

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

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

Date: Thursday, 10 July 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. Priorities and Work Programme
Councillor Wyatt, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Innovation
8. Air Quality Team
9. RMBC Housing Strategy 2008/11 (Pages 1 - 101)
- report of Tom Bell, Neighbourhood Investment Team
10. Garage Site Review and Improvement Programme (Pages 102 - 106)
- report of Paul Walsh, Programme and Asset Manager, HMR Team
11. Customer Access Strategy (Pages 107 - 148)
- referred from the 27th June, 2008, Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee

FOR MONITORING

12. Neighbourhoods Housing Revenue Account 2007/08 Outturn Report (Pages 149 - 157)
- report of Mike Clements, Service Accountant (Neighbourhoods)
13. Neighbourhoods General Fund Outturn 2007-08 (Pages 158 - 164)
- report of Mike Clements, Service Accountant (Neighbourhoods)
14. Houghton Investment Programme Outturn 2007/08 (Pages 165 - 170)
- report of Mike Clements, Service Accountant (Neighbourhoods)

FOR INFORMATION

15. Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods (Pages 171 - 178)
- minutes of the meeting held on 16th June, 2008

MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

16. Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel (Pages 179 - 187)
- minutes of the meeting held on 12th June, 2008
17. Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee (Pages 188 - 204)
- Minutes of the meetings held on 25th May and 13th June, 2008
18. New Arrivals Working Party (Pages 205 - 207)
- minutes of meeting held on 13th June, 2008
19. Members Sustainable Development Advisory Group (Pages 208 - 212)
- minutes of meeting held on 13th June, 2008

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 11 September 2008**

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor McNeely

Vice-Chairman – Councillor P. A. Russell

Councillors:-Atkin, Blair, Cutts, Falvey, Gamble, Goulty, Havenhand, Lakin, Nightingale, Walker and F. Wright

Co-optees:- Alex Armitage (Parish Councils), Bernadette Bartholomew (Parish Councils), Mr. J. Carr (Environment Protection UK), Derek Corkell (RotherFed) and Andrew Roddison (RotherFed)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	10th July 2008
3.	Title:	Rotherham MBC Housing Strategy 2008-11
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report presents the final draft of the Council's new Housing Strategy, which covers the period up to April 2012.

The strategy has been developed in conjunction with a range of key stakeholders and partner organisations. A nine month period of consultation was undertaken, with feedback incorporated into the completed document. The attached draft was approved by Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods on 16th June 2008.

A copy of the Housing Strategy has been appended to this report along with a presentation illustrating its progression and key outputs against the three priorities.

6. Recommendation

- **That Members receive the Housing Strategy 2008-11 for information and are invited to forward any comments to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods**

7. Proposals and Details

Background

Local authorities are required to produce a housing strategy on a regular basis, which should set out how they plan to exercise their strategic housing functions. These usually cover a period of 3-5 years. Given the pace of change within housing both nationally and locally, it is felt that a three year option which fits in with national spending rounds is most suitable for Rotherham.

The Council's previous Housing Strategy covered the period April 2005 – April 2008. It was assessed as "fit for purpose" by GOYH, and therefore met all of the ten criteria required by the Government.

The new Housing Strategy has been developed to meet the existing "fit for purpose" criteria and covers the period 2008–2011. The Government is presently consulting over changes to the fit for purpose criteria, expected to be announced later this year. In the interim, Officers are in contact with GOYH over early assessment of the new strategy.

An effective housing strategy should address the major strategic housing issues facing the authority, and cover all housing tenures – public, owner-occupied, and private rented. The new strategy reflects this balanced strategic approach. A copy of the Housing Strategy 2008-11 accompanies this report as Appendix 1.

Strategy Development

The new strategy has been in development since mid 2007, when consultation commenced on a new housing strategy for the borough. A range of stakeholders, including customers and customer groups have been involved. Seminars and briefings were held for Members, Rotherham Partnership Theme Boards and other stakeholder groups/partners. Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel discussed an earlier draft of this strategy in late 2007.

Four drafts of the strategy have been developed since December 2007. The final draft, included at Appendix A has been approved by the Strategic Housing Partnership and more recently by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods on 16th June 2008.

Feedback from consultation responses has been included in the finished strategy, which also contains full details of all consultation carried out.

The strategy has three thematic topic areas, which are:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place making
- Inclusion and access

These themes correspond to the themes used in the Regional and sub-regional housing strategies. This enables us to translate plans and activities through from local to regional level, maximising our inward investment and resource potential.

Each theme area includes commitments and outcomes for the next three years. These have also been developed into a comprehensive action plan, which will form the basis for delivering the strategy.

A presentation has been prepared for the Panel to illustrate how the Strategy has evolved and the actions/targets set out within the three themes for the period 2008-11 (Appendix 2).

Other housing plans

The new housing strategy is an overarching strategic plan which sets the direction for all aspects of housing in Rotherham. Sitting underneath the strategy are several detailed sub-strategies and plans for individual aspects of housing. These include:

- Homelessness Action Plan
- Private Sector Housing Strategy
- Rural Housing Strategy
- BME Housing Strategy
- Affordable Warmth Strategy
- Affordable Housing Development Plan

Officers are working on refreshing and updating these documents, so that they can be published alongside the housing strategy, with action plans that complement the overall strategic plan.

Delivery

Delivery of the strategy will involve monitoring against the action plan on a regular basis. This will be the responsibility of the Neighbourhood and Adult Services DMT and the multi-agency Strategic Housing Partnership, who will monitor progress on a quarterly basis.

This approach enabled the Council to complete 96% of the actions in the previous strategy within deadline.

As with the previous strategy, an annual progress report will be provided to Cabinet.

8. Finance

Details of the annual housing budget (capital and revenue) are contained within the strategy.

The Action Plan for the strategy is SMART and includes resource implications for each task/activity.

Significant investment strands are dependent on external funding streams – such as the National Affordable Housing Programme, Regional Housing Pot, and Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Programme. The strategy has highlighted areas where these have not been announced for the 2008-11 period.

The remainder of the decent homes programme is dependent on 2010 Rotherham Ltd retaining its two star rating following the June 2008 re-inspection by the Audit Commission.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The major risks to delivery of the strategy are financial. The current global credit crunch could have a significant effect on house prices, house building starts, household debt and economic prosperity. The strategy includes sensitivity analyses for demand and house prices, but officers will be keeping the local and national picture under review over coming months.

Over a four year period, there will inevitably be possible changes to national policy and legislation. The Council's strategic approach needs to be flexible enough to adapt to this during the course of the housing strategy. An annual review has been built into the action plan, to ensure that such changes are identified and responded to effectively.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Housing Strategy is one of the Council's major strategic plans, sitting directly under the Community Strategy, and making a sizeable contribution to achieving the authority's corporate objectives.

The strategy contains a detailed analysis of how housing activities contribute to each of the seven community strategy objectives. Officers have reviewed the strategy against the emerging updated Community Strategy to ensure that synergies are maximised.

The housing strategy contributes to achieving several of the Council's new LAA targets, both directly and more peripherally in some cases. The list below illustrates this:

- Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living
- Net additional homes provided
- Number of affordable homes delivered
- CO2 emissions reduction
- Perceptions of anti-social behaviour

- Drug users in effective treatment
- Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together
- Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- Environment for a thriving third sector

The strategy also contains major national floor targets for housing, including public and private sector decent homes, and halving temporary accommodation use.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Rotherham MBC Housing Strategy (draft)
Fit for Purpose Guidelines for Housing Strategies (DCLG)

Contact Name : *Tom Bell or Julian Higson, Neighbourhood Investment Team, ext 4970, julian.higson@rotherham.gov.uk*

Slide 1

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

Housing Strategy 2008-11

- Last housing strategy ran out in April - was awarded fit for purpose status by government
- Major changes in housing, nationally and locally since 2005
- 12 months of consultation and development
- Fourth draft now produced
- Cabinet Member agreed the strategy 16th June
- Web publication of the main strategy end of August
- Hard copy strategy summary document

Slide 2

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

What's it for?

"every resident should have a decent home that meets the needs of their household"

- Good or bad housing has an effect on other issues - health, education, economic success, sustainability
- Changing role of the strategic housing authority
 - All tenures
 - Influencing and intervening - not providing

Slide 3

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

Strategic hierarchy

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graph TD; A[Community Strategy 2005-11] --- B[Housing Strategy 2008-11]; B --- C[Homelessness Action Plan  
Fair Access Strategy  
Private Sector Housing Strategy  
Rural Housing Strategy];
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Slide 4

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

Main housing issues

- ❑ More homes in all tenures
- ❑ Tackle poor housing conditions and multiple deprivation
- ❑ Decent homes standard - public and private
- ❑ Lack of affordable rural housing
- ❑ Housing and support needs of vulnerable groups
- ❑ Preventing homelessness and extending choice
- ❑ Future management and growth of council housing
- ❑ Addressing fuel poverty
- ❑ High quality design and environmental sustainability

Slide 5

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

Our three priorities/themes

A Venn diagram consisting of three overlapping circles. The top circle is labeled 'balancing housing markets'. The bottom-left circle is labeled 'quality housing & place making'. The bottom-right circle is labeled 'inclusion and access'. The circles overlap in the center and at the intersections between them.

Slide 6

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

balancing housing markets

- Delivering Phase 2 of Housing Market Renewal - investing £27 million in regenerating neighbourhoods and homes
- Developing hundreds of new affordable homes every year for rent and low cost home ownership
- Remodelling housing estates such as Eastwood, in partnership with 2010 Rotherham Ltd
- Ensuring that new housing meets the highest standards for design and environmental sustainability
- Developing more affordable housing in rural areas
- Working with Planners to maximise the amount of new housing provided through planning gain (S106)
- Exploring new delivery vehicles for developing social housing

Slide 7

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

quality housing & place making

- Working with Rotherham 2010 to complete the decent homes programme for all council homes
- Investing £34.2 million in private sector housing programmes - targeting vulnerable households and the private rented sector
- Helping home owners to improve their homes, through Home Appreciation Loans and Home Improvement Agency activity
- Producing masterplans and design guides for urban centres - including Maltby and Dinnington
- Investing in neighbourhood centres and green spaces to ensure their long term sustainability
- Increasing Safer Neighbourhood Team activity to targeted estates
- Increasing energy efficiency referrals by 20%
- Developing more carbon neutral homes

Slide 8

Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

inclusion and access

- Extending Key Choices to other tenures
- Providing high quality housing advice and guidance
- Developing a gateway service for all emergency accommodation
- Building all new affordable homes to Lifetime Homes standards by 2011
- Providing more Supported Living schemes for people with learning disabilities
- Commissioning more new housing that meets BME needs
- Continuing to develop innovative extra care schemes for older people
- Providing and developing a new local authority site for gypsies and travellers

GROUND FLOOR



TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN



Draft Housing Strategy 2008-11

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Executive Summary

Why have we produced a housing strategy?

Firstly because the Council believes that every resident should have access to a decent home that meets the needs of their household. Residents should also be able to exercise a degree of choice over the type and location of their home. These principles underpin what this housing strategy is trying to achieve.

Furthermore, a housing strategy is not just about housing. We know that good or bad housing has knock-on effects for a range of issues that are important to the success and well-being of our communities in Rotherham. These include health, educational achievement, economic prosperity, and community safety. And in recent years, many new housing developments have been at the forefront in terms of environmental sustainability – using sustainable and recycled materials, energy efficiency measures, and domestic power generation.

As well as the factors outlined above, the housing role of a local authority has changed over the last 10-15 years. Many councils, like Rotherham, have opted (with tenant support) to devolve management or ownership of their council housing to separate organisations. In our case, we set up an Arms Length Management Organisation, 2010 Rotherham Ltd to manage and improve our 21,000 plus council homes. This separation from direct management of housing allows the Council to concentrate on its wider strategic housing role, intervening and influencing across all housing in Rotherham – public (council and housing association), owner occupied, and private rented.

It is only through effective planning and activities across all sections of the housing market that we can hope to achieve our goal of ensuring that every resident can access decent quality housing that meets their needs. That is why this strategy:

- analyses the issues involved
- identifies priorities for action
- sets out the actions required

Development and ratification of the strategy has involved consultation with a wide range of residents and key partner organisations, including Rotherham Partnership.

Our aims and objectives

Rotherham has been undergoing a remarkable transformation in recent years – this once declining industrial town now boasts strong economic growth, low unemployment and improved quality of life for most of its residents. Housing has had a significant role to play, through new housing development, decent homes programmes and place-shaping initiatives.

The job is far from complete, however. The borough still faces some serious housing issues. These include problems of housing affordability, pockets of multiple deprivation and low demand, rural housing issues, and a small but significant amount of poor quality private sector housing.

This strategy intends to address these issues. This is reflected in our overall aim for our housing strategy,

“Building prosperous, inclusive communities and shaping places where people have a real choice of housing.”

In order to realise this aim, we have adopted three cross-cutting objectives:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making
- Inclusion and access

Strategic context

The strategy has been developed within the wider national and regional housing context. For instance, the government has set an ambitious national target of three million new homes by the year 2020, and our strategy takes account of this and major government policy initiatives such as “Strong and Prosperous Communities” and “Homes for the Future”. Regionally, this strategy corresponds to many of the issues and priorities contained in the South Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy, and the Housing Market Strategy for South Yorkshire.

Within Rotherham, this new housing strategy sits beneath the main Community Strategy. It is pitched at an overarching strategic level, allowing plans for different aspects of housing to feed in, as illustrated in the diagram below:



Our achievements

This strategy follows on from our previous “fit for purpose” housing strategy, which covered the period 2005-2008. We achieved 96% of the actions and targets from the strategy. Our most significant achievements were:

- We completed Phase 1 of our Housing Market Renewal pathfinder programme – investing over £30 million in improvements to neighbourhoods, new housing provision, and design-led initiatives
- Our ALMO, 2010 Rotherham Ltd, was awarded 2 stars at inspection and commenced a decent homes investment programme of over £300 million
- We have made significant progress in preventing and tackling homelessness. Homeless acceptances have been reduced by 75%, and use of temporary accommodation has fallen by a half
- We launched “Key Choices”, our new choice-based lettings scheme
- We have delivered more than 250 new affordable homes through our partnerships with housing associations
- We were awarded beacon council status for “better public places” in 2007
- We developed a groundbreaking comprehensive Design Guide for town centre renaissance

Over the last five years or so, we have come a long way in addressing some of the large-scale and complex housing issues faced by the Borough, such as poor quality housing, areas of low demand, the need for more affordable homes, and creating safer neighbourhoods. But there is still more to be achieved. The strategy shows how we have identified future priorities and strategic direction.



Our priorities for 2008-11

The housing strategy contains a detailed analysis of housing need in Rotherham, building on and updating the picture of housing need from our previous strategy. Our analysis is informed by data and research findings from a variety of sources, including:

- Census data
- Rotherham Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007
- Rotherham Private Sector Housing Condition Survey 2007
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd Investment Plan

The needs analysis has enabled us to identify the main housing issues that still need to be tackled in Rotherham:

- We need more homes across all tenures as the local economy grows and average household size continues to reduce.
- We must continue to tackle neighbourhood and housing conditions in the poorest areas of the borough, where there are high levels of multiple deprivation, and pockets of low housing demand still remain.
- We remain committed to making sure that homes of all tenures meet the national decent homes standard.
- We need to help those households that are still experiencing fuel poverty, and those in danger of becoming fuel poor.
- We need to address the under-supply of affordable housing in rural parts of the borough.

- We must continue to address the housing and support needs of vulnerable groups, taking account of future demographic projections.
- We need to maintain our excellent progress on homelessness prevention.
- We must decide on the future of 2010 Rotherham Ltd (our ALMO) and any opportunities for organisational development that this presents.
- We should continue to put high quality design and environmental sustainability at the forefront of our housing activities.

Following consultation, we have arrived at three key strategic objectives that allow us to address the issues in the most effective way.



These themes mirror the thematic approach in the South Yorkshire Housing Market Strategy – enabling us to translate plans and actions right through from local to regional level, maximising our resource potential.

Our targets and actions

The targets and outputs cover the period 2008-11, and are described in full in the three thematic sections of the strategy. They are deliberately strategic in nature; more detailed action plans are contained within the other housing plans that support this strategy, such as the Homelessness Action Plan and Private Sector Housing Strategy.

Our major targets/actions are:

balancing housing markets

- Delivering Phase 2 of Housing Market Renewal - investing £27 million in regenerating neighbourhoods and homes
- Developing hundreds of new affordable homes every year for rent and low cost home ownership
- Remodelling housing estates such as Eastwood, in partnership with 2010 Rotherham Ltd
- Ensuring that new housing meets the highest standards for design and environmental sustainability
- Developing more affordable housing in rural areas
- Working with Planners to maximise the amount of new housing provided through planning gain (S106)
- Exploring new delivery vehicles for developing social housing

quality housing & place making

- Working with Rotherham 2010 to complete the decent homes programme for all council homes
- Investing £34.2 million in private sector housing programmes - targetting vulnerable households and the private rented sector
- Helping home owners to improve their homes, through Home Appreciation Loans and Home Improvement Agency activity
- Producing masterplans and design guides for urban centres - including Maltby and Dinnington
- Investing in neighbourhood centres and green spaces to ensure their long term sustainability
- Increasing Safer Neighbourhood Team activity to targeted estates
- Increasing energy efficiency referrals by 20%
- Developing more carbon neutral homes

inclusion and access

- Extending Key Choices to other tenures
- Providing high quality housing advice and guidance
- Developing a gateway service for all emergency accommodation
- Building all new affordable homes to Lifetime Homes standards by 2011
- Providing more Supported Living schemes for people with learning disabilities
- Commissioning more new housing that meets BME needs
- Continuing to develop innovative extra care schemes for older people
- Providing and developing a new local authority site for gypsies and travellers

Ensuring success – delivering the strategy

The strategy is backed by a comprehensive Action Plan – which identifies task owners, resources and timescales. This allows all areas of activity to be monitored regularly and effectively. A similar approach was used for our previous housing strategy, enabling us to complete 96% of actions within deadline.

Progress against the Action Plan will be monitored on a regular basis by the following bodies, and a bi-annual progress report will be provided for the Council’s Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.



We will also be providing feedback and updates to key organisations and residents through our existing partnership arrangements and through communications leaflets/briefings.



Introduction – aims and objectives

Rotherham is a borough that is transforming itself. Major changes over the last few years have seen the town and its surrounding communities stage a remarkable recovery from the position in the 1980s and early 1990s of a declining industrial centre with high levels of unemployment, poverty and deprivation.

By contrast with those days, Rotherham is now a borough with excellent prospects. Rapid economic growth has created new jobs. The percentage of people employed is higher than the national average. Educational attainment is increasing and the local skills base continues to improve. Crime is reducing, and the health of the local population, measured by life expectancy, is better than ever. Essentially, quality of life in Rotherham has changed significantly for the better.

That is not to say that everything is perfect. Despite the overall picture of strong progress there are still many issues that continue to need attention. Progress in some geographical areas has not been as good, and results in some key issues are still below the national or regional average. Evidence also suggests that there are still inequalities among groups and communities within the borough.

The Council has itself come a long way in a short time. From a Comprehensive Performance Assessment of “Weak” in 2003, Rotherham became one of the top ten most improved councils in the country with a “Fair” rating in 2004. We are now a top-rated four-star “Excellent” authority that the Audit Commission says is “improving well”.

