consumer satisfaction with trading standards (bigger is better)	Neighbourhood Standards	94.7%	95%	94%	97%	✓	96%	n/a	Performance levels have improved and above best practice levels of 75%. 75 satisfaction surveys have been returned.
14	▲	CPA 31 Business satisfaction with trading standards (bigger is better)	Neighbourhood Standards	93.6%	90%	93%	95%	✓	96%	n/a	Performance levels have improved and above best practice levels of 75%. 15 satisfaction surveys have been returned.
15	★	CPA 32 Trading Standards: High Risk Visits (bigger is better)	Neighbourhood Standards	100.0%	7.8%	23.5%	47.1%	█	100.0%	n/a	New National Trading Standards Performance Framework runs from April to June.
16	★	CPA 33i Trading Standards: High risk compliance (bigger is better)	Neighbourhood Standards	99.1%	100.0%	83.3%	100.0%	✓	100.0%	n/a	New National Trading Standards Performance Framework runs from April to June and high/medium risk are priority.
17	★	CPA 33ii Trading Standards: Medium risk compliance (bigger is better)	Neighbourhood Standards	100.0%	83.0%	94.9%	96.8%	█	100.0%	n/a	New National Trading Standards Performance Framework runs from April to June and high/medium risk are priority.
18	★	CPA 33iii Trading Standards: Low risk compliance (bigger is better)	Neighbourhood Standards	100.0%	74.0%	76.2%	92.0%	█	100.0%	n/a	New National Trading Standards Performance Framework runs from April to June and low risk is less of a priority under Hampton rules.
19	★	BV 213 Homelessness cases prevented through housing advice casework, as a proportion of the number of households (bigger is better)	Community Services	5 (567)	1 (151)	2 (261)	6 (698)	✓	6	5	Significant improvement made on this indicator due to better recording and the inclusion of discretionary housing benefit payments.
20	★	BV 64 Private sector homes demolished or returned to occupation as a direct result of our action (bigger is better)	Housing Market Renewal	15	9	15	30	✓	20	95	A performance clinic in June has targeted actions for environmental health officers and Registered Social Landlords.
21	★	BV 184b % Change in non-decent homes (bigger is better)	2010 Rotherham	13.8%	6.35%	10.12%	18.86%	✓	15.5%	31.50%	The ALMO is reporting that they are currently ahead of target to deliver the 2007/08 programme.
22	★	PSA 7 Number of vulnerable households no longer living in decent accommodation in the private sector (bigger is better)	Housing Market Renewal	New PI		75%		n/a	70%	n/a	A performance clinic in June has targeted actions for environmental health officers, energy efficiency advice and the appointment of the Home Improvement Agency.
23	★	BV 183b Length of stay in hostel accommodation (zero is best)	Community Services	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	█	0.00	0.00	Bed and Breakfast accommodation is not used for families.
24	★	BV 202 Rough sleepers count (zero is best)	Community Services	2	0	0	0	✓	0	0	Hostel accommodation is not used for families.
25	★	xBV 203 % Families in temporary accommodation compared to last year (bigger reduction is best)	Community Services	4.82%	-12.64%	-8.50%	-21.84%	✓	-9.30%	-26.12%	Performance did drop from last quarter due to increased demand from flooding, as anticipated in the last report.
26	★	HMR1 Number of affordable housing units enabled by the Authority (bigger is better)	Housing Market Renewal	New PI	6	32	32	n/a	70	n/a	A performance clinic in June has improved action planning and the outturn of 70 is on target within the planned programme.
27	★	xBV 211a % Expenditure on Planned Work (60% is considered best practice)	2010 Rotherham	32%	26%	33%	31%	✓	40%	n/a	Performance has deteriorated and an outturn of 38% is predicted.
28	★	BV 63 Energy Efficiency Rating for Council Housing Stock (bigger is better)	2010 Rotherham	61	61	61	63	█	61	69	Significant improvement made following a performance clinic on 12 October 2007. Decent homes investment is now being captured.
29	★	HMR2 % Housing Market Renewal Spend (target is best)	Housing Market Renewal	109.48%	50.03%	61.25%	79.72%	✓	109.15%	n/a	Spend profile and delivery plans in all areas are currently on target.
▲		Red Triangle = Warns not on target and high risk – Action needs to be taken immediately to improve performance if we are to achieve target.									
★		Green Star = Shows that performance is on course to achieve or exceed the year end target									
↑		Improvement in performance									
↓		Deterioration in performance									
█		No change in performance against last reported position									

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	24th April 2008
3.	Title:	Neighbourhood Investment – Private Sector Investment Plan 2008-11
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods

5. Summary

Raising the quality and standard of the residential offer in private sector housing is vital to Rotherham as it has a positive impact on social and economic objectives.

Rotherham already has a Private Sector Housing Strategy, Approved by Cabinet Member on 2nd April 2007, Cabinet Number 252, which sets out areas of intervention and following recent findings of Housing Market Assessment and Private Sector Stock Condition Survey we are now able to prioritise our investment within these intervention areas.

The Private Sector Investment Plan outlined in this report proposes to target vulnerable households, private rented sector and pre 1919 housing with a range of interventions that will provide residents with a better quality of life.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel:

- **Notes the content of this report**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

The nature of the private sector and the way that it operates has a significant impact on households, communities and service providers. The sector makes a range of contributions, through supply, condition and management standards, to the delivery of economic prosperity and achievements of the borough's wider social and environmental objectives. It is therefore important that in considering housing in the borough that the council is able to maximise the sectors contribution in achieving local priorities. We must therefore make best use of the limited resources available to the private sector and invest them in smart ways to achieve maximum impact and benefit for all.

At a national level Government concern has translated into investment programmes and target setting in the private sector evidenced by the work of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders and an introduction of performance measures in respect of decency standards, targeting the most vulnerable.

Both the Regional Housing Strategy and the South Yorkshire Sustainable Housing Market Strategy set out key objectives, which target interventions towards improving private sector housing. At a local level Rotherham is currently refreshing its housing strategy, which needs to align with sub regional working and include the approved 2007 Rotherham Private Sector Housing Strategy key objectives.

The Rotherham Private Sector Housing Strategy focuses on the following key private sector interventions and outcomes:

- Improving the condition of the private sector housing stock and ensuring progress towards Decent Homes targets and satisfactory Housing Health and Safety Ratings Assessments, particularly for vulnerable people.
- Improving access to and choice within the private sector, be it private rented or owner occupied, thereby improving choice for residents.
- Improving management of the private sector, be it private rented or owner occupied, thereby improving standards and reducing environmental nuisance.
- Supporting vulnerable people to stay in their own homes or maintain their accommodation, be it private rented or owner occupied, thereby improving independence and choice.
- Improving the energy efficiency of private sector homes and reducing fuel poverty, thereby improving health, quality of life.
- Reducing impact of hazards within the homes that may have an impact of the health and well-being of individuals and households.

Since the completion of Rotherham's Private Sector Housing Strategy two key pieces of work have been carried out, these are the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (PSSCS). Both provide timely evidence and analysis to help shape our investment decisions and support ongoing work by the Directorate and partners.

The findings of the borough's SHMA and the PSSCS both of which were undertaken and reported during 2007 estimate that;

- Private sector stock in the borough averages 84,242 dwellings representing approximately 80% of the total housing stock
- There are currently 2,544 vacant private sector homes
- The Borough shows better dwelling conditions than those found nationally.
- 21% of all private sector homes are non decent
- The cause of non decency is predominantly due to poor thermal comfort and category 1 hazards, such as dangerous electrical installations.
- Highest levels of non decency are found in private rented dwellings constructed pre 1919.
- The average income in the borough is £22k compared to the national average of £29k, therefore many households cannot afford to buy a home.
- Nearly 40% of private tenants spend more than 50% of their income on housing with many households in fuel poverty.
- Average income for newly forming households is only £9k, which does not allow them to meet their aspirations of being able to afford to buy

(More detailed summary findings of both these reports can be found in appendix 1)

The evidence above masks the very local incidence of severe problems in the private sector within some of our most vulnerable localities. This is illustrated by 2 examples of poor quality private sector housing; in and around the Leicester Road area of Dinnington and the area associated to Castle Street and Warden Street in Canklow.

7.2 Private Sector Renewal Working Group

The Private Sector Renewal Working Group established in early 2007 consists of members of staff from different business units across Neighbourhoods & Adult Services. Work has been focused upon analysis of the SHMA and PSSCS, understanding the current activity in the private sector by various business units, identifying the gaps in service provision and developing the draft Private Sector Investment Plan.

7.3 Targeting resources in the Investment Plan

There is a need to ensure resources within the investment plan are deployed in accordance with priorities and targeted towards those in most need.

Capital investment will be targeted towards;

- private rented housing
- vulnerable households
- and pre 1919 stock

This aligns with the findings of the SHMA and PSSCS, which identify these areas as needing the most improvement. This will be carried out in a geographical way by selecting neighbourhoods, which have a predominance of this type of property profile.

We propose to use the 7 key objectives set out in the Private Sector Housing Strategy to develop work programmes which will be implemented in the targeted way described above. The following diagram illustrates how this will happen.



By working and investing in this way the interventions will help deliver the South Yorkshire Strategic Housing Themes, which are;

- Balancing the Housing Market
- Quality Housing and Placemaking
- Achieving Inclusion and Access.

This approach fits in well with a number of intervention areas where housing led regeneration activity is already underway as part of the Housing Market Renewal programme and Regional Housing Board investments. In addition it targets limited private sector resources towards those in most need.

Private sector Investment plan

The following table sets out our private sector investment plan proposals, showing the indicative budget allocation set against housing themes, strategy objectives and project activity. Resources will be targeted towards the vulnerable households, Pre 1919 housing and the private rented sector.

Housing Strategy Themes			Private Sector Housing Strategy Objectives	Project Activity	2008-11 £
Balancing the housing markets	Quality Housing and Place Making	Achieving Inclusion and Access			
✓	✓		To meet the Decent Homes target for vulnerable people in the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of Affordable Warmth grants • Proactive Enforcement Team • Provision of loans (Home Appreciation Loans, Relocation Assistance Loans etc) 	2,674,000
✓	✓		To reduce fuel poverty in the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Efficiency measures including Save 'N' Warm and Warmfront schemes • New build and retro-fit Eco housing 	3,232,000
✓	✓	✓	To ensure that the private rented sector is effectively supported, monitored and managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive enforcement team using new tools e.g. Licensing, Empty dwelling Management Orders • Landlord accreditation scheme • Landlord Forums • Works in default 	1,189,000
✓	✓	✓	To support people to stay in their own homes, where appropriate, and maintain their accommodation be it private rented or owner occupied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector adaptations (Disabled facility Grants) • Re-modelling/converting of existing private sector properties 	5,119,000
✓	✓		To reduce the level of low demand and vacant properties in the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing empty properties back into use through action by proactive enforcement team and Registered Social landlords • Strategic acquisitions • Living Over the Shop conversions • Gateway and public realm improvements • Demolition and site preparation • New build development 	16,791,000
	✓		To maintain an up to date and accurate knowledge of the private sector stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector Stock Condition Survey refresh 2011 & localised surveys 	82,000
	✓	✓	Deliver Specialist Private Sector Housing projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of housing support to Gypsy and Travellers • Support to Private Sector Non-traditional households who have purchased through 'Right to Buy' • Intensive Neighbourhood Management in vulnerable localities 	5,206,000
			Total		34,293,000

8. Finance

The Regional Housing Board, Housing Market Renewal, Housing Investment Programme (which includes Disabled Facilities Grants) and Affordable Warmth funding are the primary sources of public sector funding which support investment into the private sector. The total sum of the capital allocation for the private sector is likely to increase between 2008/11 as we have bid for more money and already have a firm commitment from Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder that is 26% higher than previous years.

£('000) Funding Source	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Total 2008-11
Housing Market Renewal (Private Sector Support)	6,151	11,211	4,930	22,292
Regional Housing Board (RHB)	1,356	6,732	918	9,006
Affordable Warmth – Energy grants (Npower)	600	600	600	1,800
Housing Investment Programme (HIP)	560	385	250	1,195
Total	8,667	18,928	6,401	34,293

In addition to public sector investments the private sector make substantial contributions through landlords, developers, financial investors, individual homeowners and grants from energy companies, which reduce carbon emissions.

Housing Market Renewal funds support over 86% of the Revenue Expenditure related to the delivery of the Private Sector Support Interventions. The remaining revenue expenditure is met from individual service revenue budgets. The HMR funding allocation supports the housing enforcement activity which led to successful improvements in the private rented sector and bringing long term empty properties back into use. Increasing revenue support still further will help with the delivery of loan based products and more proactive enforcement activity.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Previously limited capital and revenue funding has been available to deliver significant improvements in the sector. As a consequence, the Neighbourhood Investment Team has bid for increasing amounts of external grant funding to deliver against the strategy and to ensure that government policy change in relation to the private sector is being met. Emerging funding streams are being confirmed for the next three years 2008 – 2011. However, more certainty and longer term funding is required to support private sector initiatives.

To support the private sector investment programme further bids to various funding bodies will be made in the 2008/11 period. A bid will be made to fund the establishment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation through site provision. The capital cost is substantial and the bid will need to be competitive if it is to be successful.

Within the resources available it will be necessary to concentrate activity by targeting households, in specific types of housing and in geographical locations to maximise the

impact that the funding we have. This approach will play a major role in delivery against the Council's strategic and enabling functions and help address private sector market deficiencies throughout the borough.

Failure to adequately resource and address private sector housing issues will negatively impact on the Council's ability to meet targets identified in the Sustainable Communities Strategy, Corporate Plan, delivery of Local Area Agreement and the Housing Strategy. It will therefore jeopardise future CPA assessments.

A range of 'new tools' have been developed to contribute towards achieving decency in the private sector, these tools will require promotional activity to provide confidence to residents that they are options that will enable them to improve their housing conditions. It is anticipated that initial take up these tools will be slow and therefore officer capacity needs to be in place to mitigate against this.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Council has a strategic and enabling role in relation to ensuring good quality housing in the private sector.

The activity identified within this report contribute towards the Corporate and cross cutting policy agenda related to Regeneration and in particular the priority for improving and promoting the image of Rotherham.

The proposed project investments also contribute towards our key corporate strategic themes of:

Rotherham Learning
Rotherham Proud
Rotherham Safe
Rotherham Alive
Rotherham Achieving
by:

- addressing the pockets of unsustainable housing that exist in some areas of the Borough through harnessing the resources of all sectors
- encouraging the private sector to develop a greater choice of well-designed, high quality housing across the Borough
- meeting national drivers such as the Housing Green Paper and Housing for an Ageing Society.

These key themes are reflected within the Individual Well-being and Healthy Communities outcome framework, as follows:

- Improved Quality of Life – by creating opportunities for improved housing standards to meet household aspirations and an improved quality of life, through facilitating alternative tools to meet identified housing needs and removing obsolete housing and environmental blight (Objective 6)
- Exercise Choice and Control – through enabling a range of housing options to be presented to households affected by regeneration programmes; ensuring

individuals can exercise choice and control over their housing options and home life (Objective 6)

- Personal Dignity and Respect – through creating housing choices and tools, which promote independent living, personal dignity and respect, investing in quality neighbourhoods, ensuring residents can enjoy a comfortable, clean and orderly environment.
- Freedom from discrimination or harassment – through providing quality housing and independent living, targeted to meet specific need, to support improved health and well-being, facilitated by a transparent process agreed with the client from the outset (Objective 2)
- Economic well-being – providing high quality housing, through high design standards and meeting identified needs in order to create sustainable neighbourhoods, offering high quality and extended choice of housing provision, to meet current and future aspirations.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Rotherham's Strategic Housing Market Assessment – Fordham Research/RMBC, September 2007

Rotherham's Private Sector Stock Condition Survey – Fordham Research/RMBC, November 2007

Rotherham's Private Sector Stock Condition Survey report to Sustainable Scrutiny Panel, 17th January 2008

Making the Difference: A Sustainable Housing Market Strategy for South Yorkshire; Strategic Framework – Transform South Yorkshire, 10th May 2007

Private Sector Investment Plan, February 2008

Contact Name: Paul Benson, Private Sector Officer ext. 4952
paul.benson@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 1 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

- 57% of the private sector stock have a of low value (Council Tax Band A) houses compared with the national average (26%) many of these are in the private sector.
- 34% of households belong to 2 or more adults with no children.
- 15.4%, of households belong to single pensioners this is set in the context of Rotherham having an ageing population.
- Almost 60% of households earn less than £20k.
- The average income in the borough is £22k compared to the national average of £29k, therefore many households cannot afford to buy a home.
- Nearly 40% of private tenants spend more than 50% of their income on housing with many households in fuel poverty.
- Average income for newly forming households is only £9k, which does not allow them to meet their aspiration for being able to afford to buy
- Within the borough there is an annual need for 411 new affordable dwellings. About half (52%) of these could be met by intermediate housing (priced between a social rent and market entry (private rented)) and the other half (48%) could only afford social rented housing.
- The average house price in Rotherham from July to September 2007 was £128,544 (England & Wales average, £229,772) the lowest level entry to housing was £67,724.

Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (PSSCS)

- Borough generally shows better dwelling conditions than those found nationally.
- Approximately 21% of private sector homes are non decent (less than estimated through the ready reckoner based approach)
- Non decency is predominantly focused on thermal comfort and category 1 hazards.
- Highest levels of category 1 hazards are to be found in private rented dwellings constructed pre 1919.
- Highest % of private rented stock are flats and terraced houses and is constructed pre 1919.

Minute No. 201 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods held on 17th March, 2008:-

OPTIONS FOR BUILDING NEW COUNCIL-OWNED HOUSING

Further to Minute No. 162 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member held on 21st January, 2008, consideration was given to a report presented by Michelle Musgrave, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, which detailed the options from an earlier report and provided a critical analysis of the various models available to the Council.

Each model was assessed against a range of factors, including cost, complexity, timescale, and flexibility of approach. Three options were recommended for further development:-

- Council developing on surplus Housing Revenue Account land.
- Limited Liability Partnership.
- Council Owned Local Delivery Vehicle.

The tenure and type of housing that could potentially be developed through these models was examined.

The 2007 Green Paper, "Homes for the Future", and the resultant November, 2007 Housing and Regeneration Bill set out the Government's commitment to address the national housing shortage and a target for three million new homes to be built by 2020. Within this target a significant percentage of new homes would be affordable to households on low-medium incomes. The Green Paper aimed for 70,000 new affordable homes per year to be built (by 2010/11). This was a considerable increase when measured against present delivery.

The Bill also provided new opportunities for local authorities and Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) to develop affordable housing in their own right, in addition to the prevailing registered social landlord route. The options included:-

- ALMO direct build – via Social Housing Grant (SHG) or other subsidy routes.
- Local Housing Companies – using public sector land in lieu of, or in addition to, traditional subsidy systems.
- Councils developing on surplus Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land within their existing HRA system – retaining the income and capital returns from sales.
- Council-owned local delivery vehicle – again using surplus public sector land assets. Would need a formal structure between Council, developers and/or Registered Social Landlords.
- Limited Liability Partnership – a legally binding partnership (which could be used on a site-by-site basis) between a developer and Registered Social Landlord. If using Council-owned land, would involve the Local Authority as a key partner.

Good practice dictated that any medium-large scale development should be mixed tenure, in order to create more stable, sustainable communities. Well-designed, high quality housing also makes a proven contribution to community development.

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

(2) That officers continue to assess how other authorities were developing new Council housing (in particular via the pilot Local Housing Company approach) and identify best practice that could be applied in Rotherham.

(3) That the three preferred options, testing their deliverability against design, quality and value for money be approved.

(4) That the potential of an Arms Length Management Organisation being a delivery vehicle be explored when appropriate.

(5) That this report be submitted to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	17th March 2008
3.	Title:	Options for Building New Council-Owned Housing – Second Report
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods considered a report into options for developing new council housing at their 21st January 2008 meeting. This report develops the options from the earlier report, and provides a critical analysis of the various models available to Rotherham MBC.

Each model is assessed against a range of factors, including cost, complexity, timescale, and flexibility of approach. Three options are recommended for further development.

The report also examines the tenure and type of housing that could potentially be developed through these models.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member:

- 1) Notes the content of the report.**
- 2) Notes that officers will continue to assess how other authorities are developing new council housing (in particular via the pilot Local Housing Company approach), and identify best practice that could be applied in Rotherham.**
- 3) Agrees to progress the three preferred options, testing their deliverability against design, quality & Value for Money.**

7. Details and proposals

7.1. Background

The 2007 Green Paper, “Homes for the Future”, and the resultant November 2007 Housing and Regeneration Bill set out the Government’s commitment to address the national housing shortage and a target for three million new homes to be built by 2020. Within this target a significant percentage of new homes will be affordable to households on low-medium incomes. The Green Paper aims for 70,000 new affordable homes per year to be built (by 2010/11). This is a considerable increase when measured against present delivery.

The Bill also provides new opportunities for local authorities and Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) to develop affordable housing in their own right, in addition to the prevailing registered social landlord route. Options include:

- ALMO direct build – via Social Housing Grant (SHG) or other subsidy routes.
- Local Housing Companies – using public sector land in lieu of or in addition to, traditional subsidy systems
- Councils developing on surplus Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land within their existing HRA system – retaining the income and capital returns from sales
- Council-owned local delivery vehicle – again using surplus public sector land assets. Would need a formal structure between Council, developers and/or RSLs
- Limited Liability Partnership – a legally binding partnership (which could be used on a site-by-site basis) between developer and RSL. If using Council-owned land, would involve the local authority as key partner

Good practice dictates that any medium-large scale development should be mixed tenure, in order to create more stable, sustainable communities. Well-designed, high quality housing also makes a proven contribution to community development.

The Government is encouraging local authorities to achieve 50% affordable housing on sites where public sector land is used as the subsidy mechanism. Where the Government itself is releasing land for development (via English Partnerships), they are insisting that:

- There is 50% affordable housing on site (social rented and intermediate)
- All housing meets Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes
- Limits are imposed on the amount of buy-to-lets

National planning policy is increasingly aimed at bringing forward more potential housing sites. Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) encourages local

authorities to identify potential housing sites (including public sector-owned sites) and to re-examine the designation of other long-term vacant sites.

7.2 The Rotherham picture

Rotherham has a diverse picture of housing needs. Although there are pockets of low demand (which are being addressed through the Housing Market Renewal Programme), there is increasing housing demand pressure, particularly at the affordable end of the market.

Average house prices in Rotherham have risen to £122,475 (December 2007, Land Registry). Although this is less than the national average, when viewed alongside average local earnings of just under £20,000 it is plain that for many households, access to a home on the open market is an unlikely proposition, and that housing affordability is a serious local issue. By way of illustration, the Council's housing waiting list contains over 23,000 households.

Rotherham is forecast to have population growth of 7% by 2021 (Fordham Research 2007). This equates to an increase of over 17,500 people, or more than 7,000 new households. Again, this is a significant housing demand issue for the Borough.

The Council is making good progress in addressing this issue. The Affordable Housing Development Programme combines the work of the Market Renewal Pathfinder Area, Housing Corporation grant funded programme and affordable homes delivered through planning gain (S.106). This has delivered over 230 new affordable homes in the 2006-08 programme.

This will still leave a significant amount of unaddressed affordable housing demand over the next few years. As a result, the Council needs to examine all possible options to increase the supply of new affordable housing.

There are a number of potential Council-owned sites within the Borough that have been identified for residential development. These range from small sites capable of less than fifty homes, to sites with a housing potential in the hundreds. This report seeks to analyse how these could be progressed most effectively to provide new Council-owned homes. In doing so, it progresses the work outlined in the previous Cabinet Member report of 21st January 2008.

7.3 Available options

All of the options examined involve the use of Council-owned sites with residential potential. It is proposed that any development utilises land subsidy, whereby the site is made available to the development vehicle at negligible or significantly reduced cost. This would replace (or lessen) the need for external grant subsidy on each site, and through doing so, allow the Council to develop additional affordable housing to meet local need. It would

also take advantage of the Green Paper proposals to allow local authorities to develop and own new affordable housing.

The options examined are those outlined in section 7.1 of this report, namely:

- ALMO direct build
- Local Housing Companies
- Councils developing on surplus HRA land
- Council-owned local delivery vehicle
- Limited Liability Partnership

In terms of overall risk, none of the options are untried; all are in development and/or implementation by other Councils, and all are acceptable to the Department Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Appendix 1 contains the evaluation table for each option.

7.4 Responding to local housing need

There are considerable advantages to the Council developing and owning new affordable housing, particularly when using the land subsidy approach.

- It allows the Council the freedom to specify and negotiate the type, tenure and size of any new homes (within the Council's existing Planning Framework).
- It affords the opportunity to engage local communities when designing and developing new housing.
- It allows the Council to implement its own strategic vision for housing and neighbourhoods.
- There is an opportunity to embrace new techniques, materials and building methods, such as: environmental sustainability; flood management; modular or off-site construction.

It also allows the Council to respond flexibly to local needs, in particular to build homes that do not fit easily within the established SHG funding system. This could include:

- More lifetime homes
- Eco-homes, or zero carbon homes
- Better space standards
- More family homes on specific sites
- Different models of intermediate housing, such as intermediate renting or shared ownership with lower equity thresholds

In short, the opportunity is there for the Council to develop high quality, sustainable homes that can meet the needs of the diverse communities within the Rotherham area.

7.5 Management of new homes

Although the Council will own any new homes delivered through these routes (or be a shareholder of the company that owns them), decisions need to be made about which organisation(s) will be responsible for management and maintenance.

The Council could decide to appoint one managing agent for all homes developed through these local delivery vehicles. Alternatively, managing agents could be appointed on a site-by-site or geographical basis. Managing agents can be appointed on a short or long term basis, although a short-term option could be disruptive to tenants.

The managing agents available include:

- Rotherham 2010 Ltd
- Housing association partners
- Private sector management companies
- Other local ALMOs

The Council's decision will need to be transparent and made on the basis of service quality and value for money.