These improvements were reflected in our 2005/06 – 2007/08 Housing Strategy, which was rated as “fit for purpose” by the Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside. This new strategy builds on the platform that was laid by the previous one, by continuing to develop several of the ongoing themes and activities. It examines the changes that have occurred both nationally and locally over the last three years, and how Rotherham intends to address these challenges. Finally, it sets out a long term strategic vision for housing in Rotherham – one that aims to help Rotherham to continue to develop and prosper, both economically and socially.

Aims and vision

Rotherham Partnership’s Community Strategy central vision is:

“for Rotherham to be a prosperous place with a high quality of life and excellent services which are accurately targeted to local needs”

This is backed up by seven priority themes, developed through extensive community consultation:

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

This new Housing Strategy aims to make a major contribution to the Community Strategy vision for Rotherham, through our three cross-cutting themes of:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making
- Inclusion and access

These themes are also those used in the South Yorkshire Sub-Regional Housing Strategy, “Making the Difference” (2007). By adopting these themes for Rotherham’s Housing Strategy we are able to show a clear and consistent approach to addressing housing issues, from the most detailed local level through to large-scale regional market interventions.

Our aim for this housing strategy can thus be encapsulated in the following statement:

“Building prosperous, inclusive communities and shaping places where people have a real choice of housing.”

This is our challenge – and it is one that we readily accept. This strategy describes how we intend to meet that challenge.

Housing Plans

This housing strategy is the overarching strategy for housing in Rotherham – across all tenures and types of housing, and embracing each area of housing need. It should be seen very much as an umbrella strategy, setting the overall priorities and strategic direction within which our other more detailed housing plans can operate. These other housing plans are formed from, and in their turn feed into, this strategy. The following diagram best illustrates this interrelationship:



Rotherham – an Overview

Located in South Yorkshire, Rotherham has a rich industrial heritage centred on the twin industries of steel production and coal mining. In recent years the town has diversified its economic base attracting inward investment and creating new jobs in growth industries such as information technology and light engineering.

These changes have sparked a local renaissance, and Rotherham now benefits from economic growth rates above the national and regional average, with educational attainment improving every year, and unemployment levels at their lowest level for many decades. The Borough's population, which had declined during the 1980s and 1990s is increasing again, and is projected to increase by another seven percent by 2021, as people continue to be attracted to the area.

Rotherham comprises a diverse and vibrant blend of people and communities. It is a mix of urban centres and smaller villages, interspersed with large rural spaces. Geographically, Rotherham is 70% rural, although the rural population is just over 10% of people in the borough.

The population of Rotherham is over 253,000. In common with the rest of the UK, we have an ageing population, with the number of people over 70 expected to increase by some 70% over the next 25 years. Rotherham's minority ethnic population makes up around 5.4% of the total population, lower than the national and regional average. The largest single minority ethnic community is Pakistani. Over recent years there has been small but significant in-migration of people from Eastern European EU accession countries.

The Council has a Leader and Cabinet model of governance, reinforced by a strong and effective Scrutiny function. The housing brief is held by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods. Council services are delivered by five directorates:

- Chief Executive
- Neighbourhoods and Adult Services (including housing)
- Children and Young Peoples' Services
- Environment and Development Services
- Financial Services

The Council is currently rated as a top "four star – excellent" authority, and has been awarded beacon status in seven different categories in recent years.

Despite Rotherham's recent socio-economic success, there are still serious local issues which continue to need attention. These include:

- Skills and qualification levels that are below average
- Income levels below national averages
- Life expectancy below national average and a high proportion of people with limiting long term illnesses
- Low housing demand in some areas
- An increasing housing affordability gap
- Spatial differentials between local communities – there is a significant gap between the best and worst performing wards (measured by levels of multiple deprivation)

The Council's major strategies, including this housing strategy, all aim to tackle these issues through targeted joint intervention.

There are additional issues of crime, fear of crime and community safety, which are of particular importance to local residents. Although the borough has low crime rates compared to national and sub-regional averages, it is still an issue which is high on residents' lists of priorities. The multi-agency Safer Rotherham Partnership co-ordinates community safety activities around the borough's seven Area Assembly areas. The Partnership has been successful with a number of anti-social behaviour initiatives and has successfully improved resident perceptions of community safety.

Housing Stock

Overall figures for housing are as follows:

There are 109,530 dwellings in Rotherham (source: Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix). This figure represents about 20% of all dwellings in the South Yorkshire sub-region. The tenure distribution is shown in the table below:

Tenure	Rotherham	S Yorkshire	England & Wales
Owner occupied	65.3%	63.6%	68.3%
Shared ownership	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%
Local authority	23.2%	23.7%	13.2%
Housing Association	3.2%	3.0%	6.0%
Private rented	5.0%	6.5%	8.7%
Other	3.3%	2.9%	3.2%

Comparison with national figures show that Rotherham has a lower proportion of owner-occupiers and private rented tenants than the rest of England and Wales. By contrast, we have a larger local authority rented sector. Rotherham's tenure picture is fairly similar to the overall figures for the South Yorkshire sub-region.

Housing Conditions – Social Housing

In the social housing sector, considerable work has been carried out over recent years to address the decent homes standard. Our ALMO, 2010 Rotherham Ltd was awarded 2 stars by the Audit Commission in 2006 and has been undertaking a £300+ million investment programme since 2005. As a result the proportion of non-decent homes has reduced from 74% to 47.64% (as at March 2008). 2010 Rotherham's Decent Homes Programme is on course to meet the Government's 2010 decent home target – providing that the Government continues to release the required funds between now and 2010.

Within the Council's stock there are a number of dwellings of non-traditional construction (mainly pre-cast reinforced concrete). Some of these do not have an economic future. The Council's Neighbourhood Investment Team, in partnership with 2010 Rotherham Ltd has just carried out an asset management survey of all non-traditional stock. This has resulted in a decision to invest in 492 properties through the decent homes programme. Further consultation relating to the remaining 330 properties is required, the outcome of which will see the production of an investment plan during the Summer 2008.

Housing Conditions – private sector

A comprehensive private sector stock condition survey was carried out for Rotherham by Fordham Research in late 2007, with results published in February 2008. The survey had the following key findings:

- Over 85% of private sector dwellings were built after 1919 – compared with 75% nationally
- There are 3,500 vacant private sector homes – nearly 1,400 these have been empty for over 6 months
- 11% of private sector homes (9,349 in total), have a Category 1 Hazard under the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) – most of these relate to cold and fall hazards
- The average cost per dwelling for carrying out urgent repairs is £1106
- There are roughly 400 houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), only 5 of which fall under the definition of "licensable"
- The private rented sector is only 5-6% of all homes in the borough, and is predominantly terraced houses and flats

In terms of the decency standard, only 20.7% of private sector homes are non-decent, although the situation is poor in the rented sector, with 44.9% of homes failing to meet the decency standard. The total cost of remedying private sector non-decency in the borough is an estimated £53.9 million, which translates as £3,098 per each non-decent dwelling.

Achievements

This section shows our progress to date in addressing Rotherham's housing issues during the period covered by the previous housing strategy (2005/06 – 2007/08). It offers our headline major achievements, and an assessment of our performance against the last strategy action plan.

Headlines

- Phase 1 of our Housing Market Renewal pathfinder programme was completed – with improvements to neighbourhoods, new housing provision, and design-led initiatives
- Our ALMO, 2010 Rotherham Ltd, was awarded 2 stars at inspection and commenced a decent homes investment programme of over £300 million
- Homeless acceptances have been reduced by 75%, and use of temporary accommodation has fallen by a half
- Rotherham was awarded beacon council status for “better public places” in 2008
- We developed a comprehensive Design Guide for town centre renaissance
- We launched “Key Choices”, our new choice-based lettings scheme
- We delivered more than 270 new affordable homes

Delivery

The Action Plan included as part of the previous housing strategy comprised 94 separate targets/projects, spread across 11 strategic objectives. By March 2008, we had completed 90 of these actions, equating to 96% completion. These included:

Balancing Housing Markets

- First Living Over The Shops (LOTS) Scheme completed on the town centre supporting local businesses
- Award for Housing Design at Westgate Demonstrator
- Developed mixed tenure housing solutions to increase range of affordable housing options including shared ownership and ‘Homebuy’ as part of 2006/08 Affordable Housing Programme
- Completion of three major regeneration schemes at Maltby, Wath and Wharncliffe improving over 800 homes and the demolition of unpopular flats and maisonettes

Quality Housing and Placemaking

- Developed neighbourhood masterplans for deprived urban centres
- Assisted over 2,000 private sector households with loft insulation and cavity wall insulation
- Completion of 2 alley gating schemes in Eastwood and Brinsworth (work starting on a 3rd scheme at Masbrough) has seen a reduction in crime statistics in these areas
- £2.3m invested in parks and green spaces
- Providing Training opportunities for residents in regeneration areas through partnership working with construction companies and groundwork companies
- BME Housing Design protocol held up as good practice
- 23 family homes built at Henley Rise in accordance with Level 5 of Code for Sustainable Homes (carbon neutral)
- Beacon Award for 'Better Public Places' 2008

Achieving Inclusion and Access

- 2 Extra Care Housing Developments have been built in the North (Potteries Court, Swinton) and centre (Oak Trees) of the borough. Plans in place to develop a third scheme (Longfellow Drive, Herringthorpe)
- Introduction of 3rd 'Key Ring' scheme in Thurcroft in partnership with Supporting People and Learning Disability Services
- Introduction of Key Choices - Choice Based Lettings Scheme



Strategic context

This strategy has been developed using evidence and information from a range of sources: consultation; census data; research findings; performance information; benchmarking & best practice; and market analyses. It also embraces the wider policy agenda for all local government services, as we know that housing does not operate in a policy vacuum.

Our goal is to ensure that our strategic approach to housing helps us to develop long-term sustainable communities – to do this we need to be up to the minute with our understanding of the legislative and policy framework and the benefits that it can afford.

National context

The Government has recognised the importance that housing brings to national prosperity and well-being and accordingly has made the provision of quality housing a national policy priority. With a national delivery target of three million new homes by 2020, this sets a challenging agenda for local authorities.

Before analysing legislation and guidance in detail it is worth examining some of the wider, even global factors that will influence housing over the lifetime of this strategy.

- Global warming – climate change is being tackled on a global scale. Communities and families are becoming more aware of the need to minimise their carbon footprints. This has a housing effect in terms of transport, commuting, building design & materials, and home energy use.
- Global economy – this strategy is being produced at a time of global economic uncertainty, fuelled by difficulties in the American and European lending markets. This has already had a significant effect on the US property market. At the time of writing, expert opinion is divided on the possible effect in the UK. What appears most likely is a national fall in house prices of up to 10-15% over the next 2 years (although some economists posit only a levelling off of prices). The actual severity may depend on the banks' medium-term approach to lending due to the "credit crunch".

The following diagram outlines the national legislative and policy drivers that have informed development of this housing strategy:

Strong and Prosperous Communities (2006) and Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act (2007)	Respect Action Plan (2006)	Our Care, Our Health, Our Say (2006)
Sustainable Communities: Homes for All (2005)	Homes for the Future (2007) and Housing & Regeneration Bill (2007)	Planning for a Sustainable Future (2007) and Planning Bill (2007)
Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing (2006)	Building a Greener Future (2007)	The Code for Sustainable Homes (2008)

We will continue to develop our strategic plans over the period covered by this strategy, and will do so by ensuring that we always take emerging government policy and guidance into account.

Regional Context

Rotherham is within the Government Office region of Yorkshire and Humberside, located to the South of this wider region which encompasses the industrial urban heartlands of Yorkshire and Hull, the rural hinterlands of these centres, and the more rurally dominated areas of North Yorkshire.

Sub-regionally, Rotherham is one of the four boroughs that comprise South Yorkshire (the other three being Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster). The South Yorkshire area is characterised by its former industrial heritage, based around coal mining and steel production. When these industries went into terminal decline in the 1980s, the region suffered socially and economically as a result. It is only over the course of the last 10-15 years that recovery has taken place, due to a combination of national and local initiatives and significant inward investment within the sub-region.

In 2008, South Yorkshire has higher economic growth than the national average, low unemployment, and a population that has started to increase again, after 20 years of net outward migration.

However, many communities in South Yorkshire exhibit signs of social and tenorial polarisation. Multiple deprivation remains high in many areas, with particular issues around skills, education, earnings and health.

Perhaps the key housing development of the last few years has been the South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR) programme. The South Yorkshire HMR is the largest of nine national pathfinders, created in 2004 to address structural issues of low housing demand and market weaknesses. The HMR area covers both urban and rural areas, and encompasses over 140,000 households within its remit.

The diagram below outlines the key regional and sub-regional strategies and initiatives that have helped to shape this strategy.



Making the Difference – a Sustainable Housing Market Strategy for South Yorkshire (Transform South Yorkshire, 2007)

Transform South Yorkshire was created through the merger of the South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Partnership and the South Yorkshire Housing and Regeneration Partnership. The housing market strategy covers the period 2008-18, and is jointly agreed by the four South Yorkshire authorities, and other key strategic partners. It combines the HMR Pathfinder strategy and other housing-led regeneration initiatives in the one overarching strategic plan.

There are three main strategic themes to the strategy:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making

- Achieving inclusion and access

These are broadly the same themes as used in the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Housing Strategy, thus recognising the strategic importance of these topics to effective housing intervention within the region.

We have also used these themes as the main priorities for this housing strategy, reflecting the clear upward and downward links between regional, sub-regional and local plans.

The strategy also focuses on spatial priorities for investment:

- The main urban centres – Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley
- Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area – the Dearne Valley, and the Sheffield/Rotherham axis
- South Yorkshire Green Corridor – the former coalfield area on the boundary between Barnsley, Doncaster and Wakefield
- Rural areas – including Dinnington and Maltby within the Rotherham MBC area

The Investment Plan within the wider strategy contains £1.06 billion to be invested by 2018, funded by the Regional Housing Board, National Affordable Housing Programme, Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, and other public/private sources.

Local context

Addressing local housing issues is only one of the significant challenges facing Rotherham. In common with other former industrial communities, particularly those in South Yorkshire, we have over the last 10-15 years been tackling issues of economic regeneration, employment, skills, poverty and health. We have also been trying to build strong, sustainable communities and rebuilding pride in our area.

The Council's track record is now one of considerable success. Over the last five years we have:

- Moved from a CPA rating of “weak” to a top rating of “excellent”
- Been awarded seven “beacon council” awards for our work in areas such as Valuing People and Removing Barriers to Work
- Had our previous Housing Strategy rated as “fit for purpose” by the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
- Had our ALMO (2010 Rotherham Ltd) assessed as providing 2-star “good” services
- Received Charter Marks for our frontline services

- Been voted “top council” in the 2008 LGC Children’s Services Awards

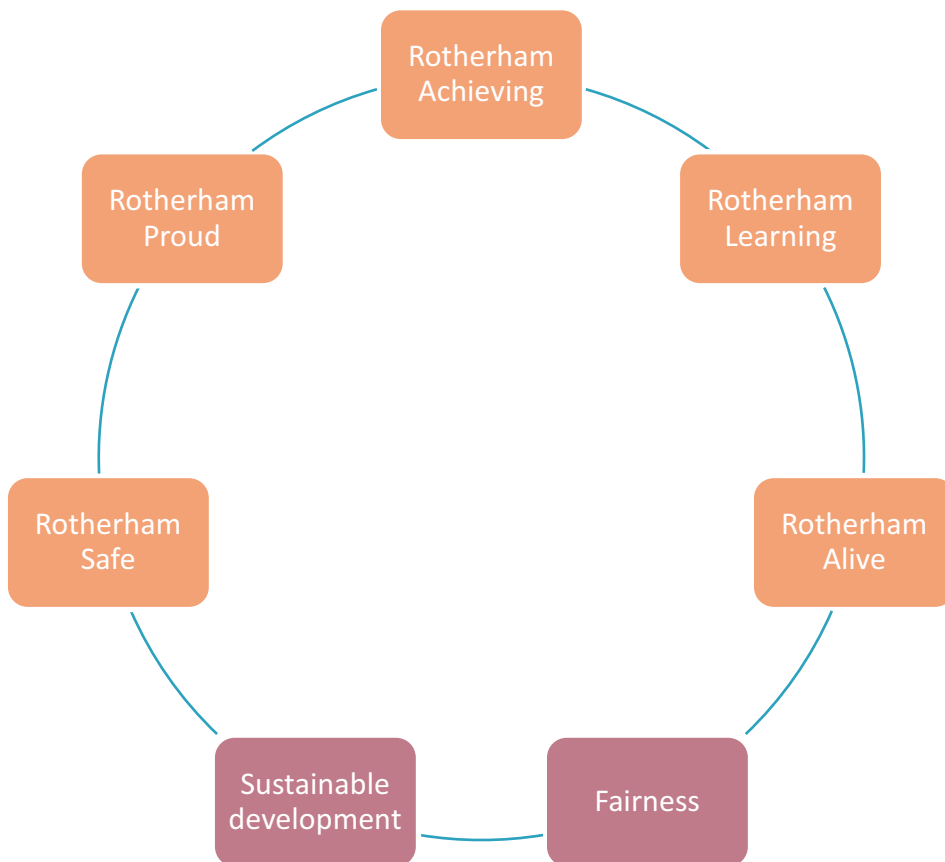
Rotherham has a strong multi-agency strategic partnership, the “Rotherham Partnership” which brings together key decision-makers from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Their role is to agree and oversee the implementation of joint strategic objectives to improve Rotherham.

The key document is the Rotherham Community Strategy 2005-11, which is the overarching strategic plan for Rotherham. It describes the vision for the future of the borough, and sets out the key targets and actions that all partner organisations are committed to achieving. It was developed through listening to local people, groups and organisations, and embracing their priorities.

The community strategy sets out a central vision for Rotherham:

“for Rotherham to be a prosperous place with a high quality of life and excellent services which are accurately targeted to local needs”

The broad aims of the strategy are to deliver the vision for Rotherham by providing a widely owned strategic framework focusing action of five strategic themes and two cross-cutting themes:



Actions from this housing strategy and the previous one make a significant contribution to achieving the aims of the Community Strategy. The following tables illustrate this by Community Strategy theme area.