7.6 Taking the options forward

On the basis of the analysis in section 7.3 above, and considering site availability, a combination of three options is recommended:

- Using existing Council construction and technical partnerships to develop selected small-scale HRA sites (such as former garages) for 100% new affordable housing. These sites would create less than 25 homes each, and build costs would be less than the OJEU tendering threshold.
- Developing a limited liability partnership to develop 1-3 small-medium sites within a geographical locality. These would be above 25 homes in total and would create mixed tenure developments.
- Commencing work on a Council-owned special delivery vehicle, capable of developing housing at higher volumes. This would be capable of becoming a Local Housing Company if required in the future.

This combination of options allows the Council to test the market, whilst spreading risk. It also offers shorter term delivery of new housing via the first two options.

8. Finance

There are no immediate financial implications to commencing further work on the 3 preferred options as initial work can be accommodated within existing officer resources in the Neighbourhood Investment Team. However each option needs to be self financing and will require the capitalisation of costs associated to the development of feasibility work, legal, design and fees generated as part of this work.

Options	Description	How Delivery Financed?
1	Council developing on surplus HRA land	Cross subsidy from open market sale housing to finance council housing. The council will benefit from increasing asset value and may wish to capitalise rent to fund borrowing. Note there is no affordable housing grant available and the Council will not receive a capital receipt
2	Limited Liability Partnership	Same as above but to a larger scale. The type of developer attracted may have partner status with Housing Corporation and be able to attract Affordable Housing grant to intermediate housing but not Council Housing
3	Council owned local delivery vehicle	Same as above but able to share profits and the developer could attract in a finance partner for longer term investment. Could also transfer to a housing Company finance model at the appropriate time if advantageous

Early dialogue with corporate finance will need to take place to ensure appropriate financial reporting takes place as options are developed.

9. Risks and uncertainties

The risks and disadvantages associated with each new housing delivery option are contained within the tables in Appendix 1.

There are always risks associated with construction and housing programmes. However, the recommended approach aims to spread the risks by progressing three discrete options. These will be evaluated against each other on an ongoing basis, allowing for comparison of delivery and value for money.

The option for larger-scale housing delivery further spreads risk through creation of a public/private consortium approach, which would take the form of an independent delivery company.

The Local Housing Company option is still at pilot stage nationally, and is relatively untested. For this reason, the recommendation is to monitor

progress with the pilots and emerging national policy. This leaves open the option to evolve a Council sponsored delivery vehicle into a Local Housing Company at a later date.

10. Policy and performance agenda implications

Delivering new affordable housing contributes to the Government's aim of building three million new homes by 2020. It also utilises the Housing and Regeneration Bill initiatives for Councils to act as developers of new affordable homes.

On a regional scale, these initiatives will help to achieve the objectives from the emerging South Yorkshire Housing Market Strategy, namely:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place making

New affordable housing delivery will also make a significant contribution to all of Rotherham's key Community Strategy objectives:

- Achieving
- Learning
- Alive
- Safe
- Proud
- Fairness
- Sustainable development

More specifically, it will address two of Community Strategy Action Plan Priorities:

- "Address pockets of low demand and poor housing that exist in some areas of the Borough through harnessing the resources of all sectors."
- "Encourage the private sector to develop a greater choice of well-designed high quality housing across the Borough."

11. Background papers

Appendix 1 – Options evaluation

Housing and Regeneration Bill, November 2007

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3)

12. Contact:

Tom Bell Neighbourhood Investment Manager
tom.bell@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Detailed Options Evaluation

ALMO Direct Build

Ten 3-star ALMOs have already been approved to bid for SHG, enabling them to develop and manage new homes. In the recent Housing Corporation funding round, several ALMOs (including Sheffield and Brent) were awarded grant for new developments. Hounslow Homes has already delivered new homes on vacant HRA land. This SHG route will be opened up to 2-star ALMOs in the near future.

The potential in Rotherham would involve Rotherham 2010 Ltd developing new housing on either HRA land or other Council-owned sites, using a minimum amount of SHG (or none). On larger sites requiring a mixed tenure approach this should be in partnership with a private sector developer, who would deliver open market housing, whilst the ALMO delivered new social rented housing.

On larger sites, there would also be potential for intermediate housing which could either be provided by the main developer and managed by an RSL, or developed via an RSL partner.

Advantages to this approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Helps to develop the housing base for 2010 Rotherham Ltd – addressing declining stock numbers due to RTB. ▪ Rotherham 2010 operates solely within Rotherham and has unique local knowledge and experience. ▪ The organisation is wholly owned by the Council and any new stock would therefore become a Council asset. ▪ Rotherham 2010 has proven housing management experience and capacity, and locally based office bases. ▪ If Rotherham 2010 can achieve partner Status with the Housing Corporation then it could attract in Affordable Housing Grant
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rotherham 2010 Ltd may not get 2-star re-accreditation at its June 2008 inspection. ▪ Expansion into new business areas at this stage could have an adverse effect on core business performance – housing management, decent homes, repairs & maintenance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The organisation has no development experience or skilled development professionals. ▪ New stock developed in this manner would usually have a ringfenced revenue and capital account outside the current HRA, and therefore no potential to contribute to the overall HRA subsidy position. ▪ Tenants would need to show support for this proposal through consultation, as the original ALMO consultation programme did not include this function.
Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is not necessarily a particularly complex option. ▪ The Council and ALMO would need to negotiate an adjustment to the Management Agreement to cover development and management of new housing. This is a relatively easy process. ▪ No adjustment to the management fee would be required, were Rotherham 2010 to operate the ringfence from the new development. ▪ Any legal agreement between development partner, ALMO and RSLs would need to be negotiated by the Council (as landowner). ▪ If SHG were required, Rotherham 2010 Ltd would need to be accredited as an approved developer by the Housing Corporation.
Time scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On smaller infill sites with no partner involvement, development could progress relatively quickly, with completion well within 24 months. ▪ Larger sites would require public consultation, legal partnership agreements, and S106 negotiations and might encounter planning delays due to objections. It would be reasonable to assume a 12-18 month lead-in time and a further 24 months of build time as a minimum. ▪ ALMOs that have pursued this route have already completed their decent homes programme (or are close to doing so), thus minimising the risk of diluting their core business. It would be prudent for Rotherham to take the same approach.
Conclusion	Any new development by Rotherham 2010 Ltd should wait until the ALMO retains its 2-star

	<p>accreditation and ideally until the decent homes programme has been concluded, currently scheduled for 2010/11. This would also allow the ALMO time to develop the skills and expertise required, and to be clear about long-term business planning objectives.</p> <p>This may ultimately be an effective way of delivering smaller-scale projects, especially on HRA-owned infill sites.</p> <p>Officers will continue to monitor the success and effectiveness of other ALMOs that are developing new homes, and the associated legislative/policy framework.</p>
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Local Housing Companies

This is a Government-backed initiative to make the best use of local-authority owned land (and some other public sector sites). It is aimed at high volume development potential, either large sites or agglomerations of individual sites.

The Company would be a consortium involving the Council, developers and RSLs (and possibly financial institutions). The Council provides the land and the developers provide investment to enable development of new mixed tenure development, with at least 50% affordable housing. The Council owns a share of up to 49% of the new company. Increasing land values due to development will allow further borrowing against the value of the asset. The new Homes and Community Agency is supporting the pilots and issuing ongoing guidance.

Fourteen pilot authorities have been selected, including Sheffield, Leeds and Wakefield.

Advantages to this approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong government support and backing. ▪ Allows large-scale delivery. ▪ Increasing asset value enables further borrowing. ▪ Guarantees 50% affordable housing provision. ▪ One company approach should deliver efficiencies and economies of scale. ▪ Off-balance sheet for Council finance purposes.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pilots are still at an early stage – no proof of effectiveness yet. ▪ Long-term agreement required, which may be vulnerable to changes in government policy

	<p>direction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council owns less than half of the company, and some are already attracting criticism for a perceived lack of democratic accountability. ▪ May be expensive to set up in terms of fees, legal etc.
Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requires lengthy partnership agreements to be developed and negotiated. ▪ Will need difficult land assembly packages when incorporating a number of individual sites.
Time scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a lengthy lead-in time, of an estimated two years. ▪ Requires strategic and business planning systems to be set up jointly and agreed. ▪ A number of large planning applications will need approval ▪ Delivery is likely to be phased over a 5-10 year period (or longer, depending on scale).
Conclusion	<p>This approach may have potential in delivering high volume new developments. It is not without risks, however. The scale involved means that a Local Housing Company would probably be the largest vehicle delivering new affordable housing outside Rotherham's existing Affordable Development Programme.</p> <p>As the fourteen pilots are now underway, the best option is to continuously evaluate their progress. As a member of the South Yorkshire Market Renewal Team, we could effectively learn from Sheffield's approach.</p>

Council developing surplus HRA land

The Council could develop new housing directly on vacant or cleared HRA sites. This would not involve Rotherham 2010 Ltd or private development companies. Rents could be ringfenced within each development, as could future sales.

The DCLG is prepared to allow this option, although their guidance suggests that authorities will need to show that it offers better outcomes and value for money than other approaches.

For smaller HRA sites under the 25 unit threshold, the Council could develop 100% affordable housing on site.

<p>Advantages to this approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council would be able to develop and own new housing. ▪ Democratic accountability of the Council as developer. ▪ Small infill sites would not be subject to mixed tenure or OJEU tenders. ▪ Could use existing Council design and construction partnerships.
<p>Disadvantages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most Councils with ALMOs are using their ALMO to develop HRA sites. ▪ Currently the Council uses RSLs to develop on such sites as they have access to SHG and therefore can build 2 homes for every one the council is able to finance through land subsidy. ▪ It does not seem to be the Government's preferred delivery mechanism. ▪ New stock developed in this manner would usually have a ringfenced revenue and capital account outside the current HRA, and therefore has no potential to contribute to the overall HRA subsidy position.
<p>Complexity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is the least complex option in terms of legal position or organisational complexity. ▪ The Council might have to select a developer to carry out the programme. ▪ Selection of a managing agent would be necessary, as the Council does not have an internal housing management service (see section 7.5 of the main report).
<p>Time scale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work could start on site within a year, providing the DCLG were convinced that this approach offers the best value to the Council. ▪ Delivery on small sites (less than 25 homes) could take up to a further 12 months.

Conclusion	<p>The Council may not have the skills or experience at the moment to pursue this route. However, our local construction partners ought to be able to assist.</p> <p>As a Council has an ALMO we will need to justify why Rotherham 2010 Ltd were not involved – though for the next 2-3 years this is unlikely to be an issue.</p> <p>Due to the risk sharing and economies of scale involved in other delivery vehicles, it could be difficult for the Council to prove that this option offers the most value for money approach on anything other than smaller infill sites. For such sites, however, this could be a quick and effective solution.</p>
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Council-owned local delivery vehicle

This is a similar approach to the Local Housing Company option, but with a bit more flexibility. It also has the potential to evolve into a Local Housing Company at a later date, if this proves necessary. Barking and Dagenham Council have gone down this route, applying for LHC status for a delivery vehicle that had been in development for some time.

In principle, the Council could be a majority shareholder in the company, although this may not be acceptable to all partners. The scale of the operation can vary, although small-scale development is inappropriate. The company can also encompass non-housing regeneration activity if required.

Advantages to this approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proven success elsewhere, eg Meden Valley, Bolsover. ▪ Flexible in scale and function – can allow a range of ancillary regeneration activities alongside housing outputs. ▪ Ability to combine a range of subsidy streams – land subsidy, public subsidy, private finance. ▪ Can harness private sector and RSL development skills and strategic expertise ▪ Economies of scale can deliver cost efficiencies ▪ Can deliver flexible mixed tenure schemes, according to local housing need
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Could involve significant lead-in times. ▪ Relatively expensive to set-up. ▪ Only effective for medium-large scale

	developments.
Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complex to negotiate, as it is a long-term regeneration vehicle, possibly with multiple partners. ▪ Could involve multiple funding streams and bidding processes. ▪ Potential to involve multiple planning applications across several sites.
Time scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Would take 12-24 months to select partners, negotiate and agree. ▪ Planning delays possible due to multiple sites. ▪ Once on site, delivery can be rapid – as experienced by existing local delivery vehicles.
Conclusion	<p>This option has the potential to deliver significant housing and allied regeneration outputs in Rotherham. It would work well when applied to larger public sites, or agglomerated smaller sites. It has worked effectively elsewhere.</p> <p>The main advantage is the flexibility that can be applied to each site in terms of tenure mix and non-housing outputs. If Local Housing Companies were to become a main plank of Government policy, then this model can easily move to such a structure.</p> <p>Although time-consuming to negotiate and set-up, this could be recouped through economies of scale and efficiencies later in the lifetime of such a vehicle.</p>

Limited Liability Partnership

This would take the form of a partnership agreement between private developer and Council (with possible RSL involvement). It could be applied on a site-by-site basis, or across a small number of sites. It has the potential to work well on small-medium scale developments.

Using Council-owned land, development would be undertaken by the private company, with an agreed percentage of affordable housing to be provided on site, which would be owned by the Council (any intermediate housing would involve and RSL partner).

Advantages to this approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council would be able to develop and own new housing. ▪ Democratic accountability of the Council. ▪ Uses proven development expertise. ▪ Outside Housing Corporation funding regime - allows Council to determine housing specifications, type, size and tenure. ▪ Effective on smaller sites – can respond to local needs.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Value of land subsidy on single sites may influence the percentage of affordable housing. ▪ New stock developed in this manner would usually have a ringfenced revenue and capital account outside the current HRA, and therefore has no potential to contribute to the overall HRA subsidy position.
Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relatively quick and easy to select partners and form a limited liability agreement (although OJEU might apply). ▪ Planning permission would involve less risk due to tailored local approach. ▪ Selection of a managing agent would be necessary, as the Council does not have an internal housing management service.
Time scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work could start on site within 12-24 months. ▪ Delivery on small sites (less than 50 homes) could take a further 12 months.
Conclusion	<p>The limited liability partnership approach has considerable appeal for development of smaller Council-owned sites in Rotherham, either on an individual site basis, or grouping small sites within a geographical locality.</p> <p>Risk and expertise sharing with partners should enhance delivery, and the timescales involved enable early delivery of new affordable housing.</p>

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	24 April 2008
3.	Title:	Rotherham MBC Smokefree Legislation Update
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report provides an update of action taken by the Council to raise awareness and encourage boroughwide compliance with smokefree legislation which came into force on 1 July 2007 and additionally, work undertaken to ensure the Council's own compliance. A progress report was requested by the Panel at its October 2007 meeting.

6. Recommendations

- **That Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel receives this progress report which outlines actions taken to encourage compliance with smokefree legislation.**

7. Details

New legislation came into force on 1st July 2007, which requires virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces to be smokefree. Enforcement of the controls is the responsibility of the Council's Food, Health & Safety Team.

The approach to securing compliance across Rotherham was developed in partnership with the PCT, South Yorkshire Police, Chamber of Commerce and other key partners. An Enforcement Protocol was jointly produced and implemented to ensure compliance measures were consistently applied.

Awareness Campaign

It was necessary to undertake a local advertising campaign to support the Government's national television and radio campaign prior to the introduction of the new laws. Many businesses were uncertain as to whether the new controls applied to their circumstances and required guidance, in particular on the display of compulsory "NO SMOKING" signs.

Articles were written for newspapers and advertisements were placed in newsletters to promote awareness. Banners were placed outside premises which were smokefree and advertisements on buses reinforced the smokefree message.

A smokefree bus visited local neighbourhoods, businesses were encouraged to visit stopping sites to collect smokefree signs and obtain advice. Advertisements on beer mats in pubs and clubs and carrier bags in the market and shops were also used to further promote the smokefree message.

Additionally smokefree displays were staged and seminars organised to provide information, advice and guidance to the very wide range of people, businesses and organisations affected by the new controls.

Signs in Council Premises and Vehicles

All Council services were involved in installing over 4,000 no smoking signs in Council premises, vehicles and other enclosed areas to which the public have access and continue to ensure compliance within the Council's areas of responsibility.

Compliance Activity

Prior to 1 July 2007 Enforcement Officers visited premises to provide advice and guidance to assist businesses comply with the law. Packs were distributed which held information specific to trading activities.

During the first two weeks following introduction of the legislation numerous premises were found not to be displaying correct no smoking signs, but with advice quickly rectified the situation. Other initial areas of non-compliance concerned the display of signs on internal rather than the external doors and situations where signs had been removed by the public. These matters were again quickly addressed and problems with the repeated removal of signs reduced greatly over time.

In certain areas problems have been experienced with littering of cigarette butts, work has been undertaken with enforcement officers to tackle this. Warnings were stencilled on the pavements in these areas, solutions sought with associated businesses owners and local enforcement activity stepped up.

More latterly there has been an indication of the beginnings of complacency by a small number of business operators and care is being taken to ensure compliance through spot checks and where considered necessary re- visits.

Between 1 July 2007 and 31 March 2008 a total of 3553 visits were made to premises. Returns on this work are made monthly to the Government. Whilst initial advice and guidance has often been required, subsequent compliance has been high and approaches 100%.

Between 1 July 2007 and 31 January 2008, 46 complaints were made to the Council. These mainly concerned allegations of people smoking in smokefree premises/vehicles including a post office, public houses, a residential home, taxis and vans. All complaints have been investigated and a satisfactory outcome on compliance achieved.

Service requests have mainly involved the location and specification of signs, permitted smoking areas and the erection of shelters. Advisory visits have been made to assist businesses.

To-date it has not been necessary to issue Fixed Penalty Notices or institute legal proceedings however, the legislation is now embedded and a firm position will be taken on non-compliance discovered during the investigation of complaints or spot check inspections in accordance with Council's General Enforcement Policy.

8. Finance

Funding of £115,116 in the form of a grant, allocated under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 from the Department of Health to support the enforcement of smokefree legislation was allocated to the 2007-08 revenue budgets of Neighbourhood Services. A clerical and administrative support officer and two enforcement officers were employed in a temporary capacity to support the Food, Health & Safety team.

No further grant is available for 2008-09 on the basis that compliance will become largely self regulating. Compliance is being monitored to estimate what impact future enforcement will have on existing resources.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Council has a duty to comply with the new smokefree regulations. Failure to comply may result in adverse publicity and be seen to show a lack of leadership on public health issues. It may also result in enforcement action and could adversely affect the Council's overall performance rating.

The Health Act 2006 Section 10(3) places a duty on an "enforcement authority" to enforce, with respect to the premises, places and vehicles in relation to which it has enforcement functions, the provisions of the Health Act 2006 and regulations made under it. Failure to enforce the provisions of the legislation will have an impact on

public health, and result in a negative projection to local communities and businesses to deliver against a high profile national drive.

The Rotherham MBC Smokefree Legislation Enforcement Protocol provides consistency and provides an enforcement framework for the Authority.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Smokefree legislation is a key part of the Government's public health agenda and directly contributes to the "Rotherham Alive" and "Rotherham Safe" themes of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan and the theme of Improved Health and Emotional Well being within the Outcome Framework by:

- reducing risk to health from exposure to second-hand smoke.
- recognising a person's right to be protected from harm and enjoy smokefree air.
- increasing the benefits of smokefree enclosed places and workplaces for people trying to give up smoking.
- saving lives by reducing exposure to second-hand smoke and contributing to a reduction in overall smoking rates.

Delivering compliance with the legislation was a Year Ahead commitment for 2007/08.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Health Act 2006

Rotherham Tobacco Control Strategy 2006-2007

The Smokefree Regulations and Lacors guidance

DoH Consultation document on "Consultation on under-age sale of tobacco

LAC (2006) 17 Dept of Health Circular regarding funding to support implementation of smokefree legislation

General Enforcement Policy

Contact Name: Janice Manning, Manager, Food, Health and Safety, ext 3126 and e-mail, janice.manning@rotherham.gov.uk

KEY DECISIONS TO BE MADE BY THE CABINET MEMBER, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR AND DIRECTORS FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ADULT SERVICES

Strategic Director: Tom Cray

Representations to: The Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods, Rotherham Borough Council, Neighbourhood Services, Norfolk House, Walker Place, Rotherham S65 1HX.

KEY DECISIONS BETWEEN 1 APRIL 2008 AND 31 JULY 2008					
Matter subject of key decision	Proposed date of key decision	Proposed consultees	Method of consultation	Steps for making and date by which representations must be received	Documents to be considered by decision-maker and date expected to be available*
April, 2008					
Plan to implement In Control individual budgets and self directed support	7 th April	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	On Target	Kim Curry	Report
SNT Review	21 st April	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Neighbourhoods Commercial Portfolio Review	21 st April	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
2008-11 HMR Pathfinder Programme	21 st April	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance	21 st April	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report

April, 2008							
2008-11 Affordable Housing Programme (Phase 2)		21 st April	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Non Traditional Housing		21 st April	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Parenting Support Update		21 st April	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Modernisation Strategy Review		21 st April	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care	for	On Target	Shona McFarlane	Report
May, 2008							
Garage Site Review – Final Report and recommendations		19 th May	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Private Sector Housing Selective Licensing Options Paper		19 th May	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
June, 2008							
Town Centre Residential Strategy		2 nd June	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Enviro-Crime Strategy Refresh		16 th June	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
Dog Control Orders		16 th June	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	for	On Target	Michelle Musgrave	Report
July, 2008							
Joint Work Programme with PCT Update	7 th July		Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health		On Target	Kim Curry	Report

CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 3rd March, 2008

Present:- Councillor Ellis (in the Chair); Councillors Kaye, N. Hamilton and McNeely.

191. TOWARDS AN INDEPENDENT LIVING STRATEGY

Tom Sweetman, Innovations Manager, submitted an update and gave a presentation on the actions completed to deliver the above Strategy and the improvement of the Adaptations Service.

The presentation drew specific attention to:-

- Where we began.
- Where we are now.
- Savings and finances.
- As was – as is.
- Phoenix database.
- Perfect Partner.
- Golden service.
- Still to come.
- Challenges.
- Awards at Magna.

The report submitted referred to further significant improvements to the Adaptations Service and the work that was still to be completed.

A discussion and a question and answer ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Waiting list timescales for Occupational Therapy.
- Process of submitting a request for assessment by the Occupational Health Section.
- Involvement by the Councillor/Ward Champion in the assessment process.
- Alleviation of the adaptations problem by implementation of the Decent Homes agenda.
- Review of the Occupational Health Service and the adaptations process by Scrutiny.
- Comparison with other South Yorkshire authorities and whether there was any merit in sharing services with one preferred partner.
- Involvement with Key Choices.
- Benchmarking successes.
- Action plans to reduce the Occupational Health waiting list.
- Invoicing difficulties and actions being taken to address the budget pressure.
- Confidence in managing finances.
- Selection process for a preferred partner.

- Information sharing with relevant Cabinet Members.
- Continued improvements of delivering the services to those in need.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress made and the successful implementation of various aspects of the Strategy so far be noted.

(2) That further development of the Adaptations Service be approved.

(3) That the relevant Scrutiny Panel give consideration to reviewing the improvements to the Adaptations Services and the Occupational Health waiting list.

192. FUTURE OF THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING STOCK AFTER 2010

Consideration was given to a report presented by Mark Ford, Safer Neighbourhoods Manager, which outlined the steps required to determine the future options for managing and developing the Council housing function post 2010.

The report set out the business planning considerations on the run up to achieving decency and having achieved it what future opportunities could be explored, set within the context of local and national housing and neighbourhood policies.

In considering the report reference was made to the proposed timetable for delivery, the composition of membership and the lack of Member involvement. It was, therefore, suggested that a further report be submitted to the Cabinet Member detailing the Terms of Reference and the membership of the Group once this had been established.

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

(2) That the establishment of a Housing Stock/ALMO Futures Group be approved.

(3) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet Member outlining the Terms of Reference and Membership Details of the Housing Stock/ALMO Futures Group upon establishment.

(4) That regular reports on the work carried out by the Housing Stock/ALMO Futures Group be received.

193. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in those paragraphs indicated below of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

194. PETITION UPDATE - WATH UPON DEARNE

In accordance with Minute No. 155 of 7th January, 2008, a report was submitted on the investigations that had been taken place by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. into the allegations received of anti-social behaviour.

The complainants concerned had received a first warning letter following by a home visit to gather more information. Home visits had also been made to all the petitioners informing them how to report any further incidents.

Whilst as of 6th February, the complainants had stated that the situation had quietened since the petition, there may still be underlying problems for the person who the complaints had been about. It was, therefore, suggested that the situation be monitored closely and support be provided to ensure that the improvements were sustained.

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

(2) That a further update report be submitted in three months time.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act – information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

195. PETITION UPDATE - BROOM VALLEY

In accordance with Minute No. 176 of 4th February, 2008, a report was submitted on the actions undertaken by the Public Protection Teams into the allegations received of anti-social behaviour.

Visits had been made to the signatories to discuss their concerns and advised accordingly. The situation would be closely monitored for the next three months.

Resolved:- (1) That the actions taken to date be noted.

(2) That a further update be submitted in three months.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act – information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

196. PEST CONTROL SERVICE - VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report presented by Mark Ford, Safer Neighbourhoods Manager, on the findings of a recent Value for Money study undertaken in relation to the Council's Pest Control Service.

The basis of the review was a benchmarking comparison of the Service against other local authority and private sector pest control service providers both regionally and nationally. The Service had also been

measured against quality indicators that demonstrated the position against KLOE9 and the "Isle of Wight" quality matrix. These indicators provided a measurement that went beyond benchmarking criteria and examined the provision of service that added value to the service received by the customer.

The benchmarking and value for money information was contained in the appendix submitted.

It had been found that the Pest Control Service demonstrated an effective and efficient service to the public that had low cost and high quality. The findings also identified potential areas for improvement to increase the value of service to customers.

It also recommended that funding be provided from the Housing Revenue Account to support the provision for the treatment of rats on/in Council-owned housing as well as continued pro-active treatment programmes.

It was noted that the Pest Control charges had been benchmarked and compared against the budget and income provision.

Discussion ensued on the net budget subsidy for the free rat service to customers, the range of services on offer, value for money findings and the initiative targeting rat treatments in localities where sewer and drainage infestations could be expected.

A discussion and a question and answer session took place and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Local authorities that charged for rat services.
- Budget provision and possibility of a bid as part of the budget process for 2009/10.
- Funding continuation from the Housing Revenue Account.
- Rotherham's control of rat infestations.
- Local Authority fees comparisons.
- Local Authority net revenue budget comparisons.
- Enforcement action.
- Corporate fees policy.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the value for money assessment for the Pest Control Service be noted.