ROTHERHAM ACHIEVING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder improving most deprived neighbourhoods ○ HMR pathfinder improving parks and public spaces ○ Design guide produced for town centre regeneration ○ Area masterplans produced by Housing and Neighbourhood Investment Teams ○ Rural housing strategy produced and rural site audit carried out

ROTHERHAM LEARNING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transform South Yorkshire and Rotherham housing strategies aligning job creation and housing growth ○ Neighbourhoods and Housing new place-shaping team empowering local residents through formal and informal structures ○ 2010 Rotherham Ltd local labour and contractor schemes

ROTHERHAM ALIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rotherham 2010 Decent Homes Programme improves thousands of homes ○ Private sector housing strategy targets elderly and vulnerable living alone ○ Supporting People enabling more people to live independently ○ New move on housing provision allows quicker hospital discharges ○ Affordable Warmth strategy and action plan improving hundreds of homes ○ More new housing of “lifetime homes” standard

ROTHERHAM SAFE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HMR makes improvements to community safety in target areas – including improved lighting, signage, CCTV ○ New affordable housing built to “secure by design” standards ○ 2010 Rotherham in partnership with other agencies to address anti-social behaviour, through Safer Neighbourhood Teams. ○ Social landlords signed up to “Respect Standard” for housing management ○ ASBOs successfully awarded and hundreds of ABCs issued

ROTHERHAM PROUD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mixed tenure housing developments helping to build cohesive communities ○ HMR improving town centres and gateway sites ○ 2010 Rotherham extending active citizenship through Board and decision making structures ○ Supporting People enabling more vulnerable people to receive support in their own homes

FAIRNESS	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BME Housing Strategy and Supporting People Strategy produced ○ Gypsy and Traveller joint needs assessment carried out ○ New culturally specific housing under development (with Sadeh-Lok HA) ○ Key Choices carries out regular ethnicity monitoring ○ 2010 Rotherham undertaken tenant profiling ○ More developments built to Lifetime Homes standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transform South Yorkshire and Rotherham housing strategies aligning job creation and housing growth ○ All new homes built to sustainable development code level 3 ○ New housing development at Henley Rise produces zero carbon emissions ○ Mixed tenure housing developments helping to build cohesive communities ○ Local communities involved in place-shaping activities

There are a number of other major corporate strategies that have informed the development of this strategy, and which have an interrelationship with this housing strategy. These include:

- Public Health Strategy
- Rural Strategy
- Sustainable Development Framework
- Town Centre Action Plan
- Older Persons Strategy
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Community Safety Strategy
- Local Development Framework
- Respect Action Plan
- Children and Young Peoples Plan
- Learning Disability Framework

Housing across all tenures has a significant contribution to make to the Rotherham Partnership Local Area Agreement (LAA). The existing LAA covers the period 2006-09 and sets out the “stretch targets” for areas of local priority. A new LAA has been developed for the period 2008-11, where our partners have considered the range of 198 National Performance Indicators (NPI’s) and identified the 50 of most importance to the Borough. Of the 34 non educational indicators there is a housing element/contribution to 18 of these. The 18 include the key indicators of net additional homes provided and number of affordable homes delivered.

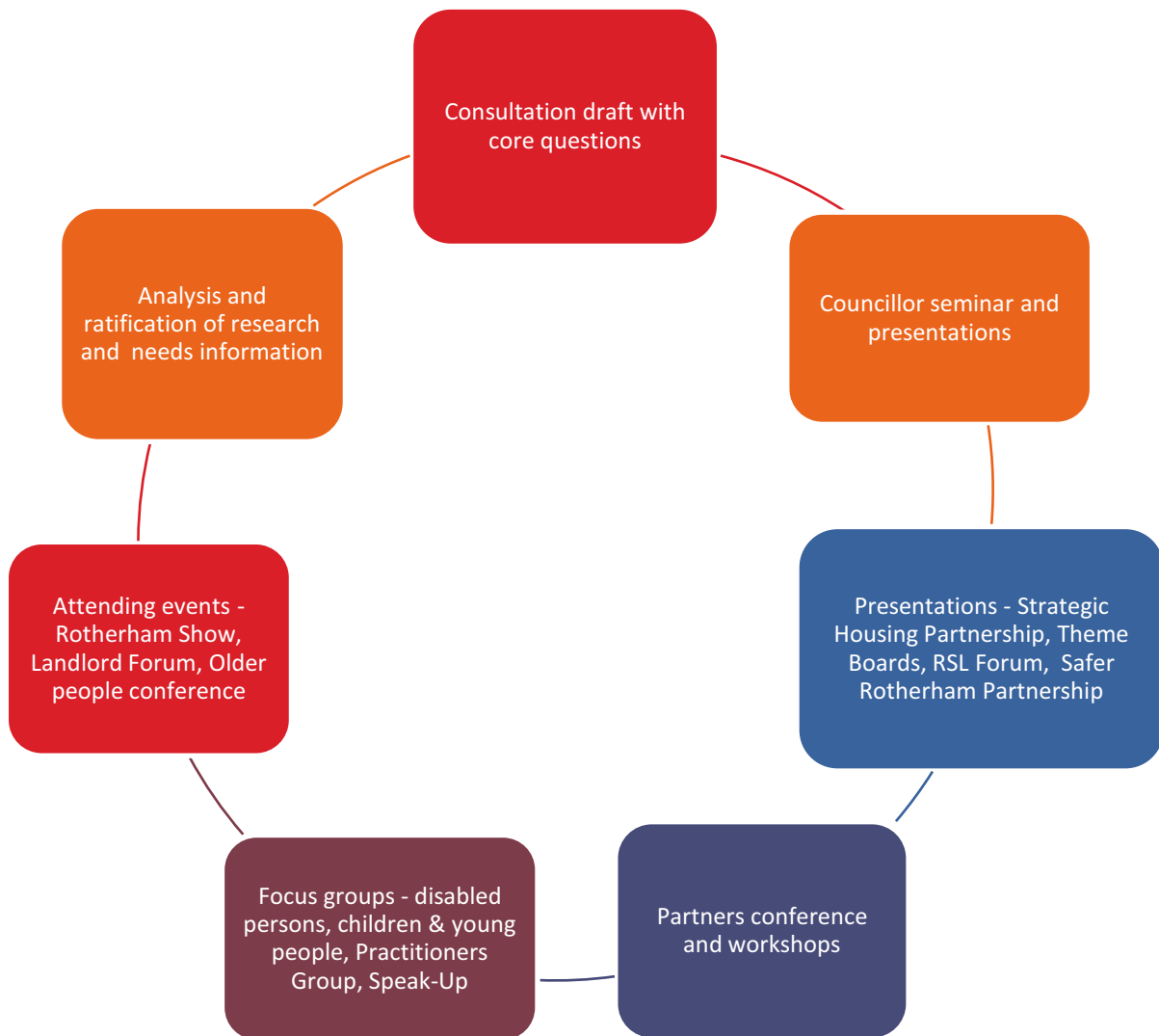
In addition to the LAA, we are currently developing a Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) with neighbouring authorities and major local agencies. This is expected to be finalised during 2008.

Consultation

Development of this Housing Strategy has involved a programme of stakeholder consultation throughout the process. We want to ensure that residents and partners, are aware of and have had the chance to contribute to, this new Housing Strategy

In 2007, Rotherham's Cabinet agreed our Consultation Plan for the emerging strategy. The initial period of consultation was undertaken between August and October 2007, with a further round between January and March 2008.

The range of consultation activity is illustrated below:



The organisations, groups and people who participated in the consultation are listed below:

- Rotherham Cabinet
- Directors and senior Council officers from all departments
- Councillors
- Area Partnership Managers
- Rotherham Partnership Theme Managers
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd
- Rotherham Strategic Housing Partnership
- RSL Forum
- Private Landlords' Forum
- RotherFed (Rotherham Federation of Council Tenants)
- Rotherham Chamber of Commerce
- Rotherham Primary Care Trust
- South Yorkshire Police
- National Offender Management Service
- South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
- Yorkshire Forward
- Housing Corporation
- English Partnerships
- Transform South Yorkshire
- Public and private sector residents' associations
- Other service users
- Health and social care practitioners
- Developers and landowners
- Speak Up

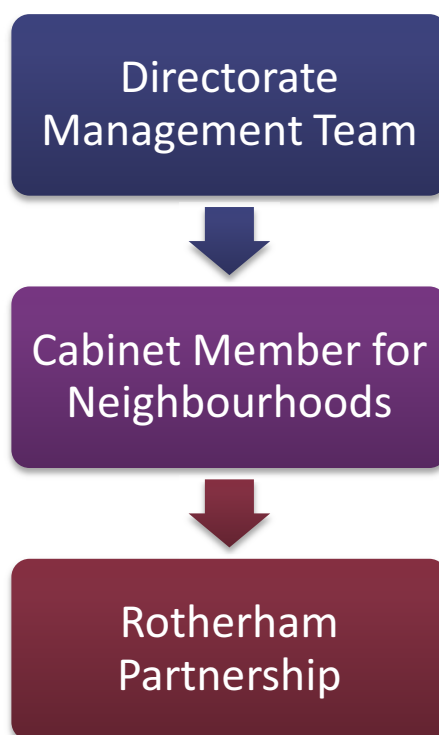
Consultation was broadly in support of the three key priorities/themes of the strategy, and of the main targets and actions. We received a large number of responses and comments from both partner organisations and other groups. The main issues have been grouped and summarised in the following table, with an analysis of our response and/or details of any changes that we have made to the strategy as a result.

Issue	Response
1. Social Housing Provision	
Lettings should support BME communities who wish to move outside Rotherham town centre.	Key Choices CBL enabling BME households to bid for any location. Regular ethnic monitoring carried out to ensure fair and equal access.
More bungalows needed to meet the needs of disabled and older people.	Included as a strategy target. New affordable housing bungalow provision being developed at Canklow and Ravenfield.
Common application form and procedure for all social housing in the borough.	Support for the principle. Key Choices now being extended to other tenures with one application process.
Additional tenancy support should be provided for new tenants, particularly younger tenants.	Additional tenancy support to prevent homelessness has been located within 2010 Rotherham Ltd – 2 new officers.
2. New housing provision	
There is a need for more four bedroom homes for larger families.	Agreed – and supported by SHMA 2007 findings. Larger family homes are being commissioned through new build and council stock extensions programme.
Rural areas – affordability needs to be addressed, particularly for younger families	Included within the Strategy as a target, and within Rotherham's Rural Housing Strategy 2007
More work needs to be done to raise awareness and understanding of shared ownership.	Agreed – A comprehensive action plan is being implemented to promote shared ownership.
Environmental considerations should be included in the design of new housing.	Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes now a requirement under our Interim Affordable Housing Planning Statement.
3. Choice	
More houses should be built to Lifetime Homes standards.	Agreed – and included as a strategy target.
Council houses with adaptations should be allocated to new tenants who need adaptations.	This is not always possible, as adaptations are individually specified and tailored.
There should be more security of tenure in the private sector.	We are working with accredited landlords to offer longer fixed term tenancies.
4. Community safety	
Crime and anti-social behaviour is ruining the perception and desirability of neighbourhoods	Community safety included as one of the key sections under the Quality Housing Theme

Alcohol misuse amongst young people is increasing.	Comment passed on to Safer Rotherham Partnership.
The Respect Standard for Housing Management should also apply to the private rented sector.	To be discussed with Private Landlords Forum – although would only be voluntary without national policy change.
There should be earlier intervention to prevent homelessness.	Agreed – and included in the strategy and the 2003-08 Homelessness Strategy. Rotherham is a top quartile performer for prevention of homelessness.
5. Community facilities and involvement	
There should be more provision of leisure facilities and youth clubs.	Agreed, and included in HMR and Place-shaping forward plans.
Dropped kerbs and crossings should be better planned.	Comment passed to HMR, Environment Service, and 2010 Rotherham Ltd.
More communication and feedback on housing initiatives such as HMR and new housing developments would be welcome.	Agreed – included in HMR and Neighbourhood Investment Team Business Plans.

An analysis of the initial consultation responses was received by Cabinet in November 2007. A further report was provided in June 2008, prior to formal adoption of the new strategy.

The strategy has now been formally approved and ratified by the following individuals and forums:



Analysis of Housing Need

This section provides an outline of the main housing need issues experienced in Rotherham. It has been informed by a range of primary and secondary data sources, including a comprehensive Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), conducted in 2007. A more detailed version of this section is included at Appendix A.

Context

Rotherham has a population of 254,000. This is projected to increase to 271,600 by 2021. Over the same period, average household size will reduce from 2.36 to 2.19, and the number of people over 60 years old will increase by 30%. This creates a sizeable increase in the total number of households in the Borough.

Average incomes in Rotherham are lower than both the regional and national average – which is a factor in households' ability to afford housing or exercise housing choice.

The housing market

The table below shows price levels for Rotherham and for comparator areas. House prices in Rotherham are considerably below the national average, and slightly below the regional average.

Average House Prices (Source: Land Registry 2008)

Area	Ave price (£)	As % of Eng & Wales
England & Wales	185,616	100.0%
Rotherham	120,607	65.0%
Sheffield	140,003	75.4%
Yorkshire & Humber	148,385	79.9%

Between 2001 and 2006, the average house price in Rotherham rose by 99%, significantly above the national increase of 61% for the same period. The last ten years have seen house prices rise locally and nationally. At the time of writing in early 2008, there are signs that this may be about to change, with a global "credit crunch" beginning to take effect.

If housing costs are compared across tenures, a picture of relative affordability emerges (see table below). This clearly shows that there is an affordability gap between social renting and private renting, and a further gap between renting and owner-occupation.

Monthly outgoings by tenure (SHMA 2007)

Size	Social rent (£)	Private rent (£)	Owner occupation (£)
2 bedrooms	256	370	405
3 bedrooms	290	450	540

We know that many Rotherham households spend more than 25% of their income on housing costs. This is most pronounced in the social and private rented sectors (affecting over 60% of tenants).

Projected housing needs

Using the DCLG-approved housing needs model we estimate an annual net housing need of 411 homes. Using data on housing size, income and prices, the SHMA suggests that 51.6% of this net need could be met through intermediate housing, with the remaining 48.4% via social rented provision.

The SHMA provides a sensitivity analysis to cover the event of prices falling by either 10% or 20%. This is quite a useful tool, given the financial climate of early 2008. The analysis assumes that the supply of affordable housing and income and savings levels will be unchanged.

Scenario	Net housing need
Prices unchanged	411
Prices fall by 10%	370
Prices fall by 20%	322
Rents fall by 10%	300
Prices and rents fall by 10%	259

Source SHMA 2007

The model also suggests that:

- There is an ongoing need for owner occupied housing
- There is a large unmet need for social rented and intermediate housing

- The main shortfall is in two-bedroom homes
- There is a potential surplus of three bedroom homes
- There is a small, but significant need for homes with four bedrooms or more

The SHMA also suggests that there is a disproportionate need for affordable housing in rural areas – due to a lack of supply, rather than non-affordability. A net annual rural need of 91 homes is recommended.

Households with specific needs

This section covers the following groups:

- Black and minority ethnic households (BME)
- Gypsies and travellers
- Households with support needs

A more detailed issues and needs analysis for these groups can be found at Appendix A.

The headline issues in relation to housing needs for BME households and gypsies/travellers are:

- Rotherham's BME population is about 5.4% of the overall population. The largest single group are South Asian (including Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi households)
- Average family sizes of 4.64 for South Asian families are twice those of white British and other BME households
- South Asian families are more likely to be living in unsuitable housing
- Recent arrivals from EU accession states are concentrated in older, poor quality private rented homes in urban areas
- There is recognised need for a local authority site for gypsies and travellers

The following table shows the number of households with support needs.

Category	No of households	% of all households	% of households with support needs
Frail elderly	3,494	3.3%	18.9%
Physical/mobility impairment	13,017	12.2%	70.5%
Learning disability	1,208	1.1%	6.5%
Mental health	1,156	1.1%	6.3%
Severe sensory impairment	2,014	1.9%	10.9%
Non-visible condition	1,663	1.6%	9.0%
Other	80	0.1%	0.4%

Source – household survey data 2007

The main housing needs issues for these groups are:

- Meeting the housing requirements of an ageing population
- Allowing people to live independently for as long as possible
- A need for more extra-care residential schemes
- More than 50% of people on Rotherham's Learning Disabilities Register will need supported accommodation in the future
- There is insufficient supported housing or floating support for people with mental health needs or physical/sensory disabilities

Our Priorities

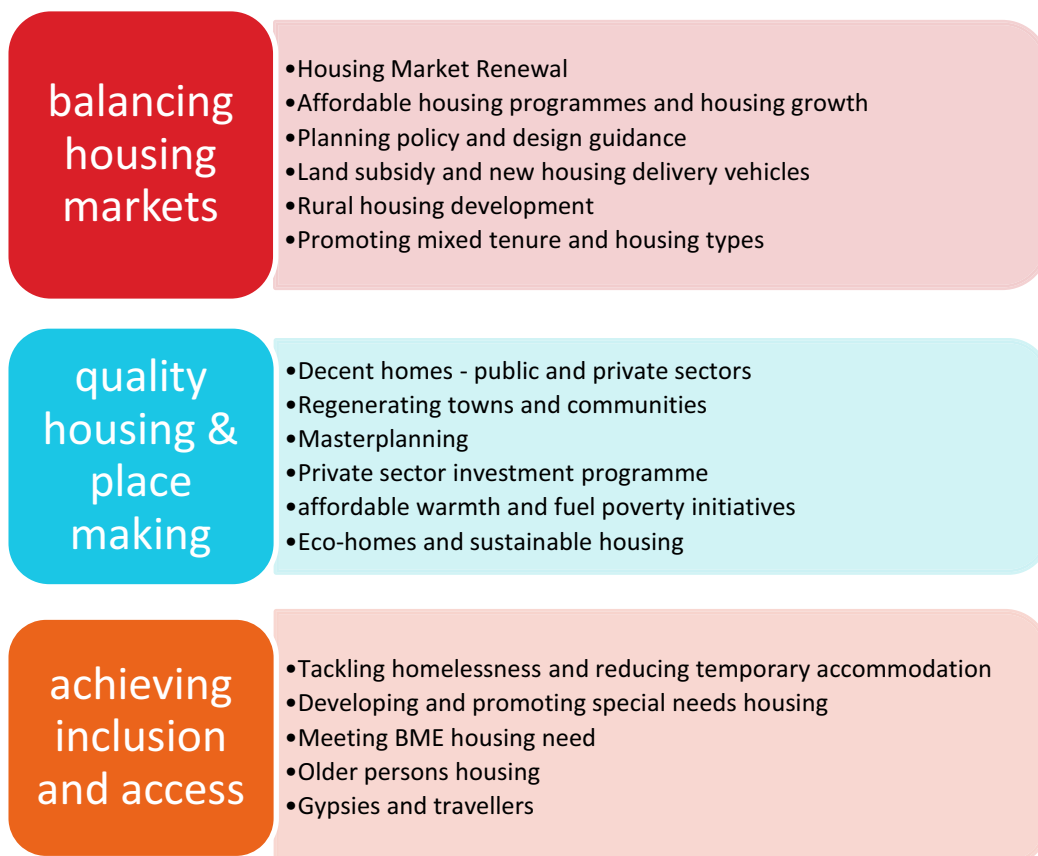
Our priorities for housing are set out in this section and form the main issues that will be addressed by this Housing Strategy and Action Plan. They have been agreed by the stakeholders and partner organisations described in the section on consultation.

Priorities

We have identified three objectives/themes that will enable us to address the housing issues facing the borough. These are:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making
- Achieving inclusion and access

These themes also mirror those in the sub-regional housing strategy developed by the Transform South Yorkshire consortium. This will enable us to translate plans and actions through from a local to a regional level, maximise investment and make the best use of resources available. The main strands of activity within the three thematic areas are shown in the following diagram.