(2) That the successful pro-active treatment programme for rats funded by the Housing Revenue Account be continued for a further year to the 31st March, 2009.

(3) That consideration be given to the budget for rat treatments in Rotherham and that a budget issues pressure submission be included as part of the budget process for 2009/10.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – information relates to finance or business affairs)

CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 17th March, 2008

Present:- Councillor Ellis (in the Chair); Councillors N. Hamilton, Kaye and McNeely.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P. A. Russell.

197. NEIGHBOURHOODS 3RD QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2007/08

Consideration was given to a report presented by John Mansergh, Service Performance Manager, which detailed the 2007/08 key performance indicators 3rd quarter results and efficiency outturns for the Neighbourhoods elements of the Directorate.

At the end of the quarter, 25 (90%) of key performance indicators were currently on track to achieve their year end targets. This compared to 79% on target at the end of the last quarter.

The three indicators that have been rated as 'off target' were urgent repairs completed in time, average void re-let times and business satisfaction with trading standards.

Further information was provided on the report which also drew specific attention to:-

- Day to Day Repairs (ALMO).
- Management of the Empty Properties (ALMO).
- Planned Maintenance (ALMO).
- Private Sector Housing (Neighbourhoods).
- Food, Health and Safety Team Plan.
- Gershon Performance.
- Management of Data Quality.
- Impact of the June, 2007 Floods.

Of particular note was the anticipated outturn of vacancy levels in the private sector of around 50 private properties brought back into use against a target of 20 properties, the energy efficiency improvements made in the private sector and the 64 enforcement activities to contribute to improving decency levels.

Of concern was the deterioration in the management of empty properties and the performance level dropping into the lower quartile, despite a recovery plan being put in place. In addition, planned maintenance was not on track to meet this year's target of 40%, compared to the Audit Commission's best practice levels of 60%.

The June, 2007 floods did have an impact on the performance indicators and the Audit Commission advised that they would take this into account

when determining overall star ratings.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Service level delivery and improvements in public perception, particularly around the return of customer satisfaction surveys for Trading Standards.
- The positive implementation of the "Scores on the Doors" Scheme.
- Management of data quality and the receipt of the "Performing Strongly" rating.
- Positive achievement of BVPI64 for private properties brought back into use.
- Re-let times and the deterioration in performance levels.
- Performance management framework for 2010 Rotherham Ltd. and delivery against the action plan.
- Support and assistance to 2010 with the forthcoming inspection in June, 2008.
- Impact of deteriorating performance levels on the budget position.
- Impact on businesses with the implementation of the smoke free legislation.

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

(2) That all those involved in the positive key performance indicator results be thanked for their hard work.

198. FEES AND CHARGES 2008/09 - NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report presented by Michelle Musgrave, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, which detailed the proposed 2008-09 fees and charges for Neighbourhood Services' activities including animal health, bereavement services, food, health and safety, houses in multiple occupation, pest control, pollution control, stray dogs and weights and measures.

The report submitted made reference to legislation providing powers of discretion for local authorities to make charges for specific services and proposed the level of 2008-09 fees for services where charges were currently made across Neighbourhoods Services.

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 provided further powers for Best Value Local Authorities in England (including the Council) to make charges for discretionary services, providing the income from the charges did not exceed the service cost, taking one year with another. Reports would be submitted where it was considered appropriate to invoke these powers.

The report and associated appendices set out in detail the schedule of

proposed 2008/09 fees and charges and in particular:-

- The 2% to 8% increases proposed for the cost of burial and cremations and the guaranteed income sum to the Council as a result of the Bereavement Services Partnership.
- The 2% increase in food, health and safety activities and the 8% increase recommended for water sampling to cover costs.
- The minimum licence fee of £350 for houses in multiple occupation.
- The 2% and 9% approach to covering expenditure incurred for pest control services.
- The national approach for consistency of fees and charges for pollution control increasing the fee by 3%.
- Proposed fee increase of 3.9% for stray dogs.

Discussion ensued on the proposed fee and charges for bereavement services, including a request to rationalise the costs associated with line inscriptions in the Book of Remembrance, the line card of Remembrance and the costs associated with a basic adult funeral in association with the Bereavement Services Partnership.

In considering other issues in the report it was agreed that the fees for HMOs should be increased by 2%. A further report on pest control activities will be submitted in advance of the fee setting for 2009/10.

Resolved:- That proposed fees and charges for 2008-09, as set out in the report, be agreed with effect from 1st April, 2008 as amended by the discussion.

199. GENERAL ENFORCEMENT POLICY REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report presented by Michelle Musgrave, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, which reviewed the Council's General Enforcement Policy following publication of the statutory Regulators' Compliance Code which would take effect on 6th April, 2008.

The Council's General Enforcement Policy (GEP) was approved by the former Cabinet Member and Deputy, Housing and Environmental Services, on 3rd September, 2001 (Minute 21D) and provided a set of common principles upon which protocols for enforcement activities were based.

There were three main changes to what the Council was currently doing and these included:-

- Legal requirements being made available and communicated promptly upon request.
- The information provided would be in clear, concise and accessible

language. Advice would be confirmed in writing where necessary.

- Clearly distinguishing between legal requirements and guidance aimed at improvements above minimum standards.

The revised General Enforcement Policy embraced the principles of the existing policy in respect of openness, helpfulness, a balanced approach, consistency, suitable action, human rights and equalities and additionally took account of new prescriptive obligations imposed by the Regulators' Compliance Code and the Council's key priority themes.

The main changes introduced as a consequence of the statutory Code concerned obligations for staff carrying out enforcement duties.

Discussion ensued on the obligations for carrying out enforcement duties and the change for not undertaking an inspection without a reason. This would result in less or no inspection of low risk businesses. It was suggested that the Council do undertake some sampling throughout the year to ensure that those businesses designated low risk continue to do so.

Resolved:- (1) That the new statutory duty placed on the Council with effect from 6th April, 2008, in respect of regulatory inspection and enforcement, be noted.

(2) That consultation with businesses and consumers be undertaken on the proposed changes to the Council's General Enforcement Policy, as outlined, following publication of the statutory Regulators' Compliance Code of Practice.

200. HOUSING AND SUPPORT FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Kirsty Everson, Director of Independent Living, which set out the latest position in relation to a number of ongoing workstreams broadly associated with housing and support services for older people in Rotherham.

A fresh view was provided on work that had already been undertaken and the report provided proposals to integrate all activities going forward during 2008/09 and beyond.

Reference was made to the current and proposed actions relating to housing and the support for older people in Rotherham and a discussion and explanation was provided on the previously agreed action, the progress, current risks to delivery, the way forward, timescale and the lead officer for each action.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued on the previously agreed actions and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- The need to spend the Regional House Board secured funding associated with Rotherham Sheltered Housing Standards.
- Why Rotherham Sheltered Housing had not been progressed.
- Post of Sheltered Housing Co-ordinator.
- Risks to tenancy agreements where the detail of designation was not included and options for the new arrangements.
- Discussions with the Older People's Champion regarding the revision of the Housing Strategy for Older People.
- Need for scrutiny of the Housing Revenue Account.
- Extension of the Independent Support Champion pilot requiring Housing Revenue Account contribution.
- Drawing up of a Neighbourhood Centre Business Plan.
- Need to spend the Preventative Technology Grant.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress made in relation to the Sheltered accommodation, Wardens and Neighbourhood Centres Reviews be noted.

(2) That the recommended actions to bring the work back on course be agreed.

(3) That a report be submitted in July, 2008 to appraise whether a Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Commissioning Strategy for Older People would be required, or whether a refresh of the Council's 'Wellbeing in Later Life' Strategy for Older People should be proposed.

(4) That an update report be provided for the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health.

201. OPTIONS FOR BUILDING NEW COUNCIL-OWNED HOUSING

Further to Minute No. 162 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member held on 21st January, 2008, consideration was given to a report presented by Michelle Musgrave, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, which detailed the options from an earlier report and provided a critical analysis of the various models available to the Council.

Each model was assessed against a range of factors, including cost, complexity, timescale, and flexibility of approach. Three options were recommended for further development:-

- Council developing on surplus Housing Revenue Account land.
- Limited Liability Partnership.
- Council Owned Local Delivery Vehicle.

The tenure and type of housing that could potentially be developed through these models was examined.

The 2007 Green Paper, "Homes for the Future", and the resultant November, 2007 Housing and Regeneration Bill set out the Government's commitment to address the national housing shortage and a target for three million new homes to be built by 2020. Within this target a significant percentage of new homes would be affordable to households on low-medium incomes. The Green Paper aimed for 70,000 new affordable homes per year to be built (by 2010/11). This was a considerable increase when measured against present delivery.

The Bill also provided new opportunities for local authorities and Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) to develop affordable housing in their own right, in addition to the prevailing registered social landlord route. The options included:-

- ALMO direct build – via Social Housing Grant (SHG) or other subsidy routes.
- Local Housing Companies – using public sector land in lieu of, or in addition to, traditional subsidy systems.
- Councils developing on surplus Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land within their existing HRA system – retaining the income and capital returns from sales.
- Council-owned local delivery vehicle – again using surplus public sector land assets. Would need a formal structure between Council, developers and/or Registered Social Landlords.
- Limited Liability Partnership – a legally binding partnership (which could be used on a site-by-site basis) between a developer and Registered Social Landlord. If using Council-owned land, would involve the Local Authority as a key partner.

Good practice dictated that any medium-large scale development should be mixed tenure, in order to create more stable, sustainable communities. Well-designed, high quality housing also makes a proven contribution to community development.

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

(2) That officers continue to assess how other authorities were developing new Council housing (in particular via the pilot Local Housing Company approach) and identify best practice that could be applied in Rotherham.

(3) That the three preferred options, testing their deliverability against design, quality and value for money be approved.

(4) That the potential of an Arms Length Management Organisation being a delivery vehicle be explored when appropriate.

(5) That this report be submitted to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in those paragraphs indicated below of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

203. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 31ST JANUARY, 2008

Consideration was given to a report presented by Mike Clements, Service Account, Neighbourhoods, which detailed the income, expenditure and net position for the Neighbourhoods Department within the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate compared to the profiled budgets for the period ending 31st January, 2008. It also included the projected year end outturn position.

This was the position after ten months and, following a thorough budget monitoring exercise, it was anticipated that the service areas would outturn on budget as a result of the management actions outlined.

These forecasts were based on financial performance to the end of January, 2008 and known commitments to 31st March, 2008. The forecast outturn was dependent on planned management actions being achieved and thus effective budget monitoring remained essential.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued with the following issues being raised and clarified:-

- Procurement process of the Bereavement Services Partnership,
- Cost pressures for Neighbourhood Standards.

Resolved:- That the contents of the report be noted.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

204. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING TO 31ST JANUARY, 2008

Consideration was given to a report presented by Mike Clements, Service Account, Neighbourhoods, which detailed performance to the end of January, 2008, indicating the Housing Revenue Account was projected to outturn with a deficit of £499,000. Within this, there were a number of variances which were identified as:-

- Supervision and Management Costs.
- Contributions of the Housing Repairs Account.
- Bad Debts Provision.
- Income.

The key risk centred on repairs and maintenance budgets, in managing the potential overspend on responsive repairs whilst maximising expenditure on planned maintenance and concern was expressed how this was being managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

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

(2) That the concerns expressed should be discussed with 2010 Rotherham Ltd. in detail.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

205. 2010 ROTHERHAM LTD. INCREASES AND HRA BUDGET 2008/09

Consideration was given to a report presented by Mike Clements, Service Account, Neighbourhoods, which detailed proposed Revenue and Capital Management Fee budgets for 2008/09. It also detailed the proposed increases to the Housing Revenue Account revenue repairs budgets managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd on behalf of the Council within the HRA 2008/09 budget presented for approval.

The proposals were to increase the Revenue Management Fee by £378,000 for inflation and one-off items and retain the level of Capital Management Fee at 7.7% of the relevant capital programme managed by 2010 Ltd.

Meetings had taken place between relevant parties and service development and savings options had been identified.

It was suggested that further information be provided to the next meeting of the Cabinet Member on any potential further increase to 2010 Ltd pension contributions as notification was due from the South Yorkshire Pensions Authority.

Resolved:- (1) That the revenue and capital fee levels and the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2008/09 proposed in the report be approved.

(2) That an update report be submitted to the next meeting of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

206. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2008/09

This report was deferred for inclusion on the next agenda of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

207. LAND AT EAST STREET, DINNINGTON

Further to Minute No. 26 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning held on 6th November, 2007, consideration was given to a report presented by Michelle Musgrave, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, which provided background information and detailed support of a request to appropriate land at East Street, Dinnington from Children and Young Peoples Services to Neighbourhoods and Adult Services.

The report summarised the issues in order that the matter may be further considered and progressed, which basically related to the development of a new primary school, delivered through PFI, on a suitable site owned by Neighbourhoods and Adult Services. Agreement was then given for the vacated school site to be exchanged and appropriated to Neighbourhoods and Adult Services.

The Dinnington Masterplan housing options process would be delayed if the land appropriation was not resolved and would also impact on the proposed affordable housing programme.

The subsequent future use and release of the former school site would be subject to Regeneration and Asset Board approval.