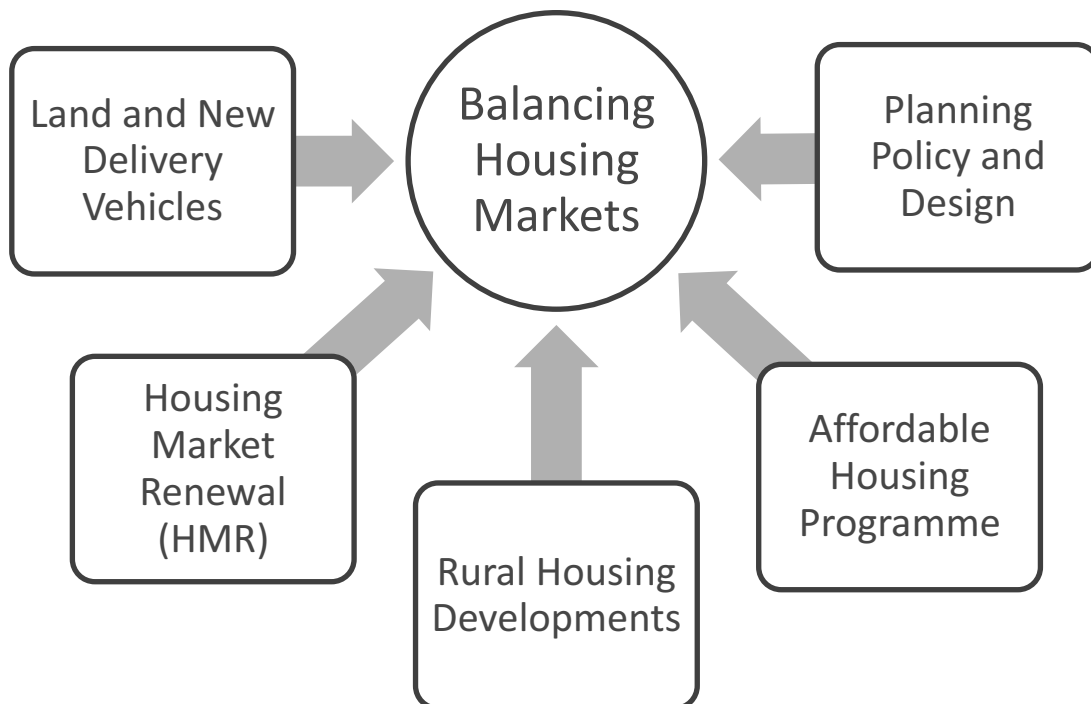
Theme 1 – Balancing Housing Markets

In common with much of South Yorkshire, Rotherham’s housing market is characterised by marked differences between areas and communities. In some areas, overall prosperity is increasing and house prices are buoyant. However, there are still communities with high levels of multiple deprivation, and where house prices remain below the average for Rotherham and for South Yorkshire as a whole.

Balancing housing markets aims to address this, and to narrow the gap between communities. The Housing Market Strategy for South Yorkshire expects to deliver:

- **Aspirational housing** – which will attract higher income households to meet the demand created by the increase in higher income jobs; which reduces the environmental impact of travel to work; and contributes to the vision of mixed communities.
- **Affordable housing** – which meets the demand created by increases in lower skilled and middle-income jobs; and which enables progression through the market.
- **Regeneration in areas of market weakness** – tackling low demand, unpopular and obsolete housing and poor quality living environments.

These are also our aims for this “balancing housing markets” theme of the housing strategy. We are addressing through planned and co-ordinated activity under the following headings:



Housing Market Renewal

South Yorkshire is the largest of nine Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinders, set up by the Government in 2004. The aim of the pathfinder programme was to tackle housing markets which were characterised by low housing demand and low housing prices.

The South Yorkshire HMR pathfinder area includes 140,000 households and covers both urban and rural communities. The pathfinder area in 2004 was characterised by:

- High incidence of multiple deprivation
- Poor quality housing stock, across all tenures
- Low levels of in-migration
- Socio-economic polarisation and spatial inequalities

The three main objectives of the South Yorkshire HMR are:

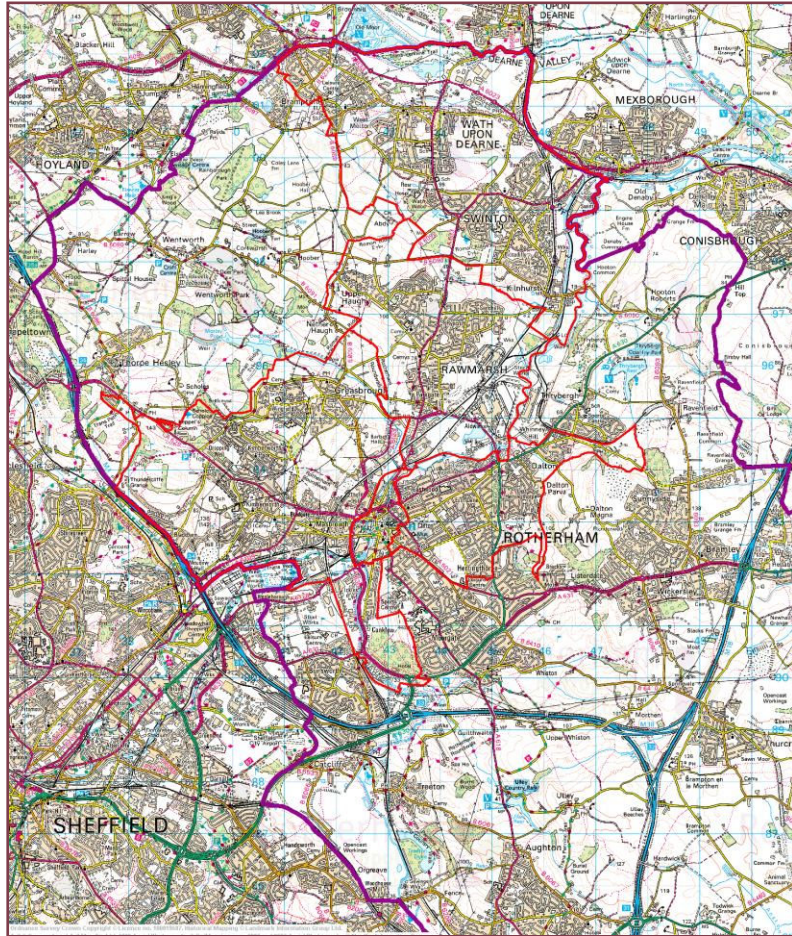
- Improve the character and diversity of neighbourhoods
- Grow the area's housing range
- Improve housing quality – all tenures

The targeted priorities for action in the 1st phase (2004/08) were: to remove and replace the worst housing; refurbish stock that has a long-term future; to enhance the public realm; and to bring life back to neighbourhood centres. For Rotherham these priorities have been the focus of HMR activity over the last four years.

Geographically, HMR in Rotherham covers two main areas:

- The Sheffield/Rotherham Axis (including the M1 corridor) – formerly dominated by declining industrial zones poor quality housing
- The Dearne Valley Axis (Between Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley) – a former coalmining area with high degrees of multiple deprivation

These are shown on the following map:



Map of Rotherham HMR areas (Ordnance Survey data)

Removing and replacing the worst housing

Over the last few years, we have cleared empty, poor quality and low demand housing in:

- Dalton
- Kiveton Park
- Laughton Common
- Canklow
- Wath
- Five former sheltered housing schemes
- Ad-hoc dispersed sites

Our Neighbourhood Investment Team (formerly Rotherham HMR Team) has also acquired a number of strategic sites, including Westgate Chambers in the town centre and the Clarence Hotel in Rawmarsh.

New housing has been developed on several sites, including the Canklow site - in a new mixed tenure scheme which received a CABE "good" rating for design. Of the 270 new affordable homes provided through our 2006-08 affordable housing programme, the majority are in HMR areas.

Phase 2 of the HMR programme covers 2008-11. During this period we will:

- **Undertake further clearance at Rawmarsh and Dalton.**
- **Develop new housing on previously cleared and acquired sites, and at other strategic sites. These include 200 homes on the White Bear site in Wath; 400 new homes at Chesterhill, and 400 homes at Lakeside, Dearne Valley.**
- **Purchase and redevelop long-term empty private sector homes in HMR areas.**
- **Develop innovative new housing schemes in acquired town centre sites, as part of the multi-million multi agency regeneration of the centre of Rotherham.**

Refurbishing stock with a long-term future

We have successfully aligned the HMR programme with 2010 Rotherham Ltd's decent homes investment programme. A Joint Project Board has been established, which assesses all planned works to Council homes in the HMR zone. Using a traffic light system we have been able to identify properties to avoid carrying out unnecessary works, or to co-ordinate decent homes and HMR investment.

An example of this is the 2007 Asset Management Review of Non-traditional Stock. This was commissioned jointly between 2010 Rotherham Ltd and the Council's Neighbourhood Investment Team, to assess the potential for remodelling of existing homes, or demolition and rebuild.

A good example of private sector refurbishment is our first Living over the Shop (LOTS) development, at College Street in Rotherham town centre. This has remodelled commercial floor space above a retail outlet to provide ten new units for low cost home ownership.

Over the period 2008-11 we will:

- **Commence a joint re-modelling programme to Council stock. This programme will involve decent homes work, allied to extensions to create larger family homes. The scheme will involve innovative elements, such as off-site construction, and eco-homes initiatives, such as green roofs.**

- **Agree and implement a programme of works to remodel and/or rebuild non-traditional council housing**

Enhancing the Public Realm

Since 2004, we have delivered projects throughout the HMR area to enhance the public realm and to improve community safety. These include:

- Gateway/corridor projects – involving improvements to parking, traffic flow, lighting, and creating new defensible space arrangements. The A633 Meadowbank Road corridor has won plaudits from local residents' groups.
- Green spaces – improving access and security, providing new equipment, and installing CCTV. Local pride has improved at a number of locations. At Rosehill Park, the park warden was nominated for, and won, a national park ranger award.
- Shopping centres – improving parking and access, new signage and street furniture. A successful scheme at Rawmarsh resulted in increased retail use and improved public feedback.
- Community safety improvements – such as alley gating programmes in Eastwood and Clifton, and roll-out of CCTV in partnership with the local Safer Neighbourhoods Teams.

Over the period 2008-11 we will:

- **Continue our planned programme of public realm and community safety programmes.**
- **Commence major improvements, including new mixed commercial and residential provision, at Bellows Road, Rawmarsh**
- **Carry out major environmental improvements to estates including Monkwood**
-



Regenerating Neighbourhood Centres

We have already carried out improvements to a number of neighbourhood centres that were previously in decline, experiencing issues of crime and community safety, low usage and poor public perception. Schemes have included baseline profiling, design studies, improved streetscapes and public spaces, and new commercial buildings. Works at Rawmarsh and Kimberworth Park are already well-developed.

We have developed spatial masterplans for other neighbourhoods, such as Eastwood, Brampton and Canklow.

Over the period 2008-11 we will:

- Invest over £50 million in mixed use redevelopment of Rotherham town centre. This includes new mixed tenure family accommodation, promoting a new vision for urban living.
- Roll out neighbourhood master planning to the South of the Borough – in Maltby and Dinnington.
- Take forward the urban centre masterplans that were developed in 2006/07.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive action plan following the review of HRA commercial portfolio.

Resources

Funding for HMR projects comes from a variety of sources, and includes public and private sector investment. Rotherham received £28 million HMR pathfinder funding during the period 2004-08, and has been allocated a further £27 million for phase 2 (2008-11).

HMR funding has been aligned with other major funding streams to maximise impact within neighbourhoods and to achieve optimal value for money. Most of our National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) allocation for 2006-08 of £13.4 million was targeted on projects in the HMR area, delivering over 250 new homes. And 2010 Rotherham Ltd's decent homes programme has been co-ordinated within the HMR area, allowing joint programmes to be delivered.

Evaluation

We believe that the HMR pathfinder has been particularly successful within Rotherham – neighbourhoods are being transformed, housing is being improved, and well-designed high quality

new homes are being delivered. The 2008-11 HMR programme aims to build on this success with an acceleration of housebuilding and regeneration of urban centres.

The Transform South Yorkshire partnership is responsible for co-ordinating the overall South Yorkshire HMR pathfinder. They receive monthly returns from each authority and evaluate progress against a range of indicators and market information.

Our programme is also assessed robustly by:

- The Audit Commission, who review the programme every six months. Their most recent assessment rated the South Yorkshire pathfinder as performing adequately in most areas, but well in facilitating homes and mixed communities and strongly in terms of place-shaping
- We carry out regular market analyses – these show that house prices have increased since 2005 in Rotherham’s HMR area, and
- Developer and commercial confidence is improving
- We survey local residents on a regular basis – public perception and confidence continues to improve

Finally, CURS (Birmingham University) conducted a mid-term evaluative study of our HMR programme last year, involving primary research with a range of stakeholders. They were able to show success against a range of indices, including house prices, land values, consumer perceptions and private sector confidence.

Planning Policy and Design

Fundamental to our overall approach to balancing housing markets is to create the right conditions and regulatory environment. The planning system has the potential to help deliver the right mix of housing, and to maximise the amount of housing (including affordable housing) that is built. In Rotherham, housing and planning officers work well in partnership to create a planning and design system that can deliver our housing market ambitions effectively.

Planning targets

We have been able to increase our planning requirements for affordable housing. The Council now requires at least 25% affordable housing on all sites in the borough capable of producing 15 homes or more. This increase is in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy, and a significant increase from the previous target of 15% on sites of 25 units or more (and only 7.5% in HMR areas).

This move will allow us to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing to meet the housing need identified in the housing needs analysis. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment, suggests a target for the proportion of social rented and intermediate housing within the 25% overall affordable housing target. The suggested target is:

- 56% social rented
- 44% low cost home/ shared ownership

On sites capable of larger scale developments, we will be seeking an additional 10% intermediate housing as part of the market percentage (housing that does not meet our affordability criteria but is priced below market level).

We commissioned Bristol University to conduct a Housing Viability Study in 2007. They looked at available sites of all sizes and locations across Rotherham. They were able to conclude that the new 25% affordable housing target is deliverable at all locations.

We have recently developed a new Interim Planning Statement for Affordable Housing. This was produced jointly between housing and planning, and sets standards for the design and quality of all new affordable homes. The standard stipulates:

- New affordable homes should attain Level 3 of the new Code for Sustainable Homes, or better
- Achieving Lifetimes Homes standards
- Meeting the Housing Corporation's Design Quality Standard
- Secured by Design, to address crime and safety issues

We are presently consulting partners and stakeholders on the new Statement, and expect it to be formally adopted in Summer 2008.

Over the period 2008-11 we will:

- **Monitor delivery against our new affordable housing targets**
- **Implement our new Interim Planning Statement for Affordable Housing (July 2008)**
- **Ensure that we meet the 100% lifetime homes commitment for affordable housing in the recent national Lifetime Homes Lifetime Neighbourhoods strategy**
- **Appoint two planning experts to work within the Neighbourhood Investment Team in Housing.**

Design quality

At Rotherham we have been pro-active in putting design at the forefront of our housing activities. Our actions to promote and develop good design standards to date include:

- Working with CABE to promote and develop new design standards for all sectors of the built environment.
- Establishing a “Design Champion” and an in-house Design Team within our Neighbourhood Investment service.
- Delivering a design training programme for officers, councillors and other partner organisations
- Producing design guides and masterplans for urban centres, including Canklow, Rawmarsh, and Eastwood

As a result, we have begun to improve the built environment across the borough. A recent housing development in Canklow attained a CABE “good” rating for its design, and at Henley Rise, a new eco-housing scheme developed by South Yorkshire Housing Association attained the CABE “very good” status.

As part of the multi-agency long-term plan to regenerate Rotherham town centre, in 2007 we produced a comprehensive Design Code in advance of the programme, to ensure that design was at the forefront. We believe that this is the first such design code of its type.



Over the period 2008-11 we will:

- **Produce further masterplans and design guides for urban centres, including Maltby and Dinnington**
- **Start a new Design Panel for residential developments**
- **Continue to train staff and stakeholders in the latest design guidance**
- **Ensure that high quality design is incorporated in all new housing developments**
- **Use good design principles to deliver more sustainable homes, for instance by using green roofs, water recycling, flood defences, and off-site construction techniques**

Affordable Housing Programme

We have had considerable success in increasing the size of our affordable housing programme over the last few years, and we are working towards delivering our RSS and SHMA targets of over 400 new affordable homes per year by 2011.

We are aware that the RSS targets represent a considerable increase in affordable housing output for Rotherham. We must continue to accelerate the rate of affordable housing growth in order to reach these ambitious growth targets.

Programme delivery

Our NAHP grant from the Housing Corporation increased from £2 million in the early 2000s, to £12 million for the 2006-08 housing programme, as a result of our HMR programme and our ability to deliver high quality housing schemes within deadline. This was reflected in a further £1.4 million that we received during 2006-08 through in-year bids.

Our 2006-08 programme is delivering 270 new affordable homes – most of which are within the HMR area, a result of our policy of aligning different funding streams where possible. The programme includes a mix of general needs housing and other specialist housing, including:

- Six new larger family homes for BME households – developed by Sadeh-Lok HA at the former Ferham School site
- 18 new dispersed one and two bedroom homes for move-on from supported housing – developed by Arches HA, who are providing high quality housing on constrained sites.

Our policy is to ensure mixed tenure developments wherever possible. This is reflected in our planning policy of 25% affordable housing, with a mix of shared ownership and social rented housing forming the affordable quotient.

For the 2008-11 programme we have been allocated an initial £7.8 million from the Housing Corporation. This only represents 40% of the programme, due to the imminent handover of national responsibilities to the new Homes and Communities Agency. We would also expect to receive further in year bids as the programme progresses.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Deliver the 2008-11 affordable housing programme in full, on time, and deliver 100% spend against budget**
- **Deliver large scale developments at the following sites – 250 new homes in Wath (White Bear – 104 Affordable homes and 101 at open market value), 200 homes at Chesterhill, and 200 homes at Lakeside, Dearne Valley**
- **Undertake the clearance and redevelopment of unsustainable housing in Eastwood and remodel existing homes where appropriate to deliver a wider housing offer that reflects local needs**
- **Deliver new rural affordable homes on five sites at Thurcroft**
- **Work with government other agencies and partner housing associations to maximise the amount of affordable housing investment**



Housing association preferred partners

In 2007 we undertook a housing association preferred partner selection process. We selected seven partners to work with the Council on all new grant-funded housing developments. The benefits to Rotherham from this approach are:

- The successful HAs have all been assessed as having a good track record in development, housing management, design quality, and strategic vision
- All partners will have local expertise and a significant local presence
- Partners will sign up to agreed standards and guidance, such as Fair Access housing protocol, planning statements and design codes
- Partners will add value through community capacity building, training and skills development, and s106 negotiations
- Partners will help to develop more economically marginal infill sites as part of the wider development package
- We monitor partners' performance across a range of activities – including site management, housing management, customer service etc.

The Seven partners are:



Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Deliver the 2008-11 NAHP funded programme through our seven preferred partners**
- **Promote the use of our preferred partners for s106 funded developments**

Shared ownership and intermediate housing

Our planning targets and affordable housing programme will be delivering a step change in the provision of intermediate housing. This is in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy and the recommendations of our Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Intermediate housing allows us to plug the gap between social rented housing and market rate housing (owner occupied and private rented). In the case of shared ownership, it allows households to own a home when they may be otherwise unable to do so.

Potentially we could deliver nearly 200 new shared ownership homes every year by 2011, offering households an opportunity to join the housing ladder. However, this aspect of our housing programme is not without its risks. This is because:

- Intermediate housing is a relatively new product within South Yorkshire, and demand levels are uncertain
- There is only a relatively small price margin between new build shared ownership and entry level second hand home ownership (compared with the South East, for example)

We will be addressing this issue through:

- Working with HA partners to evaluate local demand for shared ownership
- Looking at the feasibility of reducing equity stakes to less than 50%
- Developing targeted marketing and publicity strategies
- Working with financial institutions and the Council of Mortgage Lenders to identify and promote suitable mortgage packages
- Exploring other intermediate housing vehicles, such as sub-market renting

New Housing Delivery Vehicles

In addition to providing affordable housing through the traditional grant funded route, we are using and evaluating other methods for delivering new housing, and hence accelerating housing delivery in Rotherham. This approach is essential if we are to meet our RSS and SHMA targets of over 400 new affordable homes per year. Failure to accelerate housing growth will have knock on effects in other areas of Rotherham's ongoing development, given the projected increases in inward migration and job creation.

We are committed to accomplishing this additional growth through harnessing other funding streams and through land subsidy (either partial or 100%). Other funding streams include:

- Section 106 planning gain
- NHS capital resources
- Carbon Trust funding
- RSL reserves
- Private finance

We have already had some notable successes in delivering new housing through these routes. Examples include:

- Using land subsidy to develop on a former derelict site at Henley Rise. South Yorkshire HA delivered a scheme of 23 general needs mixed tenure homes. The homes meet Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Housing (i.e. zero carbon emissions) and have been awarded a Building for Life gold star.
- Developing 8 new Living over the Shop units in the centre of Rotherham, for low cost home ownership
- Developing two new extra care housing schemes, at Oak Trees and Potteries Court, using NHS resources

Over the next five years we plan to increase housing output through new vehicles, using three main methods:

- Section 106 Planning Gain – we will be enforcing affordable housing targets, following the SHMA and Bristol University Study. We will insist wherever possible that affordable housing is integrated into the main site, rather than developed separately. We have already been successful with this approach at the White Bear site in Wath.
- Developing special needs and older persons housing. We are able to lever in other funding sources, such as NHS capital, and often combine this with redevelopment of low demand and obsolete sheltered housing sites. We will use this method to deliver more extra care schemes and new models of supported housing, such as bungalows for people with learning disabilities.
- Using surplus public sector land. Rotherham's Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods agreed a report in March 2008, which set out a number of preferred options for developing public sector sites at various locations within the borough. We will be taking forward some exploratory schemes over the next 2-3 years. These include one-off partnerships to develop small infill sites; and developing larger-scale consortia for medium and large sites (which could eventually follow the new Local Housing Company model).

We will be involving the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) when developing these initiatives, seeking their advice, guidance and support.

Rural Housing Development

Our SHMA indicated that there is an under-supply of affordable housing in rural areas. This has the potential for lower and middle income households to migrate out of these areas, which would have an adverse effect on our ability to sustain mixed and balanced rural communities.

To tackle this we developed our 2007 Rural Housing Strategy. Its three main aims are:

- Improved housing choice and affordability
- Housing developments that reflect the needs and aspirations of rural communities
- Improved quality of life for people living in rural areas

Over the next few years we will be implementing the strategy, and the major recommendations for rural housing from the 2007 SHMA.

Our main activities will be:

- **Conducting a review of all possible development and infill sites in rural areas**
- **Carrying out targeted empty property initiatives in rural areas, including acquisition and redevelopment**
- **Creating a Rural Housing Enabler Post (via the Countryside Agency)**
- **Examining possible Rural Exception Policy areas for planning targets (such as reducing affordable housing site thresholds)**
- **Developing new rural affordable housing through our housing development programme – we already have schemes agreed and funded at five sites**

Theme 1 – Balancing Housing Markets

Summary of Key Actions

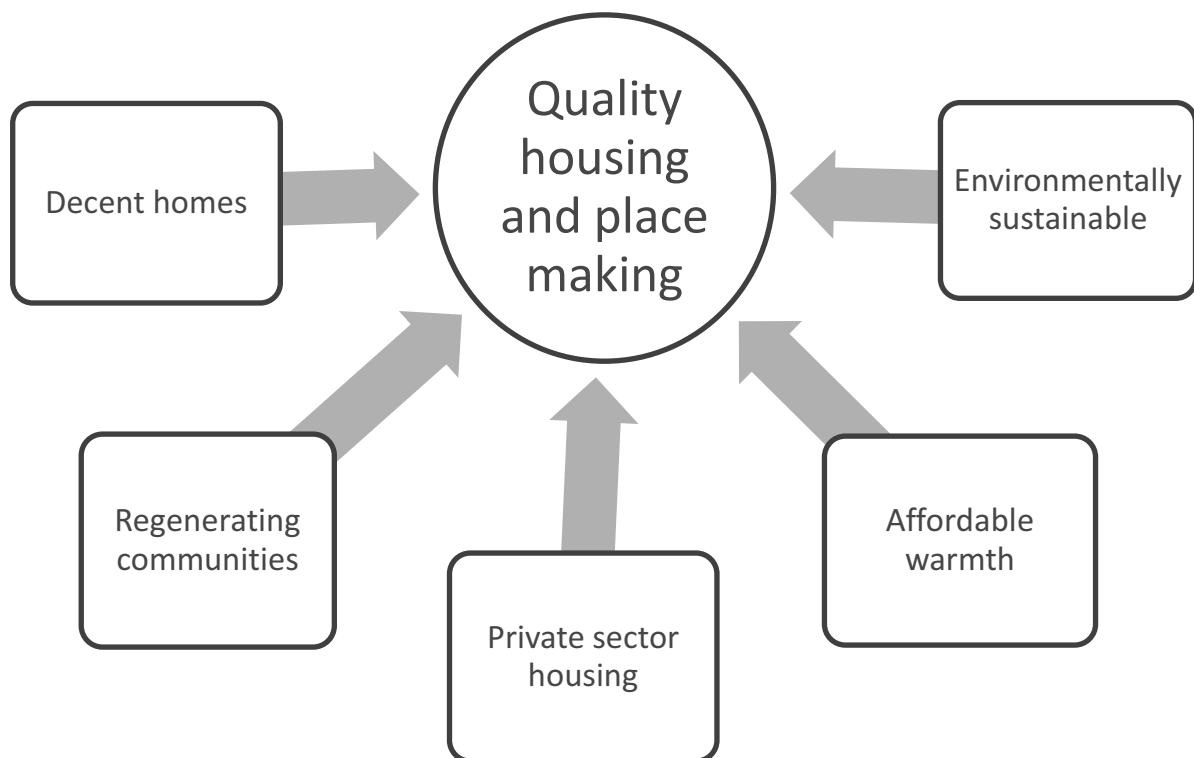


Theme 2 – Quality Housing and Place-Making

Our vision for this theme – echoing that of the South Yorkshire Sustainable Housing Market Strategy, can be encapsulated as:

“ensuring that our homes are fit for future generations – not just in good condition, but of the highest quality, and in attractive, safe neighbourhoods”

The priority areas for this theme are set out in the diagram below:



Decent Homes

Making sure that every household has a home that is in decent condition is an essential requirement. It is also one of the main planks of Government policy. The 2010 decent homes target has been the catalyst for major changes to the delivery of local authority housing. In Rotherham, decent homes were the key factor in residents’ decision to create an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

Local authority stock

In 2005, when 2010 Rotherham Ltd was created, the level of non-decency in council housing stood at 74%. This was due to a number of factors:

- Structural lack of investment
- Significant proportion of dwellings built through non-traditional methods
- High proportion of homes built after 1919

The decent homes programme is now in its fourth year, and has reduced the level of non-decency to 47.64% (March 2008). Success has been achieved through:

- Targeting renewable elements – boilers, kitchens, bathrooms
- One-off programmes to the external fabric of buildings
- Effective partnering contracts for large elements of the programme – with effective supply chain management
- Focusing on spatial programmes, only visiting each area once, where possible
- Aligning the programme with other funding, such as HMR

Year	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11
Local auth funds (£ million)	17.5	16.5	16.0	15.5	14.4	14.8
Decent homes funds (£ million)	7.5	45.0	50.0	55.0	52.0	9.4
Total programme (£ million)	25.0	61.5	66.0	70.5	66.4	24.2

The decent homes programme is on course to hit the 2010/11 target for achieving 100% decency. However, this is dependent on a number of factors, including 2010 Rotherham retaining its 2 stars at Audit Commission re-inspection in June 2008, and the Government releasing decent homes funding.

We have already commenced a project to examine the future for local authority housing in Rotherham. A multi-agency working party (including tenants and residents) is meeting to consider whether the ALMO model will be best for Rotherham after the 2010/11 when the existing contract expires. The project is also examining options to diversify the portfolio of responsibilities of the managing agent from 2010 onwards.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Work with 2010 Rotherham Ltd to complete the decent homes investment programme**
- **Help 2010 Rotherham Ltd to attain 2 stars at re-inspection**
- **Continue to ensure value for money through effective partnering arrangements**
- **Decide on the future management of Council stock after 2010**

Private sector decent homes

In 2007, we developed a new Private Sector Housing Strategy. One of its key strategic aims is to:

“improve the condition of private sector stock and ensure progress towards decent homes and HHSRS targets”

Our 2008 Private Sector condition survey estimates that only 20.7% of homes in the private sector are non-decent. This shows good progress and is partially due to our success in:

- Implementing Home Appreciation Loans – helping home owners increase the value of their properties through improvement works
- Improving standards in the rented sector through advice and our Landlords Accreditation Scheme
- Carrying out minor works for elderly households
- Warm Front grants for energy efficiency improving more than 2000 homes

However, the cost of remedying the 20.7% remaining private sector non-decency is still over £3,000 per home, or £54 million in total. Our approach, in line with national policy, is to target the most vulnerable households.

The Government’s private sector decent homes target is that by 2010, 70% of homes with vulnerable occupants should meet the decent homes standard. Our recent private sector condition survey found that Rotherham has already met this target – our figure is 75.8% decency for vulnerable households.

We can still improve on this, though. Targeted improvements at central heating and insulation will be most effective in tackling non-decency, and will also help address fuel poverty. We will also continue to help home-owners to release funds to improve their homes.

Regenerating Communities

One of our main objectives in Rotherham is to narrow the gap between more prosperous communities and those with higher levels of deprivation. We also want to improve the quality of life for all residents who live or work in Rotherham.

Some of our urban centres and neighbourhoods suffered during the industrial and economic decline of the 80s and 90s. We have been working with our partners and through the Rotherham Partnership to transform these areas – bringing back businesses, improving homes, addressing crime and community safety, and restoring a real sense of community and civic pride.

Within housing we are leading a number of project streams aimed at improving neighbourhoods and shaping places.

Housing Market Renewal

Our HMR initiatives involve targeted initiatives to improve communities, creating the right environment for housing growth and developing sustainable communities. These initiatives are described in detail in Theme 1 – balancing housing markets. Projects include:

- Clearance and acquisitions
- Gateway and corridor schemes
- Public realm and green space projects
- Improvements to neighbourhood and retail centres
- Improving the design quality of new commercial and residential developments

Place-shaping

We have created a new “place-shaping” team within our Neighbourhood Investment Service. The service aims to co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to intervention in Rotherham’s most deprived neighbourhoods. The vision centres on the concept of “whole-life” neighbourhoods, where people have choice, access to amenities and services, jobs, and the ability to be involved in their local community.

Initial target areas include the towns of Maltby and Dinnington, and neighbourhoods within the HMR area, such as Eastwood and Chesterhill. Projects undertaken so far include:

- Developing community involvement structures – around place-shaping activity programmes

- Neighbourhood profiling – building up a comprehensive understanding of each individual neighbourhood
- Developing neighbourhood Masterplans – with all partners signing up to co-ordinated implementation
- Raising publicity and awareness – through newsletters, workshops, community days, and other events
- Developing community-led social enterprise projects – such as Garden 100, a gardening and grounds maintenance service provided by people with learning disabilities
- Public and community art projects – in several neighbourhoods, including the high-profile Aldwarke Acorn

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Roll-out the Implementation Plans for Dinnington and Maltby**
- **Conduct baseline studies for smaller neighbourhoods – including Kiveton Park, Wentworth, and Harthill**
- **Develop an action plan for tackling empty residential and commercial property in targeted neighbourhoods**
- **Commence a programme of inter-generational activities, to help build community cohesion**

Crime and community safety

Although Rotherham as a whole has relatively low levels of recorded crime (2006 Quality of Life Survey), fear of crime and community safety is still high on many residents' lists of priorities. It is also central to the Council's ambitions, with "Rotherham Safe" as one of the five main Community Strategy priorities.

The Council has an effective multi-agency Safer Rotherham Partnership, set up jointly with South Yorkshire Police, and reporting in to the main Rotherham Partnership. Their focus since 2007 has been on reducing fear of crime, tackling vulnerable localities, and addressing the needs of young people.

Housing-based programmes are central to achieving many of Rotherham's community safety priorities. As the largest single landlord, 2010 Rotherham Ltd has been pro-active in crime and safety initiatives. In partnership with the Council and the Police they have developed Safer Neighbourhood Teams in 2006, which are working across many of the council's estates. An example of this is the

Chesterhill Project. A twelve month programme of multi-agency intervention has seen anti-social behaviour fall by 70%, a 50% reduction in recorded crime, and more families beginning parenting programmes.

Other community safety initiatives relating to housing include:

- All social housing providers have signed up to the “Respect” standard for housing management
- CCTV, alley gating and lighting improvements to a number of neighbourhoods through the HMR programme
- Over 1200 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) issued
- Five crack house closure orders granted
- Joint neighbourhood management schemes – organised around the seven Area Assemblies
- Tackling long-term empty property through acquisitions and redevelopment
- New housing built to “secure by design” standards

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Continue to improve neighbourhoods through HMR initiatives**
- **Increase the amount of housing built to secured by design standards**
- **Work with 2010 Rotherham Ltd to strengthen Safer Neighbourhood Teams and estate based initiatives**
- **Roll out empty property work to smaller neighbourhood centres through the place-shaping team**

Town centre renaissance

At Rotherham we are embarking on a major project to redevelop and re-populate our town centre. The programme, which will take 15 years to complete, will transform the historic town centre, retaining much of its original character, whilst developing high quality, design-led new retail centres, residential accommodation and public spaces.

Housing has been at the forefront of this groundbreaking urban renaissance project. The first phase of works will involve improved “gateway” sites and regeneration of the riverside area of the town. One key aspect is the re-population of the town centre, with family-sized and one bedroom homes, mainly above existing and new commercial premises. We have already delivered the first scheme, a Living over the Shop initiative of apartments for low-cost home ownership.

In 2007 we developed a new Design Guide for the town centre, setting out design guidance and examples for streetscapes, public realm and new buildings. We believe that this comprehensive guide is the first of its kind, and will be a major factor in creating the urban environment that is envisioned.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Develop a comprehensive town centre residential strategy**
- **Continue to acquire strategic town centre sites for acquisition and redevelopment**
- **Develop new high density housing schemes within the town centre – above commercial premises where possible**
- **Work with partners to promote excellent design in all new housing schemes**



Private Sector Housing

The main private sector housing issues that we need to tackle are:

- Increasing the supply of housing
- Tackling unfit, decent homes and using the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System
- Improving standards and quality in the private rented sector

- Reducing the number of empty homes
- Promoting and enabling independent living

In 2007, we developed a new comprehensive Private Sector Housing Strategy which addresses these issues, and which pulls together existing strands of activity. As already mentioned in this chapter, we are making good progress tackling non-decency in the private sector. There have already been other notable successes in recent years, including:

- New planning policies for housing design, across all tenures
- Working closely with private sector developers to promote high quality housing development and mixed tenure schemes
- A new Landlords Accreditation Scheme (commenced 2006), which is helping to raise standards of accommodation in the private rented sector
- Improved SAP ratings for energy efficiency due to targeted multi-agency programmes
- A new Home Appreciation Loan scheme – helping home-owners to improve their properties
- Development of a one-stop housing advice centre in the centre of Rotherham
- A new bond scheme, Robond, to help people on low incomes into the private rented sector

Private sector resources come from a range of sources, including HMR, local authority capital receipts, and the Regional Housing Pot.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Deliver projects totalling £34.2 million on private sector housing initiatives**
- **Target our activities where there is most need - vulnerable households, the private rented sector, and houses built before 1919**
- **Develop a programme of extensions and conversions to existing private sector homes**
- **Increase the number of home owner loans we provide to owner occupiers**
- **Increase the number of landlords in our Accredited Landlords' Scheme**
- **Increase the number of empty homes brought back into use through enforcement powers**

Affordable Warmth and Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is defined as occurring when a household needs to spend 10% or more of their income on basic energy needs, such as heating, lighting and power. The 2001 Census allows us to estimate

that there were as many as 13,300 people in fuel poverty in Rotherham in that year. Fuel poverty has a recognised detrimental effect on health and well-being, accidents, mental illness and social isolation.

This alone would make it imperative for us to tackle this issue. But fuel poverty is also a major contributory factor to climate change due to increased energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Thus, at Rotherham we take affordable warmth very seriously indeed.

We have developed a multi-agency Affordable Warmth Strategy 2007-10. Members of the partnership that developed the strategy included: Rotherham Council; Rotherham Primary Care Trust; Age Concern; Rotherham Credit Union; 2010 Rotherham Ltd; National Energy Action; and South Yorkshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre. The strategic vision is for:

“affordable warmth for all Rotherham households by 2016”

Whilst this is a challenging target, we have already gone some considerable way to achieving it, with a comprehensive programme of activities in recent years:

- There have been over 4,500 referrals to Warm Front for energy advice and assistance
- Over 2,000 households have received new boilers and/or insulation packages as a result of our Save N Warm scheme
- Frontline staff have been trained on energy awareness and advice
- A sub-regional energy efficiency initiative, Hotspots South Yorkshire was launched in 2007
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd has improved the energy efficiency of over 7,000 council-owned homes through its decent homes programme
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd took part in a Government’s pilot for producing Energy Performance Certificates for social homes and has already produced over 1400 certificates

These activities will be accelerated over the next 2-3 years. Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Develop all new affordable housing to meet Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable homes, or better – thus reducing energy loss and carbon emissions**
- **Increase energy advice referrals by 20%**
- **Complete the decent homes programme to all Council stock**
- **Link affordable warmth planning to extreme weather warning systems**
- **Improve publicity and public awareness of affordable warmth issues and initiatives**
- **Target homes in the private rented sector and dwellings built before 1919**

Environmentally sustainable housing

In 2007 the Government produced “Building for a Greener Future”, which set out targets for all new homes to be zero carbon producing by 2016. This was followed in early 2008 by the new Code for Sustainable Homes – illustrating the national importance of environmental sustainability for housing. Environmental sustainability is one of Rotherham’s core objectives, and our recent track record in housing shows the strides that we have made:

- Through South Yorkshire we have developed a new housing scheme at Henley Rise that is the first in Rotherham to be carbon neutral (Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes). The development of 23 new general needs homes has already won awards for its design and eco-housing approach.
- We are developing new homes on former council housing sites that have a range of green initiatives, including green roofs and water recycling
- Our new Interim Affordable Housing Planning Statement will require all new affordable homes to be Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Housing (or better)
- Our neighbourhood masterplans all incorporate environmental sustainability initiatives
- Our multi-agency approach to energy efficiency is reducing carbon emissions from thousands of existing homes
- 2010 Rotherham are improving the thermal comfort and energy efficiency of thousands of local authority homes via their decent homes programme