Neighbourhoods would need to determine the level of housing service investment, both in officer time and financial resources, made to assemble the school development site and the former school site, to enable new housing development to be realised in the area.

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

(2) That the request to appropriate the land from Children and Young People's Services to Neighbourhoods and Adult Services be noted.

(3) That the report be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services for consideration.

(4) That the report subsequently be submitted to the Regeneration and Asset Board.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

208. 7B JACKSON CRESCENT, RAWMARSH

Further to Minute No. 304 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for

Neighbourhoods held on 21st May, 2007, consideration was given to a report presented by Michelle Musgrave, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, which detailed a one bedroomed void non-sheltered bungalow, in need of substantial investment and exceeded the current investment threshold on individual properties.

A number of options for the future of the property had been considered and were detailed in the report. Consultation regarding options for the future of the property had been undertaken with 2010 Rotherham Ltd. and local Ward Members.

In view of the identified need for affordable housing in the locality, it was recommended that the property be retained and improved to Decent Homes standard.

Discussion ensued on the proposals for re-letting the property to residents aged 50+, but it was suggested that, due to the time period this property had been a void, it be offered for re-let initially in the current category and only be re-designated should re-letting it prove difficult.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report and the various options presented for the above property be noted.

(2) That the option to retain the property be supported.

(3) That the property be repaired and brought up to the Decent Homes standard, to facilitate re-letting.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

209. 5 LAWRENCE DRIVE, FITZWILLIAM ESTATE, SWINTON

Consideration was given to a report presented by Michelle Musgrave, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, which provided details of the vacant property in need of substantial refurbishment following a fire. This property formed part of a block of eight three bedroomed family units on the Fitzwilliam Estate, Swinton. The main extent of damage was contained within No 5 Lawrence Drive. However, due to the design and construction of the dwellings, adjoining properties were also affected. The entire roof of No's 5 - 11 would require replacement.

The full costs of remediation works were recoverable from the Council insurance fund.

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

(2) That the option to retain and invest in the property be supported.

(3) That works to 5 Lawrence Drive be undertaken to facilitate re-letting.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

210. PETITION - ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - NORTH CRESCENT, EAST DENE

The Democratic Services Manager reported receipt of a petition containing seventeen signatures relating to the alleged anti-social behaviour of a neighbour.

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

(2) That the allegations be investigated and a report submitted thereon in three months.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act – information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

211. PETITION- ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - NETHERFIELD LANE, PARKGATE

The Democratic Services Manager reported receipt of a petition, containing forty signatures, from residents of Parkgate, Rotherham, regarding anti-social behaviour in the area.

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

(2) That the petition be referred to the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit for investigation, a report being submitted in three months.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act – information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

212. PETITION - THE LANES, EAST DENE

The Democratic Services Manager reported receipt of a petition, containing one hundred and nine signatures, from residents off The Lanes, East Dene, Rotherham objecting to the removal of the Caretaker from The Lanes.

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

(2) That the matters be investigated and a report submitted thereon in three months.

(Exempt under Paragraph 2 of the Act – information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

213. PETITION UPDATE - BROOM VALLEY COMMUNITY CLUB

Further to Minute No. 88 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods held on 17th September, 2007, consideration was given

to an update report presented by Stuart Carr, Facilities Manager, on the issues raised in the petition.

A brief history of the building and the reasons for the submission of the original petition were outlined, which had resulted in an action plan being developed to address the issues, whether they be immediate repair or more medium term improvements.

The lead petitioner had been advised of the steps in place to improve the issues raised.

Significant investment was required to remedy the issues relating to improvement of the ramps and Disability Discrimination Act toilet provision. It was suggested that a further report be brought to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods by Facilities Management in three months confirming actions to resolve these matters.

The concerns raised by the petition included legislative compliance matters including health and safety and disabled access. These were required to be addressed by Facilities Management to ensure liabilities of the Council were not compromised.

Steps were being taken to try and address the anti-social behaviour and other alleged criminal activity being highlighted by the petitioner.

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

(2) That a further report be submitted from Facilities Management in three months time confirming action to resolve the matters relating to ramp access and Disabled Discrimination Act compliance of the facility.

(3) That a report be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People Services for information.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 31st March, 2008

Present:- Councillor Ellis (in the Chair); Councillors Kaye and N. Hamilton.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McNeely and P. A. Russell.

214. PROGRESS ON AN IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR THE TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, outlining progress on the implementation of a service improvement plan for the Trading Standards Service. It was reported that the plan was produced following a self assessment review and subsequent Peer Review evaluation of findings.

It was pointed out that good progress had been made with 84% of improvement milestones having been either completed or with on-gong commitments being maintained.

In relation to the remaining 16% of milestones, it was explained that slippage had occurred due to a key post being vacant, and some work being more complex than anticipated. However, the work had been reviewed and revised target completed dates scheduled between April and June 2008.

The appendix to the report detailed progress on key actions.

Reference was made to the further development of the Business Regulation Partnership which would involve:-

- funding and development of a website
- increased partnership liaison
- consultation with businesses on the revised General Enforcement Policy
- service modernisation
- a more generic approach to inspection locally with reference to a business inspection pilot scheme (with the exception of the Fire Service)

Resolved:- That the progress made on implementation of the improvement plan for the Trading Standards Service be noted.

(The Cabinet Member authorised consideration of the following two extra, open items:-)

215. STRATEGIC LANDLORD EXCELLENCE PLAN

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Housing

and Neighbourhood Services, which outlined the specific areas that the strategic housing function is improving to contribute towards the ALMO re-inspection, scheduled to take place between 16th and 23rd June 2008.

Particular reference was made to the improvement activity required for the Neighbourhoods elements of the Directorate's contribution to the ALMO re-inspection.

In respect of the 65 actions within the excellence plan, the following position was reported:-

- 75% were complete
- 19% "off target"
- 6% on target with remedial action in place

The report contained more detail in respect of those actions rated as being "off target", and the Director provided supplementary information about actions to address these.

In addition it was reported that since compilation of the report Homelessness Service was now at green status.

It was proposed to present a further report to the Cabinet Member in May on the progress of actions on the targets which were currently "off target" (red status) or progressing with remedial action (amber status).

Resolved:- That the improvement activity detailed in the Strategic Landlord Excellence Plan and as now reported, be noted.

216. SCHEME OF DELEGATION - 2010 ROTHERHAM LTD

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, relating to a review of the efficiency and appropriateness of the existing scheme of delegation and decision making processes between the Council and 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

A revised draft scheme was attached as an appendix to the covering report.

It was pointed out that the revised Scheme aimed to clarify and strengthen governance arrangements, and would include a set of protocols. Reference was made to the changes to the allocation of decent homes contracts, which would be subject of reports to the Cabinet Member.

Elected Members present stressed the need for 2010 Rotherham Ltd. to develop a separate Scheme of Delegation detailing responsibility for decision making between the 2010 Board and its Committees.

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

(2) That the Scheme of Delegation – 2010 Rotherham Ltd., be approved insofar as the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods is concerned, and the Scheme be referred to the Cabinet and Council for consideration and adoption.

(3) That the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services inform both the Chair, and Chief Executive, of Rotherham 2010 Ltd of Elected Members' concerns regarding the responsibility for decision making between the 2010 Board and its Committees which was yet to be developed and set out in a separate Scheme of Delegation.

217. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006) (information relating to financial/business affairs of any particular person (including the Council)).

218. DECENT HOMES 2008/09 ALLOCATION OF WORKS

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Investment, 2010 Rotherham Ltd, seeking authority to award contracts for the financial year 2008/09 to the refurbishment and windows/doors contractors that are currently employed by RMBC to carry out Decent Homes works to its homes.

It was reported that the allocations of works proposed in this report were calculated taking into account the contractors' performance up to the end of December 2007. It was explained that performance had been measured using a range Key Performance Indicators which had been agreed with all the contractors.

It was explained that the proposed work values offered Rotherham 2010 Ltd and the Council the best terms from the point of view of achieving Value for Money. Reference was made to improved monitoring and delivery arrangements across the various aspects of the contract.

The Cabinet Member and Advisors commented on the performance of the individual contractors, noting their current strengths and weaknesses, together with any areas in which improvement had clearly been demonstrated by them.

A number of issues were raised in respect of the following, and clarification was requested:-

- achieving target spend

- time within dwellings
- accident incident rate
- number of Construction JobMatch Trainees
- price per rewire
- the amount of variation between the figures
- implications in the longer term

Resolved:- (1) That the Decent Homes work be awarded to contractors, as detailed in the report now submitted, for the financial year 2008/09.

(2) That any changes over £50,000 be reported to the Cabinet Member for approval, in accordance with the 2007/2008 Scheme of Delegation.

(3) That the Director of Investment, 2010 Rotherham Ltd, provide the Cabinet Member with further information to clarify the points raised.

(4) That the current position relating to the environmental works programme be reported to the Cabinet Member in May 2008.

(5) That an update be provided for the Chair of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel.

219. PREFERRED PARTNER FOR THE ADAPTATIONS SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Independent Living, which related to an on-going review of the Aids and Adaptations Service. It was reported that as part of the review it had been agreed that a Preferred Partner should be sought through the OJEU process.

The report detailed recommendations based on the tendering interview and evaluation process that had taken place in March, 2008.

As a result of an analysis of the outcome of the interview and evaluation process it was explained that two of the contractors had been invited to clarify aspects of their original presentations. As a consequence it was recommended that the specialist work for fitting stairlifts and moduls should be separated from the overall contract and awarded to specialist companies, with further clarification being sought from the remaining contractors regarding the rest of the contract.

The financial details of this proposal were set out in the report.

Resolved:- (1) That the contract for Stairlifts be awarded, as detailed in the report now submitted.

(2) That the contact for Modular Buildings be awarded, as detailed in the report now submitted.

(3) That further clarification be sought from the other two contractors, detailed in the report now submitted, regarding their tender for the remainder of the contract.

220. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 90 of the meeting of the Regeneration and Asset Board held on 20th February, 2008, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Programme Manager, Neighbourhood Investment Team, relating to the disposal of commercial property and also progress with the review of Council owned commercial properties located within neighbourhood settings across the Borough.

A summary of the review was given in the report, together with emerging recommendations for the future of commercial properties located within neighbourhood settings. (A copy of the 1st draft of the document, in which information was presented in a Commercial Property Review format, was made available at the meeting, and copies had been made available at the Town Hall.)

It was pointed out that key partners and relevant Ward Councillors had been consulted.

The initial recommendation of the review suggested the following:-

47% of the portfolio be retained
44% be classified as "pending"
9% for disposal

A further explanation was given of the various factors which would also need to be taken into account e.g. neighbourhood sustainability; current use and occupancy; support for continued business growth etc.

Reference was made to:-

- properties located within Pathfinder areas
- estimated market values
- rental stream/Housing Revenue Account
- expectations
- provision of financial advice
- quality of the work which had been done to complete the review and Draft Report

Resolved:- (1) That the report be referred to the Regeneration and Asset Board and the Board be asked to consider the initial recommendations presented within the report regarding the future of individual commercial properties.

(2) That a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet

Member for Neighbourhoods providing additional investment needs information, re-housing implications and identifying funding requirements, to enable further consideration of recommendations to be made.

(3) That the officers be thanked for their work in producing this document.

221. NEIGHBOURHOOD INVESTMENT – PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT PLAN 2008-11

Further to Minute No. 252 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods held on 2nd April, 2007, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, relating to the development of the Private Sector Investment Plan which aimed to target vulnerable households, private rented sector and pre-1919 housing with a range of interventions that will provide residents with a better quality of life.

Reference was also made to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, both of which had provided timely evidence and analysis to shape the Council's investment decisions and support to on-going work within the Directorate and with other partners.

The following issues were highlighted:-

- energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty
- the Borough showing better dwelling conditions than those found nationally
- the value of the return on the Council's investment
- influence and timing of the Pathfinder
- delivery of the 3 year Programme

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

(2) That approval be given to the Private Sector Investment Plan which will deliver against the Private Sector Strategy key objectives through targeted activity.

(3) That the Cabinet Member receives regular reports on work carried out by the Private Sector Renewal Group on delivery against the investment plan, and a six monthly progress report on the overall Strategy.

222. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (HIP) 2008/09

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Service Accountant, detailing the proposed Housing Investment Programme (HIP) for 2008/2009, and the resources identified to support this programme.

The following issues were highlighted:-

- installation of smoke alarms and CO meters at solid fuel properties
- Energy Performance Certificates surveys when properties were re-let
- Adaptations and the change to the requirements for Councils to provide resources to match DFG funding
- demolition of the Tarran estate
- non-traditional properties
- the Regeneration/Neighbourhood Renewal programme – Regional Housing Board allocations
- garage sites
- Research and Information Programme
- Sheltered Housing modifications programme
- resources and funding streams

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

(2) That the 2008/2009 Programme, as now reported, be approved.

(3) That reports in respect of garage sites and on the Decent Homes Programme be submitted to the Cabinet Member in May 2008.

(4) That the Senior Advisor, Adult Social Care and Health, be informed of the reporting timescale regarding the Sheltered Housing modifications programme.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
Thursday, 13th March, 2008

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Falvey, Havenhand, Robinson, P. A. Russell, Walker and F. Wright.

120. COMMUNICATIONS

(1) The Chairman referred to the absence of Dawn Mitchell, Senior Democratic Services Officer, following an accident at home.

Resolved:- That Dawn be wished a speedy recovery.

(2) Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor Lakin, Hilary Cahill, Jack Carr and Keith Stringer.

(3) Reference was made to an e-mail to All Members from Councillor Stonebridge asking for views on co-option to Scrutiny Panels.

Resolved:- That any comments be submitted to Councillor Stonebridge before 26th March, 2008.

(4) The Chairman invited Members to submit their views on items to be included in the 2008/09 Scrutiny Work Plan.

Resolved:- That any views be submitted to the Scrutiny Officer.

(5) Reference was made to the review being undertaken of the Housing Register.

Resolved:- That Sandra Tolley be asked to provide details of the review document to members of this Panel.

121. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

122. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions.

123. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT - LOCAL INDICATORS

Mark Ford, Safer Neighbourhoods Manager, outlined the matters set out in the report circulated.

The report set out the current position with regard to the development of the new 2008-2011 Local Area Agreement. This report referred to an emerging list of indicators taken from the National Outcome and Indicator set that could form the basis of our second Local Area Agreement 2008-

2011.

The key risks around the project were ensuring buy in to both the process and the refreshed strategy and plan across the Council and partners, given the tight timescale for delivery. Delays in information being made available from central Government for example in relation to Indicator definitions and the reward could impact on the ability to deliver the plans by the proposed date.

Mark gave a presentation which drew particular attention to those Priority Indicators in the possible "Top 35" that related to Sustainable Communities.

Scrutiny members asked questions including reference to the following :-

- The RESPECT agenda
- Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour
- Alcohol abuse
- Monitoring arrangements
- Possible reward grant

It was noted that the Cabinet would be considering which Performance Indicators to include in the Local Area Agreement shortly.

Resolved:- (1) That the emerging list of potential Indicators that could form the basis of the 2008-2011 Local Area Agreement be noted.

(2) That the matters being considered for the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 and the further steps being taken to complete the work be noted.

124. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 31ST DECEMBER 2007

Mike Clements, Service Accountant (Neighbourhoods) presented the submitted report.

The report detailed the income, expenditure and net position for the Neighbourhoods department within the Neighbourhoods & Adult Services Directorate compared to the profiled budgets for the period ending 31st December. It also included the projected year end outturn position.

This was the position after nine months and following a thorough budget monitoring exercise it was anticipated that the service areas would outturn on budget as a result of the management actions outlined.

Key points were noted in respect of the following Services:

- Neighbourhood Services Management
- Neighbourhood Standards

- Community Safety
- Neighbourhoods Management
- Community Services
- Neighbourhoods Development

The forecasts were based on financial performance to the end of December 2007 and known commitments to 31 March 2008. The forecast outturn was dependent on planned management actions being achieved and thus effective budget monitoring remains essential.

Scrutiny members were provided with information on a range of issues including the following :-

- Greasbrough Cemetery development
- Landfill sites
- The Independent Support Service (formerly Warden Service)
- Filling of vacancies

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

125. FUTURE OF THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING STOCK AFTER 2010

Tom Bell, Neighbourhood Investment Manager outlined the matters set out in the report circulated.

The report stated the current contract with 2010 Rotherham Ltd expired in December 2010 and outlined the steps required to determine the future options for managing and developing the council housing function post 2010.

The report also set out the business planning considerations on the run up to achieving decency and having achieved it, what future opportunities could be explored, set within the context of local and national housing and neighbourhood policies.

Any move away from the 2010 Ltd. ALMO structure from 2010/11 onwards – either back in-house or via stock transfer would required extensive tenant and leaseholder consultation and a ballot of all tenants (under the terms of the new Housing and Regeneration Bill).

Public services funding was presently being squeezed due to a range of global and national factors. It was not unreasonable to expect housing subsidies to be affected by this (although the Government remained committed to delivering 3 million new homes by 2016)

Housing demand and house prices were at their most uncertain in the current climate. Most indicators showed that price growth was plateauing or falling slowly.

Core performance of 2010 Rotherham Ltd. had experienced some fluctuations since its inception and those core areas should be delivered at a consistent and sustainable high quality before any new businesses could be adopted.

Rotherham 2010 Ltd. still needed to achieve a minimum of 2 stars at inspection, before additional funds for decent homes could be released.

Scrutiny members noted the options available and the need to review them.

Reference was made to adding a Scrutiny representative to the Forum reviewing the future arrangements.

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

(2) That the establishment of a Housing Stock/ALMO Futures Group be supported and Councillor Walker be proposed as a member,

(3) That regular reports be submitted on work carried out by the Housing Stock/ALMO Futures Group.

126. NEIGHBOURHOODS CHARTERS

Shaun Mirfield, Area Partnership Manager, outlined the matters set out in the report circulated.

The report provided an update on the progress to date in delivering against Our Futures 3 (OF3) - Objective No. 10:

Review, develop and implement multi-agency Neighbourhood Charters tailored to meet individual Area Assemblies.

The 'project' highlighted that in a small number of service areas there was at present a lack of performance monitoring data. Moreover, across all service areas no performance monitoring data was disaggregated down to an Area Assembly level. The project had been, and was, however, an important opportunity to increase community awareness of service standards, setting out what they could expect from both the Council and partners, and Area Assemblies profile. The Working Group had identified ways of improving Charter development for the future.

Scrutiny members supported the development of the Charter and the progress being made by the Area Assemblies. Information was provided on the following :-

- The Clean, Green and Safe agenda
- Activity to prevent Anti-Social Behaviour
- The role of the partners
- Links with the public

It was noted that the Governance arrangements for Area Assemblies were to be considered by the Cabinet shortly.

Resolved:- That the progress made be noted.

127. CABINET MEMBER OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Panel noted the decisions made under delegated powers by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods held on 18th February, 2008

128. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th February, 2008, were noted.

129. PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 1st and 15th February, 2008, were noted.

130. RECYCLING GROUP

The minutes of a meeting of the Recycling Group held on 26th February, 2008, attended by Councillors R. Russell (in the Chair), Akhtar, J. Hamilton, Falvey and Walker were noted.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
Friday, 29th February, 2008

Present:- Councillor Stonebridge (in the Chair); Councillors Akhtar, Austen, Boyes, Burton, Clarke, Jack, McNeely, G. A. Russell and Whelbourn.

Also in attendance was Councillor Wardle (Chair of the Audit Committee)

In attendance for Item 159 below were:-

Nick Best	Government Office Yorkshire and the Humber
Peter Holmes	Environment Agency
Steve Maggs	National Grid
Nick Gill	C.E. Electrical
John Hunter	C.E. Electrical
Anna Trippel	C.E. Electrical
Wendy Kimpton	Yorkshire Water
Michelle Lewis	Yorkshire Water
Laurence Morgan	British Waterways
Martin Pollard	British Waterways

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Doyle and P. A. Russell and also from John Healey, M.P. and Tony Rae (Severn Trent Water).

157. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Akhtar declared a personal interest in item 160 below (RBT – Performance Update) being the Council’s representative on the RBT Board.

158. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

159. INTEGRATING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Chairman welcomed organisation representatives to the meeting and introductions were made. Brief reference was made to the submitted report summarising the overview and scrutiny work undertaken since the flooding in June, 2007.

The Chairman outlined the format of the discussions and referred to the report considered by Cabinet this week relating to the summary of both the independent review by Sir Michael Pitt of the 2007 floods and the Environment Agency review of 2007 summer floods, including the possible impact on the Council.

Graham Kaye, Engineer and Ian Smith, Director of Asset Management elaborated on the report to Cabinet and highlighted some of the issues as

follows:

- investment work
- responsibilities of the Council and partners
- river levels and overland flooding
- internal flooding Whiston/Catcliffe and apparatus problems
- creation of unforeseen drainage channels e.g. railway lines enabling water to flow and cause damage

The findings of the Pitt report and Environment Agency review indicated a need to work more closely with partners/agencies and to establish stronger communication links for the future.

An action plan was being prepared and a way forward needed to be agreed.

Nick Best, Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber, elaborated on:

- the role of Government Office : making reference to the Resilience Team and the setting up of communications and also being the command link back to Central Government
- preparedness for an emergency: indicating systems and processes in place. Close working relations had been established with the Pitt review team and Local Resilience Forums had been notified of recommendations from the Pitt report
- execution :
 - at national level category 2 responders (utilities) some worked well some didn't
 - an understanding of critical national infrastructure was vital
 - need for stockpiling of equipment was being assessed
 - need for better understanding of surface water flooding
 - consideration of mutual aid arrangements between local authorities
 - at regional level
 - Local Resilience Forums (LRF) were carrying out their own reviews
 - aims to bring LRF's together to move forward collectively

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- representation on LRF's

- clarification of a Category 2 responder
- numbers of Category 2 responders attending at Gold Command (space availability issues) and need for clarity regarding presence of responders
- travel access to Gold Command
- experiences of Category 2 responders in the June floods
- Category 2 responders attendance at LRF's
- implications for gas and electricity supplies should Ulley Reservoir have burst and awareness of those implications
- need for the sharing of installations information at regional and national level with partners including local planners
- distributive command structures
- clarification regarding roles of Gold Command (Strategic), Silver Command (tactical) and Bronze Command (operational)
- sharing of information at community level
- rationale for moving to Gold Command and hierarchy e.g. most senior people not necessarily at Gold Command
- need to develop intelligence at local level utilising local community, parish councils, local emergency plans etc.
- need for a review of critical infrastructures and better utilisation of such information
- need for clarification of the element of risk associated with Brinsworth Sub-Station
- need to build risks modelling of critical society infrastructures into local and regional risk registers
- maintaining a clean water supply
- checking dams/reservoirs
- managing surface water
- understanding reservoirs and the need for inundation maps was essential
- responsibility for production of inundation maps

- need for better communication links with partners
- need for more proactive working between partners/agencies and a shared agreed set of risks around flooding issues

Following a brief adjournment, a discussion and question and answer session continued focusing on drainage, land and water matters and the following issues were covered:-

- action plans from the floods in 2000
- planning guidance re flood plains
- sandbag allocations and potential alternatives to sandbags
- overview of issues from the 2007 floods from an Environment Agency (EA) responsibility regarding:
 - flood warnings : E.A. lead organisation but can only provide where detection feasible. Cannot detect through surface water/drains etc. Pre-registration was required for flood warning notification but take up was poor. Awareness raising was ongoing
 - liaison/communication : network of gauges on rivers. EA shared information with other organisations but stretched to limit in June, 2007. Lessons learnt from June, 2007 to enable more media information during January, 2008 flood
- recommendation from Pitt report that Environment Agency lead on surface water and need for help/ information from partner organisations regarding surface water/sewers/drains
- 'hawkeye' monitoring of sewers/manholes
- costs and siting of monitoring equipment
- local authority/undertakers' inventories could help Environment Agency and build up a shared knowledge base
- need for proper mechanisms/terms of reference to assess information provided and make practical sense of it
- 'private' drainage issues and need to clarify private/public ownership
- LRF's and numbers of flood plans/governance arrangements
- reporting line/ accountability of LRF's
- need to be able to hold to account locally those with responsibilities

- national capability surveys every two years to assess performance of LRF's
- leadership of LRF's
- work of LRF's driven by national, regional and local risks

Discussion and a question and answer session then continued on specific local matters and the following issues were covered:-

- Canklow regulators
- River Rother regulators
- considerations to reduce risks further in the River Don/River Rother area but time consuming and costly: options to be considered regarding national priority and funding
- public health issues .e.g. sewage in gardens and kitchens
- equipment issues e.g. lack of sandbags, pumping not adequate
- temporary and demountable defences
- lessons learnt from other countries

In concluding the discussions, the Chairman summarised the issues highlighted which needed further attention as follows:-

- 1) Need to continue to develop better communications and information exchange
- 2) Need to clarify roles/responsibilities of Gold/Silver/Bronze Command
- 3) Need for Local Resilience Forum to look again regarding its own leadership in blue light scenarios
- 4) Sharing of inundation plans would be helpful
- 5) Brinsworth Substation position in need of clarification and further work required on the level of risk
- 6) Integrated Risk Management and Assessment – need for safe setting to share information and that those risks can be challenged

Community Risk Management – risk forums to look for opportunity to challenge

- 7) Need for an integrated monitoring system
- 8) Need for clarification of laws relating to sewers/drains (public lack of understanding who is responsible) single contact needed
- 9) Consideration needed as to whether LRF focus of work should be sub regional as now or needs to be more local
- 10) Although not possible to deliver all action plans from 2000, the

- need to be able to deliver 2007 action plans was vital.
- 11) Any further views to be forwarded to the scrutiny office.

In concluding, the Chairman made reference to views expressed by John Healey, M.P., which would be built into the reports going forward for further consideration.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution.

160. RBT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Paul Hamblett, Business and Improvement Manager and Paul Briddock, Head of Service Operations, RBT Connect Ltd., together with Mark Gannon, Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Manager.

Paul Hamblett presented, with the aid of powerpoint, the submitted report detailing the progress and performance of RBT for the period 1st September to 31st December, 2007.