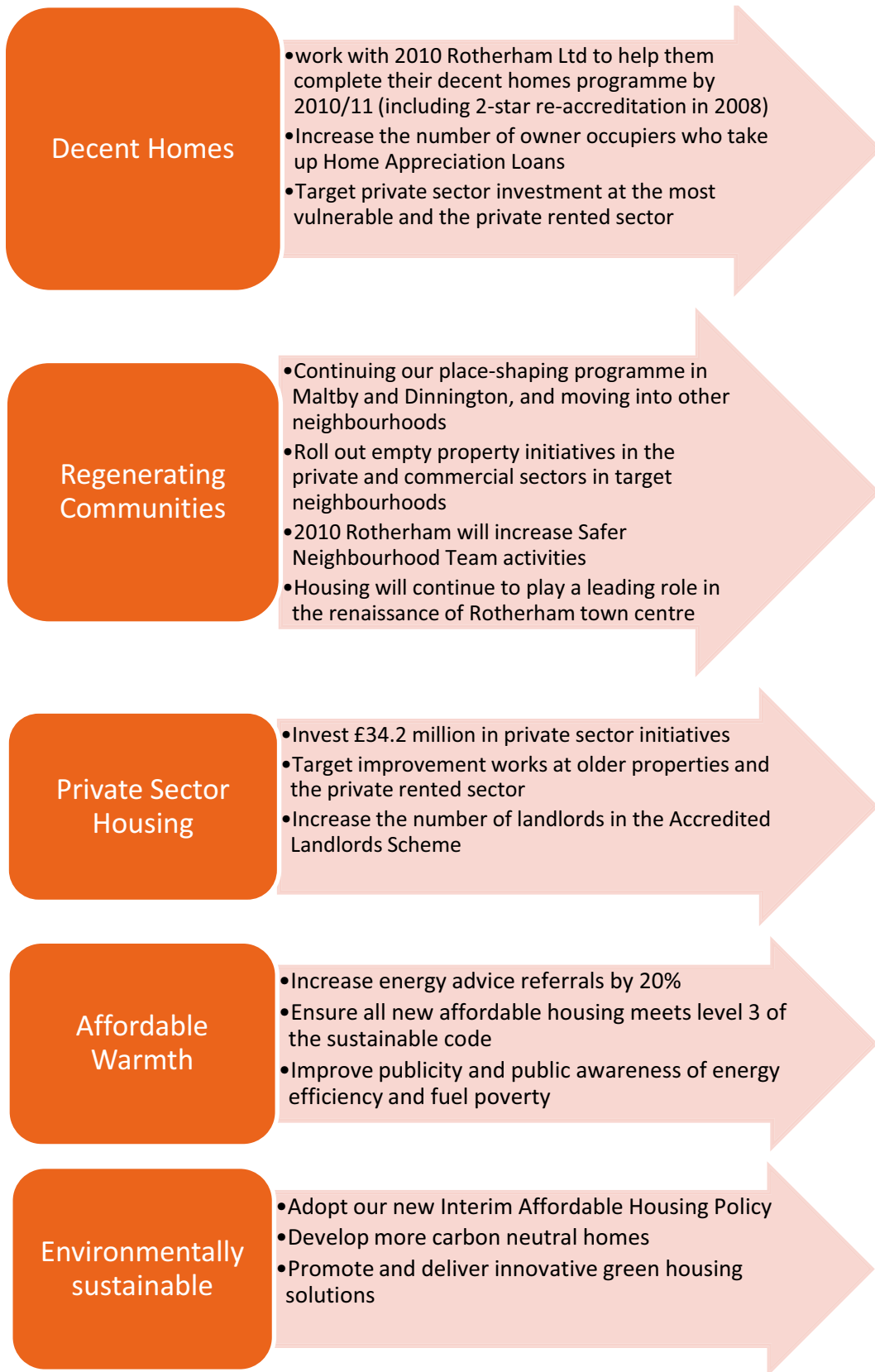
A team from Sheffield Hallam University are engaged in ongoing monitoring and analysis of many of our environmental sustainability initiatives (particularly the Henley Rise development). Their research will enable us to identify and fine-tune the most effective products and systems for use in future housing developments.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Formally adopt and enforce our new Affordable Housing Planning Statement**
- **Increase outputs from our affordable warmth and decent homes programmes**
- **Work with developers and partner housing associations to promote zero-carbon housing**
- **Develop more housing schemes that attain Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes**
- **Continue to work with Sheffield Hallam University on evaluation of our ecological initiatives**

Theme 2 – Quality Housing and Place-Making

Summary of Key Actions

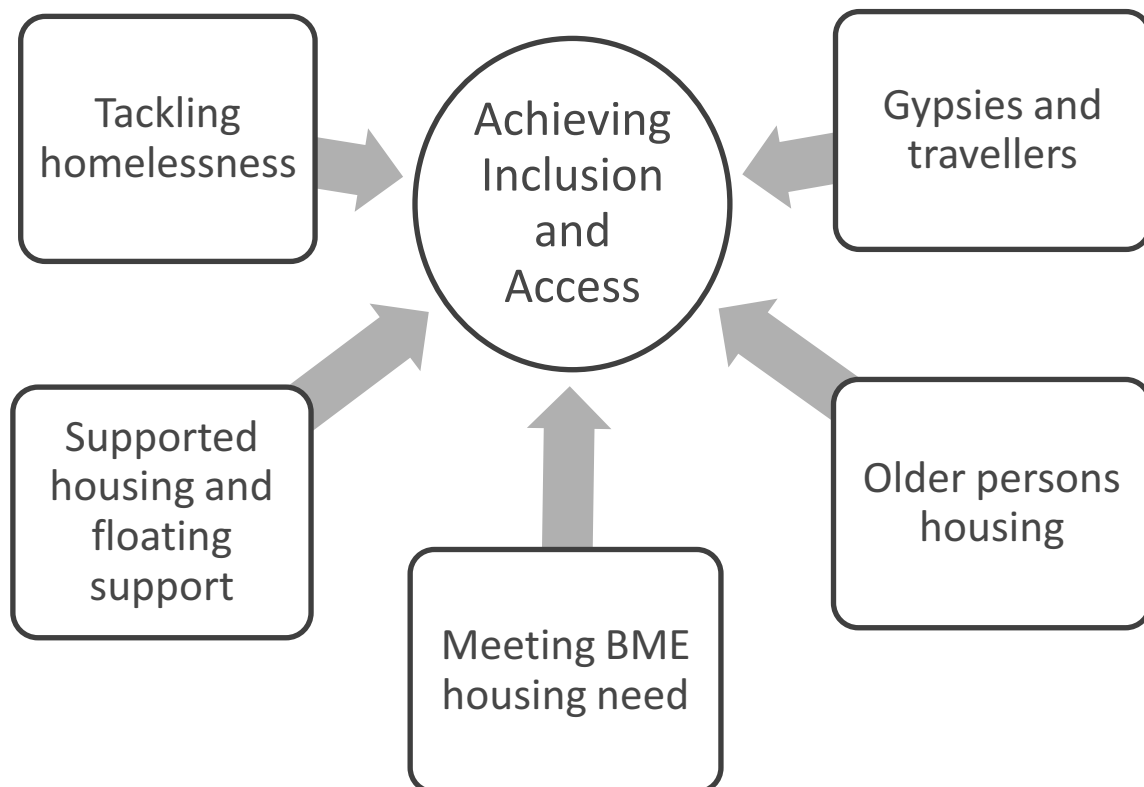


Theme 3 – Achieving Inclusion and Access

This theme cuts across the two previous themes, and indeed across all areas of our housing activities. Our aim is to provide appropriate housing and related support options which allow everyone to be included as part of their community. We want to enable independent living, and to target support towards those who are most vulnerable.

There are a range of needs, experienced by a range of communities, groups and households – and highlighted in the chapter on housing needs. This chapter sets out how we are addressing these needs and how we will be developing our services over the period of this strategy.

The main areas for action, intervention and investment are set out below:



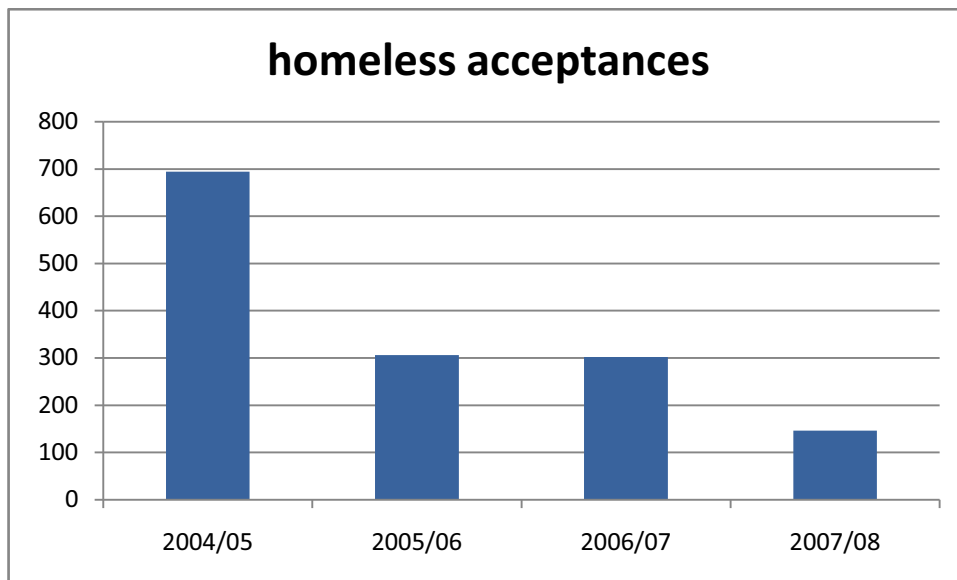
This chapter of the strategy reflects many of the strategic issues and actions contained in Rotherham's Supporting People Strategy 2005-10, and have been informed by its needs and supply mapping. Other actions have developed as result of close partnership working between housing officers, social care commissioners, the local PCT, and voluntary sector partners.

Tackling Homelessness and Reducing Temporary Accommodation

Rotherham has been successful at keeping levels of homelessness low, and reducing temporary accommodation. Our first Homelessness Strategy was developed in 2003, and covered the five years to 2008. It had three priorities:

- To reduce homelessness through appropriate prevention measures
- To ensure appropriate and timely accommodation and support services are available
- To improve information gathering and service quality

It also placed homelessness prevention at its core, implementing a number of new initiatives. Their success is evident in the graph below:



Performance is now top quartile for use of bed and breakfast for families, homeless prevention, and minimising repeat homelessness.

Other initiatives over the five-year strategy period include:

- The successful implementation of the “Key Choices” choice based lettings scheme and the establishment of the Key Choices Property Shop
- Launching a successful Quality Landlord Scheme with private landlords – already recognised by CLG as undertaking best practice
- Increasing uptake of Robond by 10% – our tenancy deposit scheme
- Increasing the number of housing solutions home visits

- Increasing the number of homes in our new Furnished Homes Scheme – which last year furnished the new lettings of over 100 vulnerable tenants
- Extending choice based lettings to other tenures – housing associations, private rented, intermediate housing, and Homebuy
- Providing a one-stop housing advice, choices and options service to residents from all tenures

We are in the process of consulting with partners on an update to the previous strategy, to be produced in Autumn 2008.

The main targets and actions for the period 2008-11 are:

- **Sustaining the government’s 2010 target for halving temporary accommodation use – we have already met our target of 31 units, now we are aiming to improve on it**
- **Full relocation to our new town centre Property Shop – our one stop shop for housing options, advice and choice based lettings**
- **Increasing the number of landlords and lettings through the Rotherham Quality Landlords Scheme**
- **Developing a gateway service for all emergency accommodation**
- **Developing a Sub-Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme, in partnership with other South Yorkshire councils**

Supported housing and floating support

Our aim with special needs housing and support is to enable people to live independent lives as far as possible, with the appropriate level of support and care. We also try to ensure that accommodation based solutions are available for people for whom independent living is not possible, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

Independent living and support

Our Supporting People programme provides housing related support to a range of vulnerable client groups in Rotherham. The 2005-10 Supporting People set out priority areas for development, including:

- Floating support services for adults aged 18-65
- Outreach for teenage parents

- Cross authority provision for people with HIV/AIDS
- Additional mental health support for offenders
- Floating support for gypsies and travellers

The Supporting People Commissioning Body is working to address these priority areas, through a mixture of re-commissioning and reconfiguring of existing services. This is being achieved against a background of real cuts to Supporting People Grant for Rotherham. Any new or additional services will need to come from efficiency savings and decommissioning of poor performing services.

Many vulnerable people have particular needs from their homes, in order to be able to live independently. For instance, people with physical disabilities may need level access or single floor accommodation, some people with learning disabilities need apartment complexes, and many people have carers.

We are committed to meeting these housing needs wherever possible. Our successes so far include:

- Provision of 23 move-on homes (via Arches HA) for people leaving supported accommodation
- Bungalow provision within new housing developments at Canklow
- Effective MAPPA arrangements and a dedicated Independent Living Team, managing hospital discharges
- Providing hundreds of Disabled Facilities Grants through a targeted programme to enable people to remain in their own homes
- Developing over 40 Supported Living Schemes for people with Learning Disability (Rotherham is one of 4 beacon councils for Valuing People)

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Deliver a DFG programme of £1.4 million per year**
- **Ensure that all new affordable homes are built to “Lifetime Homes” standards by 2011**
- **Start a Joint Commissioning Board to identify potential housing developments for vulnerable people**
- **Continue to develop Supported Living Schemes for people with Learning Disabilities**
- **Work to maximise the value for money we get from a reducing Supporting People grant, aiming not to reduce service levels**

Accommodation based solutions

The levels of supported housing schemes in Rotherham are quite close to the national average. Limited resources mean that we have had to target our development activities in this area. We have been able to develop some new schemes recently, including a core and cluster scheme for teenage parents and additional units for ex-offenders.

We are about to start a new Joint Commissioning Board to identify supported housing development opportunities. The results will inform our affordable housing development programme and planning guidance, enabling us to match projected need with long term supply provision.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Commence regular meetings of the new Joint Commissioning Board**
- **Correlate research into the housing needs of vulnerable people**
- **Carry out a feasibility study for a new Foyer-type development in the borough**



Meeting BME Housing Need

In 2005, we published a Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy, which set out how we plan to address the housing issues faced by many BME households in the borough. A comprehensive review and update of the strategy is currently underway.

The strategy concentrates on housing choice, quality homes, and access to services. There is also the fundamental requirement to maintain a thorough understanding of the range of BME housing needs. The Council as a whole has been assessed as providing services that meet Level 3 of the national Equalities Standard, and is aiming for Level 5 across the board by 2010.

We have carried out a range of BME specific research, and also ensure that other housing research that we commission or undertake includes BME analyses. Examples include:

- Carrying out community and ethnicity profiling for baseline studies of our Place-Shaping projects
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd have developed a comprehensive tenant database, with details of ethnicity and language/access requirements
- Our Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007 and Private Sector Condition Survey both involved BME data collection and analysis
- HMR masterplanning involved BME consultation and aspirations

We have also been successful in taking forward the action plan from the BME strategy. For instance all officers now receive equalities and diversity training; a floating support service is now in place for asylum seekers; new racist incident systems and publicity have been provided; and a range of official publications are available in various media and translations (including DVD format).

We have improved housing choice through our new Key Choices CBL scheme, and our town centre Property Shop co-ordinates both CBL and all other housing options advice in a central one-stop service. Officers have all been trained in cultural awareness and BME housing needs, and translators and culturally specific publications are available.

In terms of new housing provision, we are encouraging developers to include large family homes in new developments, and our own affordable housing programme includes larger family homes and some culturally specific housing provision. Our most recent scheme is in partnership with Sadeh-Lok HA, developing six larger homes for BME households on the former Ferham School site. We are also working with 2010 Rotherham Ltd to re-model council homes at Eastwood, in a programme which includes extensions to create larger family homes (four bedrooms and above).

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- Continue to commission new affordable housing that meets BME needs
- Monitor the impact of Key Choices on lettings to BME households – including quantity, quality and location
- Look to roll out our remodelling of Council homes to more areas/estates
- Provide a range of inter-faith and intergenerational activities as part of our place-shaping programmes
- Target private sector investment at older properties – which are more likely to include BME households
- Work with the Rotherham District Landlords Association to improve private rented sector standards, and use enforcement activity to tackle the worst landlords – our private sector survey shows that people from EU accession states are most likely to be in poor quality rented homes
- Adopt the use of selective licensing in the private rented sector to address areas suffering from low demand and/or significant and persistent anti-social behaviour.
- Target energy efficiency grants at BME communities and affordable warmth publicity at community venues/facilities
- Continue to develop our understanding of migration from EU Accession states

Older Persons' Housing

Rotherham's recent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlighted the trends associated with an increasingly elderly population. By 2021, the number of people over 60 in the borough will have risen by 30% - to over 70,000. Over the same period, the number of people living past 85 will have increased by 65%. These increases run parallel to a desire for independent living – with specific older persons' residential provision now needed mainly for the very frail, or those unable to remain in their own homes.

We have already started to reconfigure our services to meet the changing demographics and associated changes in older persons' housing needs. We will also be working towards the aims of the new national strategy for housing in an ageing society, "Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods".

Independent Living

- We are building more new homes to "Lifetime Homes" standards

- We are providing bungalows for older people in new developments (e.g. Canklow)
- We are encouraging developers to build retirement homes for owner –occupation
- We are targeting energy efficiency grants and Save N Warm improvements towards older people in all tenures – including publicity and marketing campaigns
- We have launched a Care and Repair Home Improvement Scheme which carries out repairs and maintenance to older peoples’ homes through Anchor Staying Put
- We have increased floating support provision to older people (via Supporting People) in partnership with the PCT
- We are developing an integration and support strategy
- We have spent £0.4m of Regional Housing Boards funding on improvements to sheltered properties and intend to spend a further £1.9m

Specific Housing Provision

The redevelopment of our older persons’ housing is underway to meet changing needs, whereby existing low demand and obsolete sheltered housing is being decommissioned. We have started a programme of developing extra-care housing schemes, suitable for very frail residents, with 24-hour support and care provision on-site.

We have already developed two new schemes, providing 65 units at Oak Trees and Potteries Court. A third is in development at Longfellow Drive, and will be ready for occupation later in 2009.

We are also looking at the potential demand for owner-occupied or shared ownership extra care provision, which would allow home-owners to transfer equity if required.

Under-occupation

We are developing a number of initiatives to address under-occupation within the borough. Our aim is to free up a supply of larger homes for families in need, across social and owner-occupied tenures. The statistics below illustrate why older persons’ households could unlock this potential.

- Over 25% of all homes in Rotherham include one or more people over retirement age
- 56% of all single person households are occupied by an older person
- Over half of all households with one or more older people have three bedrooms or more

Initiatives to encourage people to move include: 2010 Rotherham Ltd offering incentives and assistance to under-occupiers to move to more suitable accommodation; encouraging the development of more retirement homes; and developing products to facilitate equity transfer.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- Meet the new national requirement to build all new affordable homes to Lifetime Homes standards as soon as possible
- Identify and commission further extra care provision, jointly with Rotherham PCT and Supporting People
- Work with developers to encourage innovative new retirement housing provision
- Increase energy advice referrals amongst older people by 20%
- Increase the number of repairs carried out by our Home Improvement Service
- Increase the number of under-occupation moves year-on-year
- Work to improve inclusion and access and reduce social isolation through our place-shaping services
- Improve advice and guidance to older people so that they can make informed housing choices



Gypsies and travellers

The 2006 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study for South Yorkshire identified a gypsy and traveller population of about 400 in Rotherham (which is relatively low for the region). However,

there is no Council owned or managed site provision within the borough. Existing mobile home provision is on private sites, or unauthorised encampments.

The 2006 study estimated that an additional 276 pitches are required in the sub-region, of which 28 should be developed in Rotherham.

Roughly 40% of gypsy and traveller families in Rotherham live in bricks and mortar accommodation. This is predominantly in the private rented sector, and poor conditions are not uncommon.