The presentation covered:-

- SLA Performance
- Rotherham Connect Contact Centre Update
- Rotherham Connect Call Volumes
- Human Resources and Payroll
- ICT
- Procurement
- Revenues and Benefits
- Revenues and Benefits : Council Tax Collection
- RBT complaints by Ward

Highlights for the period included :

- Rotherham MBC was successful in the British Computer Society Awards, 2007, winning the Public Sector Organisation of the year award
- two members of RBT Connect staff were awarded HEART employee of the month for September and December
- alternate weekly collection scheme impact on Connect performance

- Rotherham Registrars selected by Central Government as a pilot site for the "Tell Us Once" project, one of only three sites nationwide
- Rotherham Registrars features in a national publication
- excellent work continues for Rotherham citizens in Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service
- positive results from the Human Resources and Payroll customer satisfaction survey
- pay awards received and implemented
- Advice and Guidance Service provided support to Rotherham 2010 Ltd.
- All ICT service level agreements reported on or above target
- planning alert service went live
- progress continues with Procurement Card process
- improvements in BVPI 8 performance
- positive Procurement Satisfaction Survey results
- implementation of Local Housing Allowance remained on schedule
- quarterly reported service level agreements in Revenues and Benefits all reported on target

The report set out :-

- Service by service overview covering :
 - Customer Services/Public Access
 - HR and Payroll
 - ICT
 - Procurement
 - Revenues and Benefits
- Progress Against Corporate Initiatives:
 - Equalities and Diversity
 - Investors in People
 - Consultation/Complaints

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- use of single telephone number
- broadband provision
- role of schools in procurement savings
- impact of opportunity to pay direct debits in twelve monthly payments
- need for future reports to breakdown complaints figures by ward and client

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

(Councillor Akhtar declared a personal interest in the above item being this Council's representative on the RBT Board)

161. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE 2007/08

Matt Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive, presented the submitted reported relating to the above and gave a brief presentation which covered:-

- update on progress of Corporate Plan measures
- Corporate Plan key performance indicators
- Corporate Plan exceptional improvement
- CPA Direction of Travel 2008
- Performance Clinics
- Local Area Agreement
- CPA Framework 2008
- Overall key issues relating to :
 - Environment and Development Services
 - Neighbourhoods and Adult Services
 - Children and Young People's Services
 - Finance/RBT

The report indicated that, at the end of Quarter 3, 73% of the Corporate Plan indicators had hit their target with 72% showing improvement or maintaining their best score in the Audit Commission's Direction of Travel.

Last year's CPA Direction of Travel improvement rate was 55%. Currently, Quarter 3 results indicated an improvement rate of 53% with a projected year end improvement rate of 62%.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following

issues were covered:-

- BV 212 average time to re-let properties
- PAF C28 households receiving intensive home care per 1000 population aged 65+
- PAF C29 adults with physical difficulties helped to live at home
- PAF C72 number of admissions of supported residents aged 65+ to residential and nursing care
- Base Budget Review discussions
- impact of lifting the moratorium on development of Greenfield sites
- Ombudsman: average number of days to respond to complaints
- breastfeeding facilities : need for information from partner organisations/women's strategy

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted, including the overall position and direction of travel in relation to performance.

(2) That the Direction of Travel performance measures at risk be noted.

(3) That scrutiny panels look at the respective indicators along with the relevant Cabinet Member.

162. COPTION ONTO SCRUTINY PANELS

Resolved:- (1) That consideration of this matter be deferred until the next meeting.

(2) That, prior to the next meeting, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of scrutiny panels and scrutiny advisers give initial consideration to the position.

163. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th February, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

164. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor Jack reminded Members that the launch of the Women's Strategy was taking place next Wednesday, 5th March, 2008 from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

(b) Councillor Boyes reported that an extra 'themed' meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel had been scheduled for Wednesday, 2nd April, 2008 with regard to the Town Centre Renaissance.

(c) Councillor Stonebridge informed Members that :-

- the Advice Centres review report was now in draft
- the review of the Use of Consultants was now complete
- the Councillor Call for Action Working Group had reported to Cabinet
- the Complaints review was nearing its completion

165. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
Friday, 28th March, 2008

Present:- Councillor Stonebridge (in the Chair); Councillors Akhtar, Austen, Boyes, Burton, Clarke, Doyle, Jack, McNeely, G. A. Russell, P. A. Russell and Whelbourn.

Also in attendance was Councillor Wardle (Chair of the Audit Committee)

166. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Akhtar declared a personal interest in item 179 below (BVPI 8 – Payment of Invoices within Thirty Days) being the Council's representative on the RBT Board.

167. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

168. PROCUREMENT LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Further to Minute No. 121 of the meeting of this Committee held on 19th December, 2007, Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented the submitted report setting out the details of the indicators developed to date, targets and the first, second and third quarters' reported performance.

Of the thirteen indicators (details of which were appended to the report):

- six were status amber with performance on target
- one was status amber with performance slightly below target
- two were status red with performance below target
- one was reported on an annual basis at the year end
- two were still under development
- one had work ongoing to baseline the current position

In addition, three sustainability local performance indicators had been developed for the Ringway contract (highways) with reporting yet to commence.

Resolved:- That the current performance against the indicators be noted.

169. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 122 of the meeting of this Committee held on 19th December, 2007, Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented, with the aid of powerpoint, the submitted report detailing how the Council's

Corporate Procurement Strategy was based around the 4 key visions of the National Procurement Strategy :

- Vision for leadership, management and capacity
- Vision for partnering, collaboration and supplier management
- Vision for systems that allow business to be done electronically
- Vision for stimulating markets and achieving community benefits

Implementation of the Strategy was via four action plans corresponding to the visions and the report provided an update on progress against those action plans.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- need to link the forward plan of procurement to the forward plan of key decisions
- website difficulties

Resolved:- That the actions to implement the Procurement Strategy be noted and the ongoing actions be supported.

170. REGIONAL NETWORK OF SCRUTINY CHAIRS

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, reported receipt of a request from Mike Leitch, for expressions of interest in the possible development of a regional network of scrutiny chairs.

The Chairman indicated there were examples of such models elsewhere in the country and reference was also made to similar networks regarding health scrutiny.

The opportunity to share best practice was welcomed with as much virtual communication as possible rather than bureaucratic meetings.

Resolved:- That a positive response be sent to the principle of a regional network of scrutiny chairs and further information be awaited.

171. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, reported on provisional arrangements for a scrutiny session on 18th April, 2008 to discuss the above.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following

issues were covered:-

- revised date for the session
- invitees to the session
- need to seek issues from
 - voluntary/community sector organisation
 - area assembly chairs and area partnership managers
 - co-optees
- issues for discussion

Resolved:- (1) That the above session be held on Friday, 25th April, 2008 at 11.00 a.m. to which all Members of the Council be invited.

(2) That discussion include :

- (a) recommendations from scrutiny panels
- (b) issues from Cabinet /Corporate Management Team
- (c) issues raised by the public over the last twelve months
- (d) issues from the parish councils' network
- (e) issues rolled over from the previous year's programme that were not completed.

172. COPTION ONTO SCRUTINY PANELS

Further to Minute No. 162 of the meeting of this Committee held on 29th February, 2008, Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented the submitted report indicating that the previously agreed two year "term of office" for co-optees was to end in May, 2008.

The report highlighted issues to be considered in determining future co-option arrangements for scrutiny panels including :-

- legislative drivers
- recruitment
- scrutiny of organisations subject to formal scrutiny

Also submitted, as appendices to the report, were :

- a full list of current co-optee organisations
- basic role description for potential co-optees
- suggested formats for expressions of interest for completion by groups or individuals

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:

- current numbers of co-optees on scrutiny panels
- types of co-optees (e.g. statutory and non statutory)
- changing role and function of scrutiny
- need to monitor how effective co-optees were at reporting back to their groups/organisations
- potential need for parish council representatives to be co-opted onto all scrutiny panels
- need for clarity regarding co-optee representation (e.g. because of own experience or representing organisation)
- potential development of a 'bank' of citizen co-optees
- code of conduct issues relating to a 'bank' of co-optees
- potential 'bank' of citizen co-optees and link to applications to join citizen panels
- organisations to be approached to nominate co-optee representation
- optimum numbers of co-optees for scrutiny panels
- application process to support co-optee recruitment and format of application form
- co-option arrangements for groups/organisations subject to formal scrutiny
- code of conduct for co-ordinating groups of area assemblies

Resolved:- (1) That approval be given to the recruitment of co-optees to scrutiny panels for the two year term of office 2008 to 2010.

(2) That sectoral organisations, as now discussed, be approached to nominate representatives for co-option onto all scrutiny panels.

(3) That the Parish Council Network be approached with a view to nominating representatives for co-option onto all scrutiny panels.

(4) That an application process, to support co-optee recruitment, be introduced and accordingly the submitted draft application forms be

developed including issues relating to disability/access and how feedback to representative organisations would be implemented.

(5) That further consideration be given to co-option arrangements for groups that were subject to formal scrutiny.

(6) That a further report be submitted on the feasibility of establishing a 'bank' of community co-optees (citizen element) in line with the recommendation from the Public Engagement Scrutiny Review.

(7) That consideration be given to the introduction of a Code of Conduct for co-ordinating groups of area assemblies.

(8) That an overall progress report be submitted to this Committee on 25th April, 2008.

173. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Further to Minute No. 124 of the meeting of this Committee held on 19th December, 2007, Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented examples of forward plans from other authorities namely Hackney, Newham, South Staffordshire, South Tyneside and Blackburn with Darwin.

The Committee considered the various formats of the plans submitted against the Council's current forward plan of key decisions.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:

- focus on the user friendly aspect of the plans
- impending work on the development of the Council's website following the appointment of a website manager
- elected Member involvement in the development of the website
- utilisation of the previous review by Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel to help inform the redesign of the website
- need for website to be user friendly and fit for purpose

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

(2) That, in the first instance, Corporate Management Team be requested to consider the Hackney forward plan format as a basis/benchmark for the development of this Council's forward plan of key decisions.

(3) That the website redesign element of the previous scrutiny review be referred to the Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Innovation to help

inform the redesign and respecification of the Council's website.

(4) That the Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Innovation be requested to look at the Hackney forward plan format given the imminent appointment of a website manager.

(5) That further to the above, a progress report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

174. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th February, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

175. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor McNeely indicated that the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel was planning for the year ahead with voids and the lettings/allocation policy being likely topics.

(b) Councillor Akhtar reported that, with regard to the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel,

- a special meeting was scheduled for 2nd April, 2008 themed on renaissance/town centre issues
- the report on the use of school buildings would be considered at the scheduled meeting on 18th April, 2008
- next year's work programme was being considered
- a joint review was to take place with the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel on child safety issues

(c) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered:

- presentation on the Directory of Services and Activities for Children, Young People and their families
- forward plan of key decisions
- Imagination Library
- support for newly arrived children and young people in schools

(d) Councillor Jack reported that the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel was about to consider:

- for Adult Services
 - examination of the Alive Local Area Agreement indicators
 - In house residential accommodation charges 2008/09
 - proposed changes to the service level agreement and impact assessment
- for Health :
 - annual health check
 - LINKs update

(e) Councillor Stonebridge reported the need to be considering relationships and partnership working in Rotherham.

176. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following item to prevent any unnecessary delay in processing the matters referred to)

177. HEARING LOOP AND AV EQUIPMENT

Reference was made to the availability of portable hearing loops systems and the potential for such use in the Town Hall and anywhere else that the public regularly met.

It was suggested that the previous review on Community Leadership be revisited as reference to hearing loops was made.

It was also proposed that proper AV equipment be supplied as part of the revamp of the Town Hall.

Resolved:- That Cabinet/Corporate Management Team be requested to investigate the provision of portable hearing loop systems for use in the Town Hall and anywhere else that the public met on a regular basis.

178. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to individuals).

179. BVPI 8 - PAYMENT OF INVOICES WITHIN THIRTY DAYS

Further to Minute No. 120 of the meeting of this Committee held on 19th December, 2007, Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented the submitted report which detailed BVPI 8 and how it measured the payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days.

The Council had agreed the following average annual targets for performance of BVPI 8 with RBT:

2007/08	96.3%
2008/09	97.0%
2009/10	97.5%

Following a drop in performance against this indicator in May, 2006 a series of measures were put in place by the Council and the situation steadily improved, although the final outturn figure for the year was 91% against a target of 95.90%.

Performance against BVPI 8 was not as consistent as it should be and it was recognised that the Council should act to instil and embed good practice in this area and work was ongoing to this effect. Recent performance had achieved :

April	97%
May	95%
June	91%
July	91%
August	91%
September	91%
October	94%
November	96%
December	95%
January	90%
February	96%

Average performance against BVPI 8 for the year to date is 93.36%.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:

- prompting system for first named authorisers
- early payment discounts
- driving up performance
- impact on suppliers

- invoice system
- impact on budget
- need to continue as a local performance indicator
- early invoicing
- disputed invoices
- numbers of invoices
- average value of failed invoice to be paid within thirty days.

Resolved:- (1) That the improving position be welcomed.

(2) That the information be noted and mitigating actions be supported.

(3) That future reports should:

(a) continue to be submitted quarterly on an exception reporting basis

(b) show performance on the numbers of invoices

(c) identify any specific risks and impact e.g. relationships with suppliers and reputational risks to the Authority

(Councillor Akhtar declared a personal interest in the above item being this Council's representative on the RBT Board)