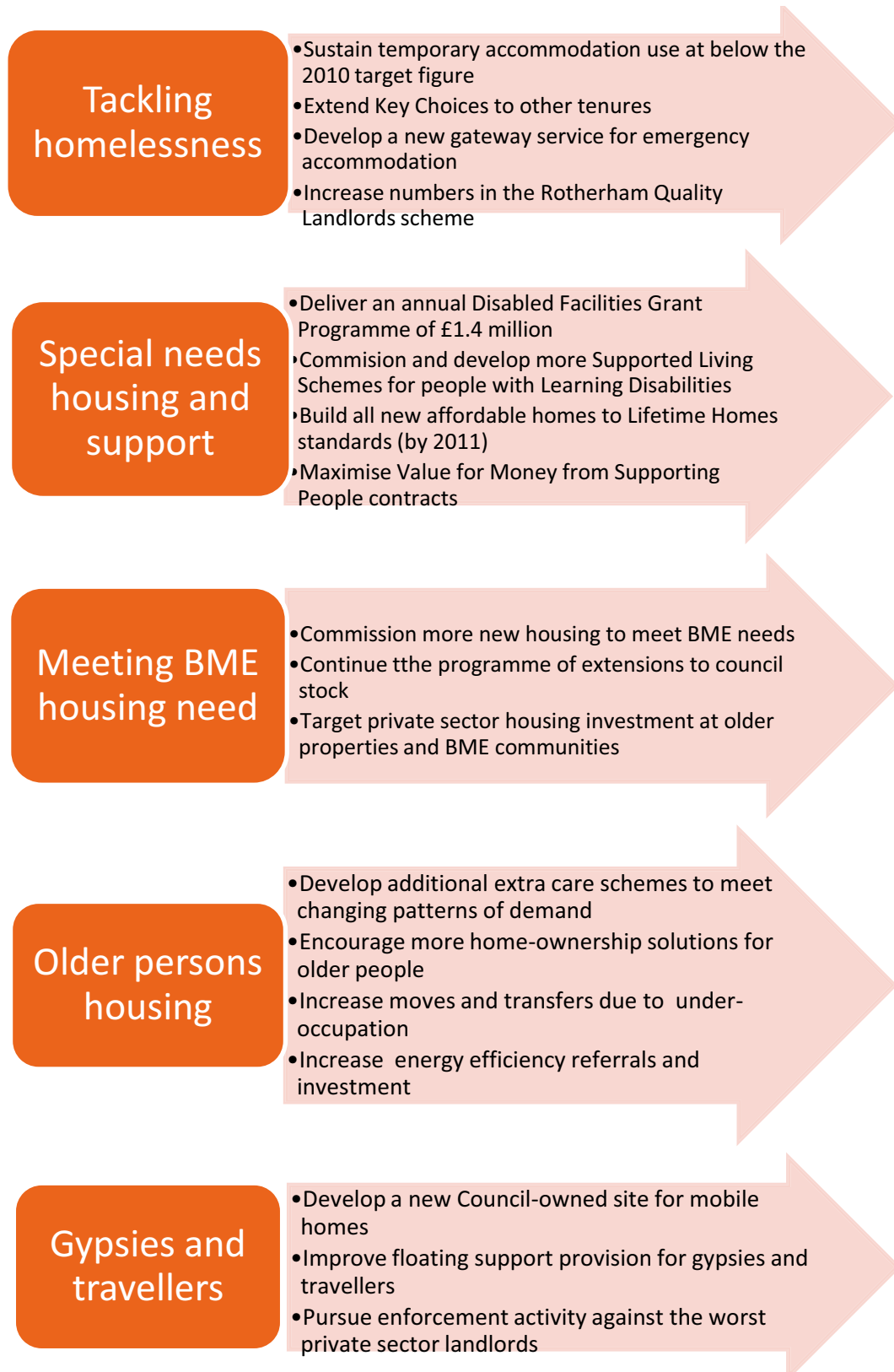
We are currently consulting on a draft Gypsy and Traveller Action plan for Rotherham, which will co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to meeting housing needs.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Develop new Council-owned site provision within Rotherham – two possible sites are already being assessed**
- **Target additional floating support provision at gypsies and travellers, through the Supporting People programme**
- **Pursue enforcement activity against the worst performing landlords in the private rented sector**
- **Continue to work with our Children's' Service to identify hidden gypsy and traveller households**

Theme 3 – Inclusion and access

Summary of Key Actions



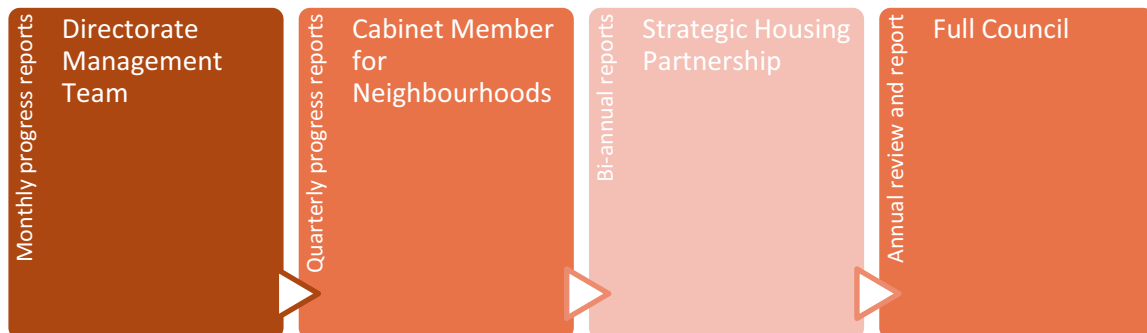
Delivery

Having a fit for purpose housing strategy is a good thing. But it is nothing without the ability to deliver against the commitments, targets and deadlines that are contained in the strategy and action plan. We will measure our success by how we perform in these areas between now and 2011/12.

The earlier section on our achievements shows how we have achieved over 95% of our actions from the previous strategy. If we can maintain and improve on this level of performance, then we can be fairly confident that we will achieve our main goals for housing over the 2008-11 period.

Governance and monitoring

The Strategy is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Council. Several key groups and boards receive regular progress updates, setting out performance to date against the main objectives and individual actions. Exception reports are provided for any areas where performance is below or behind target.



Housing Strategy Action Plan

The Housing Strategy is supported by an action plan which clearly sets out:-

- All the actions that will be taken in order to deliver the strategic objectives and service priorities;
- Timescales for completion;
- Identification of lead officers to deliver each priority action;
- Resource implications;

- Targets and milestones; and
- Anticipated outcomes.

In accordance with the Audit Commission guidance all priority actions are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound.

Annual action plan targets are incorporated within the Housing Service Annual Excellence Plan. Progress against this plan is monitored on a fortnightly basis by a group of senior housing and managers, chaired by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services.

Reviewing and updating the strategy

A formal review of the Housing Strategy will be undertaken on an annual basis to ensure that the strategic objectives remain appropriate and to determine progress against the stated actions. This review process involves a number of steps including a review of the strategy against:-

- Government objectives and any new regulatory requirements
- Changing regional and sub regional policies and priorities
- Changing and emerging housing needs in the borough
- How housing can and will contribute to new or revised corporate objectives or those determined by the Rotherham Partnership (LSP)
- Other associated strategies for example Homelessness Prevention, Private Sector Housing, Supporting People, BME Housing, Rural Housing, Gypsy and Travellers Plan, Extra Care Housing etc.
- Stakeholder views. These are obtained on an ongoing basis through a number of consultation and discussion forums including:-
 - Strategic Housing Partnership
 - RSL Forum
 - Private Landlord forum
 - Service Users Inclusive Forum (Supporting People)
 - Reachout
 - Tenant and Residents groups

Resources

Resources for housing strategic initiatives and actions come from a variety of sources – including Council revenue and capital budgets, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), National Affordable

Housing Programme, Housing Market Renewal, Regional Housing Pot, Supporting People, the CLG, and other public and private sector organisations.

Where possible we try to maximise resources and value for money by aligning funding streams to target various tenures, types of housing or geographical areas, thus increasing the overall impact of our expenditure. Examples include:

- Aligning HMR pathfinder resources and 2010 Rotherham decent homes funds when redeveloping council housing
- Targeting private sector housing investment at the private rented sector and homes built before 1919
- Combining HNS capital resources, Supporting People revenue funds and land discount to develop new extra care housing schemes

Budget spreadsheets 2008-11

Action Plan

Appendix A - Analysis of Housing Need

Our understanding of housing needs in Rotherham has been informed by a range of sources, including:

- Rotherham Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Fordham Research 2007)
- Rotherham Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (Fordham Research 2008)
- Census data
- National Performance Indicator returns
- Housing Market Renewal Strategic Bid (Transform South Yorkshire 2008)
- Rotherham Supporting People Strategy and Needs/Supply analysis
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Rotherham MBC & Primary Care Trust 2008)
- Rotherham Public Health Strategy (Rotherham MBC & Primary Care Trust 2006)
- The Rotherham Statement (Transform South Yorkshire 2005)
- Rotherham Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (2007)
- Rotherham HRA Business Plan Statistical Appendix (2007)
- Rotherham Affordable Warmth Strategy (2007)
- Rotherham Respect Action Plan (2008)
- Rotherham MBC Neighbourhoods and Adults Services Departmental Service Plan (2006)

The above information was augmented through meetings and discussions with key officers, stakeholders and partners.

The needs analysis has been split into four areas:

- Context
- The housing market
- Projected housing needs
- Special needs housing

Context

Rotherham's housing market area is broadly defined by the borough boundaries, although obviously we encompass several larger housing markets, such as the Sheffield City Region and the Dearne Valley (Doncaster axis). For this needs analysis the market area has been defined using the Government's housing market definition, which includes household migration patterns and travel to work areas.

Population

The population of Rotherham has increased in the last 10 years, and now stands at 254,000. This is an increase from 247,000 in 2000. However, the current population is now the same as the population in 1981, prior to the years of industrial and economic decline experienced by the region. By comparison, nationally population increased by 7% over the same period.

As Rotherham is now experiencing a period of rapid industrial and economic growth, the previous population trends are changing. The borough's population is projected to increase by 7% by 2021, to a total of 271,600. Or, put another way, an increase of 17,000 people in under 15 years.

In household terms, we can expect a significant increase due partially to the population influx, but also as household size is falling. By 2021, the number of households in Rotherham will have increased from 108,000 to 124,000 – an increase of 16,000 households.

Change in households and household size (source CLG and ONS)

Date	Population	Households	Ave household size
2006	254,600	108,000	2.36
2011	259,900	113,000	2.30
2016	265,800	119,000	2.23
2021	271,600	124,000	2.19

Other significant population trends are that the number of people aged over 60 is expected to rise by 30% over the period – to a total of 72,200. The number of people who are 85 or over will rise by 56%.

Economy

Economic growth in Rotherham has been prolific. Between 1995 and 2005, the number of jobs in the borough grew by 41% (to a total of 104,800). Compared with South Yorkshire (24% increase) and all of England and Wales (16.6%), it is evident that our economic renaissance is well under way.

When planning for housing we should examine the employment profile of the borough. Rotherham has a lower proportion of managerial and professional jobs than the national average, but higher percentages of trades, process, plant and sales jobs. In other words, we have more lower paid manufacturing and services jobs.

Employment types by sector (source NOMIS 2007)

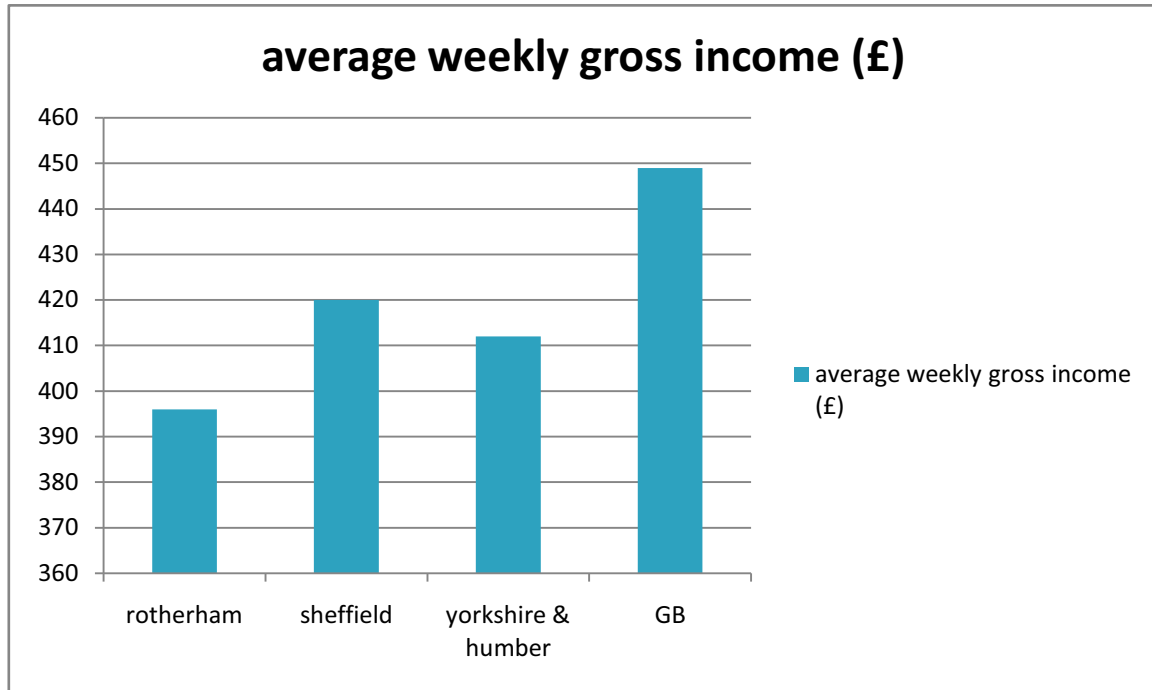
Employment category	Rotherham (%)	GB (%)
Manufacturing	16.1	11.1
Construction	6.1	4.6
Distribution and hospitality	23.9	24.1
Transport & communications	6.7	6.0
Finance and IT	17.3	20.7
Public administration, education & health	24.5	26.9
Other services	4.0	5.2
Agriculture, fishing, energy & water	1.4	1.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Unemployment has declined in Rotherham in recent years. The current unemployment rate of 4.9% is pretty much the same as the national figure. This is in contrast to the position of 10 years ago, when local unemployment was considerably higher.

Of concern, however, is the picture of skills and attainment, where the level is lower than the national or regional picture. 16.8% of Rotherham's population have no formal qualifications, compared with only 14.3% nationally. And whilst at a national level 26.5% of people have a degree level qualification, only 17% of people in Rotherham have reached this level.

This finds its way through to peoples' wages and salaries. Average incomes in Rotherham are slightly lower than the regional average, and lower than those in neighbouring Sheffield. They are also considerably below the national average.

Earnings are obviously a crucial factor in households' ability to afford housing, and to exercise choice over type, tenure and location of their homes.



Source: annual survey of earnings 2006

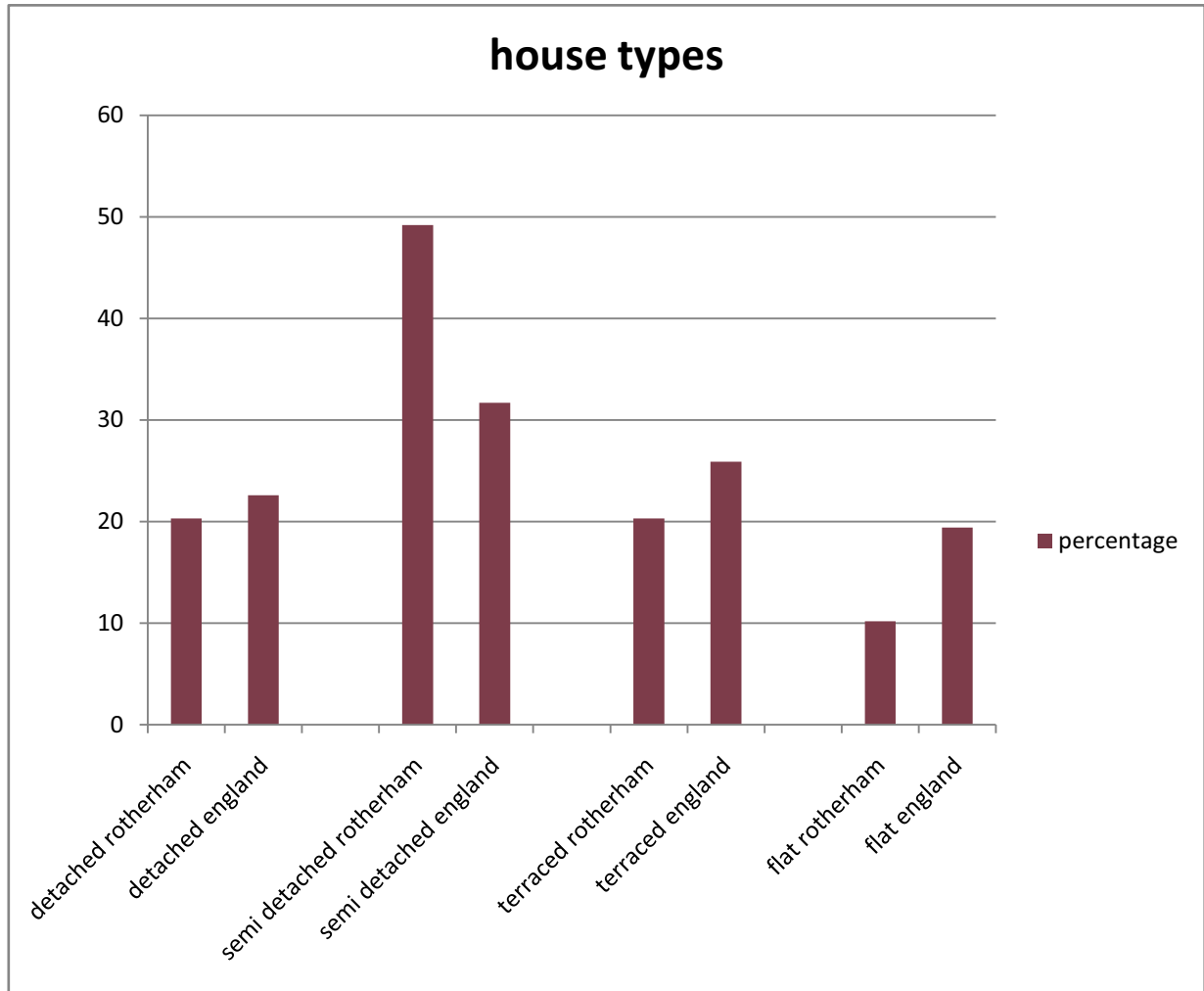
Housing stock

There are approximately 110,000 dwellings in Rotherham. Tenure breakdown is as follows:

- Owner occupied 65.3%
- Council rented 23.2%
- Housing association 3.2%
- Private rented 5.0%

We have a lower level of home ownership than the national average, and a smaller private rented sector. Local authority rented housing is considerably above the national average of 13.2%.

An examination of dwelling types reveals that Rotherham has a much higher proportion of semi-detached houses than is the case nationally. By contrast, we have a significantly lower level of flats and apartments.



Source: Census

The majority of dwellings in Rotherham fall into Council Tax band "A" (57% of homes). This is a considerably higher proportion than regionally or nationally, and reflects the generally lower value of dwellings in the borough.

Vacancy rates are, however, comparatively low at 3.4%, compared with 3.9% across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

The Rotherham housing market

Owner occupation

The table below shows price levels for Rotherham and for comparator areas. House prices in Rotherham are considerably below the national average, and slightly below the regional average.

Average House Prices (Source: Land Registry 2008)

Area	Ave price (£)	As % of Eng & Wales
England & Wales	185,616	100.0%
Rotherham	120,607	65.0%
Sheffield	140,003	75.4%
Yorkshire & Humber	148,385	79.9%

Between 2001 and 2006, the average house price in Rotherham rose by 99%, significantly above the national increase of 61% for the same period. The last ten years have seen house prices rise locally and nationally. At the time of writing in early 2008, there are signs that this may be about to change, with a global “credit crunch” beginning to take effect. However, at this stage there are no accurate indications of the effect that this will have, either locally or nationally. Prices may level off, or even start to reduce, although by how much is still in the realm of guesswork.

The 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment analysed local data and surveyed a range of stakeholders to gain a spatial picture of the local housing market. The main findings were:

- Prices tend to rise towards the central and southern parts of the borough
- There have been more rapid price rises recently in northern wards
- The market has a large buy-to-let influence

Entry level housing costs are shown below, by Area Assembly boundary:

Area Assembly	2 bedrooms (£)	3 bedrooms (£)	4 bedrooms (£)
Rother Valley South	89,500	116,600	174,200
Rother Valley West	84,800	106,600	155,600
Rotherham North	69,400	96,300	156,600
Rotherham South	75,800	118,900	209,100
Wentworth North	83,900	105,800	170,500
Wentworth South	84,000	103,800	167,100
Wentworth Valley	81,300	107,100	162,000
Whole Borough	81,000	108,000	171,000

Source – Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007

Although there are some price variations within the borough, they are not hugely significant.

New build homes are considerably more expensive than purchasing second-hand homes. On average, the Strategic Market Assessment found new homes to be 50% more expensive.

Private rented sector

Rotherham has a relatively small private rented sector (about 5% of all dwellings). This compares with 10-11% nationally. Entry level rented costs are shown below:

- 1 bedroom - £350 pcm
- 2 bedroom - £370 pcm
- 3 bedroom - £450 pcm

There appear to be few larger properties available for private rent (4 bedrooms or above). The sector has a higher concentration of dwellings in urban centres and proportionately more terraced homes than the Rotherham average.

Social rented sector

Social rented average rents are shown in the table below, taken from CORE data:

- 1 bedroom - £217 pcm
- 2 bedroom - £256 pcm
- 3 bedroom - £290 pcm
- 4 bedroom - £329 pcm

This shows that rents are considerably less than those for private renting, indicating a potential affordability gap between the two sectors. If costs are compared across the sectors, a picture of relative affordability emerges (see table below). This clearly shows that there is an affordability gap between social renting and private renting, and a further gap between renting and owner-occupation.

Monthly outgoings by tenure (SHMA 2007)

Size	Social rent (£)	Private rent (£)	Owner occupation (£)
2 bedrooms	256	370	405
3 bedrooms	290	450	540

Household characteristics

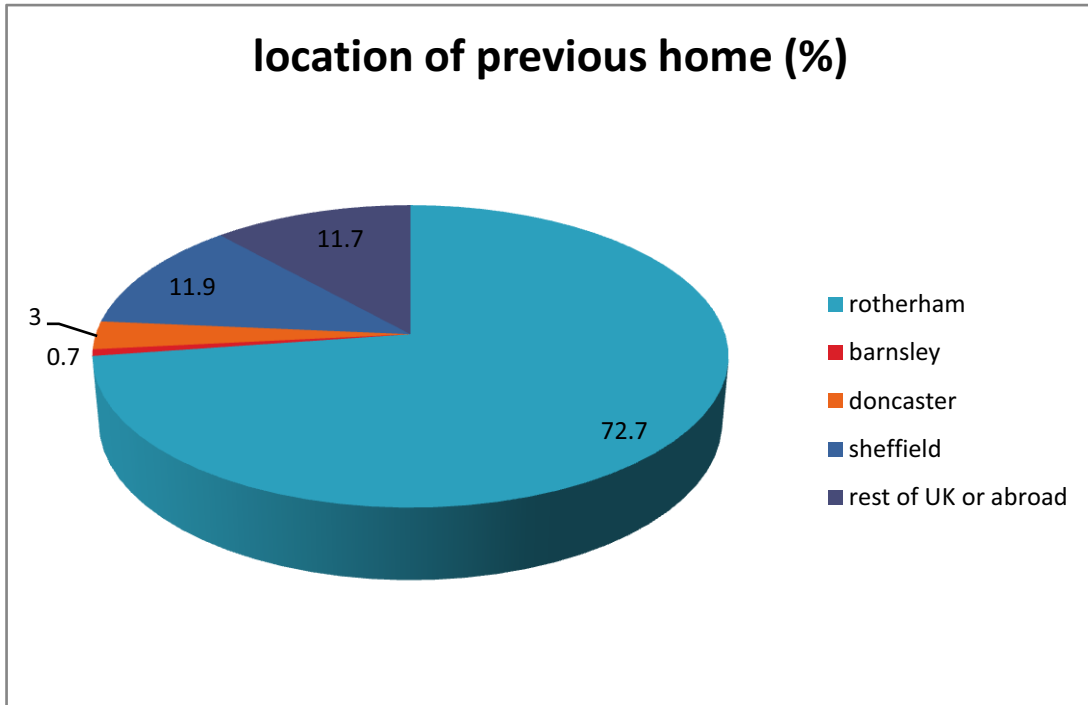
The bullet points show the headline household characteristics of the Rotherham housing market:

- 25.7% of households are pensioner only homes
- 28.3% of households contain children
- 12% of are single non pensioner households

Average household size is 2.4 persons, roughly the same as the national average. Owner occupiers with mortgages tend to have the largest households (2.9 average), whilst social rented households are the smallest (2.0 on average).

Households in Rotherham are more settled than the national average – over 75% of people have lived at their current home for more than five years. Owner occupiers are most settled (only 8% have moved within the last two years), and private rented tenants the least settled (46% have moved).

The vast majority of moves are within the Rotherham housing market area (72.7%). Only 11.7% of moves within the last two years are from elsewhere in the UK or abroad, as the diagram below illustrates.



Source: SHMA 2007

An examination of employment status also reveals interesting facts about the local housing market. Owner occupiers with a mortgage have by far the highest proportion of household members in employment:

- Owner occupiers with a mortgage – 75.5% in employment
- Owner occupiers with no mortgage – 24.1% in employment (although 67.2% retired)
- Private renters – 49.5% in employment
- Social renters – 15.8% in employment

Obviously, these figures have a sizeable impact on peoples' ability to access other types and tenures of housing. A comparison of average income reveals significant tenure variations – with owner occupiers having average incomes of over £30,000 per household, private renters having average incomes of £15,000 per household and social renters having an income of less than £10,000 per household. Rotherham's average income is £21,810, which is about 10% less than the national average.

Average incomes vary geographically within the Borough. There is a £10,000 gap in household income between the two more affluent Rother Valley wards and the town centre wards of Rotherham North and Rotherham South.

Many households in Rotherham spend more than 25% of their income on housing costs – over 20% of owner occupiers and over 60% of social rented and private sector tenants. A significant number are spending over 50% of their income on housing (although this does not take account of housing benefit costs).

Projected Housing Needs

The Department for Communities and Local Government defines housing need as:

“households who lack their own housing, or live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their needs in the market.”

For affordability purposes we are assuming the ability to secure a mortgage at a 3.5 multiple of income, or for renting, spending more than 25% of gross income on housing costs.

In Rotherham there are currently 6,000 households living in unsuitable accommodation (5.6% of all households). By tenure this breaks down as:

- Owner occupied – 46%

- Social rented – 42.4%
- Private rented – 11.8%

Our 2007 Strategic Market Assessment estimates that 3,534 of these households need a move to alternative accommodation. The Market Assessment also estimates that there is a backlog of unmet housing need of 2,278 households, and an annual need from newly formed households of 2,050.

Using the CLG-approved Needs Model, it is possible to compile an estimate of net annual housing need.

Needs Model for Rotherham (source SHMA 2007)

Stage of calculation	Output (households)
Stage 1 – Current Need	
Total current housing need (gross)	2,278
Stage 2 – Future Need	
New household formation	1,382
Proportion unable to buy or rent at market rate	40.8%
Existing households falling into need	1,488
Total newly arising need (gross per year)	2,051
Stage 3 – Affordable Housing Supply	
Affordable homes occupied by households in need	1,111
Committed supply of affordable housing	492
Total affordable stock available (combined)	1,603
Annual supply of re-lets (net)	1,770
Annual intermediate supply available	5
Annual supply of affordable housing	1,775
Stage 4 – Net current need	
Net current need (gross)	675
Annualised net current need	135
Stage 5 – Annual net housing need	
Net annual housing need (backlog + new need – supply)	411

This leaves us with an annual net housing need of 411 households. In national terms this is fairly low: Fordham research estimates this at a rate of 4 homes per 1,000 households (against a national average of 16 per 1,000). However, when set against affordability and income criteria, it is still a significant need that is not being met at present. Failure to address this need is likely to have a significant impact on the future socio-economic success of the borough.

It is possible to provide an estimate of how much of this affordable housing need should be met by tenure – i.e. social rented or intermediate affordable housing (NB – intermediate housing covers a range of products from low cost home ownership through to sub-market rented housing). Using data on household size, incomes and prices, the 2007 SHMA estimates that there is potential for 51.6% of the net need to be met by intermediate housing (212 households out of the net 411 annual need figure).

The SHMA provides a sensitivity analysis to cover the event of prices falling by either 10% or 20%. This is quite a useful tool, given the financial climate of early 2008. The analysis assumes that the supply of affordable housing and income and savings levels will be unchanged.

Scenario	Net housing need
Prices fall by 10%	370
Prices fall by 20%	322
Rents fall by 10%	300
Prices and rents fall by 10%	259

Source SHMA 2007

Even taking a significant house price and rents decline, there will still be the need for over 250 new affordable homes per year.

Types of housing

Using the SHMA and data from other sources, we have analysed the types of housing likely to be required by those households that are in housing need.

The first step examines all tenures, and assesses where surpluses and shortfalls may exist, using the Fordham Research Balancing Housing Markets model. The result is a net demand of 792 dwellings per year (across all tenures). This is close to the Regional Spatial Strategy target of 750 new homes each year. The model also suggests that:

- There is an ongoing need for owner occupied housing
- There is a large unmet need for social rented and intermediate housing
- The main shortfall is in two-bedroom homes
- There is a potential surplus of three bedroom homes
- There is a small, but significant need for one bedroom homes and homes with four bedrooms or more

Rural housing need

Geographically, the majority of Rotherham is rural – over 70% of the borough. However, in population terms, the majority of people live in urban areas (88.9%). By way of definition, “urban” consists of settlements with a population of 10,000 or more.

Settlement type	Households	Percentage
Urban	95,104	88.9%
Town and fringe	9,557	8.9%
Village	1,881	1.8%
Hamlet	458	0.4%
TOTAL	107,000	100.0%

Source – household survey data 2007

To define “rural” we include all households in non-urban categories - this equates to a total rural population of nearly 12,000. Only seven electoral wards contain rural populations according to this definition. They are:

- Wales – 100% rural households
- Rother Vale – 76.5%
- Keppel – 32.6%
- Anston & Woodsetts – 19.1%
- Hooper – 13.0%
- Dinnington – 9.0%
- Silverwood – 2.9%

There are marked differences between the rural and urban populations in Rotherham. For instance, average rural earnings are higher - £28,867 compared to £20,928. Only 14.7% of rural households do not have access to a car (30.5% in urban areas).

There are also differences in house types. 41% of rural homes are detached, compared with 17% in urban areas. And owner-occupation stands at 85% in rural areas, with only 10% social rented housing.

The Government’s Affordable Rural Housing Commission states that poor access to services is one of the key issues facing rural communities. However, the 2007 Rotherham SHMA found little variation

in access between rural and urban households, with rural communities even enjoying better access to some amenities, such as hospitals, shops and banks.

The following table shows the CLG Needs Model applied to urban and rural housing need. As can be seen, over 20% of net annual need is rural, even though the rural population is only 11.1%. This suggests that rural households experience a disproportionate need for affordable housing – although due to a lack of supply rather than through non-affordability.

Urban and rural housing requirements (source household survey data and SHMA 2007)

	Urban	Rural	Total
Total annual need	2,308	198	2,507
% of annual need	92.1%	7.9%	100.0%
Total annual supply	1,989	107	2,096
% of annual supply	94.9%	5.1%	100.0%
Net shortfall	319	91	411
% of net shortfall	77.8%	22.2%	100.0%

Households with Specific Needs

This section examines groups and households who may have special or additional housing needs, and are likely to need assistance in order to enjoy fair and equal access to housing. It is worth pointing out at this stage that not every household in the groups concerned will have additional needs just that needs have been identified in relation to a significant proportion of constituent households.

This section covers the following groups:

- Black and minority ethnic households (BME)
- Gypsies and travellers
- Households with support needs

BME Households

Rotherham's BME population makes up around 5.4% of the total, well below the national average of 11.7%. The largest group is South Asian (including Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi households) at 2.1% of total population.

Significantly, data and consultation evidence shows that Rotherham’s BME population has increased in wealth and is beginning to disperse away from more traditionally BME concentrated areas of the borough.

Average household size by ethnicity shows some disparity with the white British/Irish population, particularly for South Asian communities. This is a significant factor in housing needs terms.

	White British/Irish	South Asian	Other BME	TOTAL
Ave household size	2.34	4.64	2.42	2.39

Source: primary data

There are 48.3% South Asian households with two or more children – more than four times as many as the rest of the local population. Single South Asian households are almost non-existent.

In terms of tenure, South Asian households are more likely to live in owner occupation, and less likely to be social renters. Other BME groups exhibit lower levels of owner-occupation, possibly reflecting their more recent arrival in the UK.

Spatially, the urban wards of Rotherham North and Rotherham South contain the highest proportion of non-white residents (4.9% and 13.6% respectively). Essentially, the highest proportions of BME residents are in the main urban centres.

The other main characteristics of BME communities in Rotherham are:

- Average incomes for South Asian and other BME communities are lower than those for the white British and Irish population
- South Asian households are four times more likely to be living in unsuitable accommodation
- 22% of South Asian households are overcrowded, compared with a borough average of 2.1%
- 11% of South Asian households are in housing need, as are 13.4% of other BME households (compared with only 1.9% of white British/Irish households)

Gypsies and travellers

The Northern Housing Consortium carried out a South Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study in 2006. The study found that Rotherham has a relatively small gypsy and traveller population – 86 households, or about 400 people.

40% of our gypsy and traveller population live in bricks and mortar houses/flats, the remainder in mobile homes. Over a third of the families in houses and flats live in the private rented sector and are highly likely to live in unsuitable or poor quality accommodation.

The families who have mobile homes either stay on private sites or in unauthorised encampments. Rotherham does not at present have a Council-owned or managed site.

The 2006 Study found a need for 276 additional pitches across South Yorkshire, and suggested that at least 28 of these could be in Rotherham.

Households with support needs

The Census data reveals that 22.4% of people in Rotherham have a long-term limiting illness; and nearly half of these are of working age. There are 18,471 households with one or more members in an identified support needs group, a figure equal to 17.3% of all households. This is higher than the national average of 13-14% (Fordham Research).

The breakdown by support needs group is as follows:

Category	No of households	% of all households	% of households with support needs
Frail elderly	3,494	3.3%	18.9%
Physical/mobility impairment	13,017	12.2%	70.5%
Learning disability	1,208	1.1%	6.5%
Mental health	1,156	1.1%	6.3%
Severe sensory impairment	2,014	1.9%	10.9%
Non-visible condition	1,663	1.6%	9.0%
Other	80	0.1%	0.4%

Source – household survey data 2007

Within this breakdown, an estimated 3,275 households contain someone with multiple needs.

Spatially, households with support needs are well-dispersed throughout the borough. No borough has a significantly higher proportion, although Wentworth Valley Area Assembly has relatively low levels of support needs.

Using a range of data sources – Supporting People, Commissioning Plans, SHMA and Census data, we have analysed the main support needs by client group:

■ Older people:

- An ageing population – there will be over 72,000 people aged 60+ by 2021
- People generally want to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible
- Over half of households with older people are in three bedroom or larger properties – suggesting potential under-occupation
- Existing sheltered housing provision is no longer popular or fit for purpose; extra care accommodation is becoming the preferred model
- An increasing proportion of carers are over 65 years old
- Rotherham has higher levels of dementia than the rest of South Yorkshire – the number of people with dementia is expected to increase by 23% to 4,000+ by 2020.

■ Homelessness:

- The borough has reduced levels of homelessness, due to a more pro-active approach adopted in the last few years
- The Government has set a target of halving temporary accommodation (TA) use by 2010 – for Rotherham this means reducing households in TA to 31
- The need for a single “gateway” service for emergency accommodation has been identified

■ Learning disability:

- There are 840 adults in Rotherham with Learning Disabilities – nearly half live with their families, the remainder are living independently or in residential care
- Nearly 75 people have carers who are over 70 years old
- At least half of the people on the borough’s Learning Disability Register will eventually need fully supported accommodation solutions
- Rotherham has over 40 Supported Living schemes, mainly in the RSL sector – however this does not meet projected need

■ Physical and sensory impairment:

- Over 25,000 people in Rotherham have a physical or sensory impairment – this is expected to increase by nearly 10% within the next five years
- There is a need for more housing that meets the needs of this client group – over 75% want to remain in their own home wherever possible
- There is only limited floating support available for people with physical disabilities

■ Mental health:

- 1700 people receive specialist mental health provision in Rotherham
- There are only 50 supported housing places – demand outstrips supply
- The Supporting People Strategy has identified the need to reduce in-patient beds, and the provision of more community based tenancies with intensive support

■ Teenage parents and young people at risk:

- Rotherham has a relatively high rate of teenage pregnancy
- There is a need for more floating support and move-on accommodation for teenage parents
- There are only 10 floating support placements and 3 supported lodgings for young people at risk
- The Supporting People Strategy suggests a foyer-type scheme could be developed

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	10th July 2008
3.	Title:	Garage Site Review and Improvement Programme Progress report
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

At the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel on 13th December 2007, Members requested a further report presenting information on progress to date with the garage site review, including progress with the investment programme.

The following report provides a position statement with regard to the outcomes of the review to date, and details the current position relating to the garage site investment programme and work being undertaken by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. A presentation will also be made to the Panel highlighting the key issues.

A full summary of garage sites per ward, including site location maps, the initial recommendations of the review and investment undertaken to date on a site by site basis, is contained within the Garage Site Database; a copy of which is in the Members Room Library at the Town Hall.

6. Recommendations

- **That members note the contents of the report and presentation.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 The Garage Site Review

A database of garage sites and garage plot sites compiled by the Neighbourhood Investment Team has identified 451 Council owned garage sites spread throughout the Borough. Table 1 below for further reference details the number of sites per Assembly Area. The Garage Site Database breaks this down further into specific Wards/locations,

The database captures the following information;

- Location of site, per Ward
- Assessment of Demand (High/Medium/Low)
- Management and regeneration commentary where appropriate
- Site sustainability assessment using a 'traffic light' method (Red/Amber/Green)
- Details of sites currently within the disposal process
- Details of sites further recommended for decommissioning, or retention.

Table 1: Distribution of garage sites per assembly area.

Assembly Area	Total Garage Sites	Total Garage Plot Sites	Grand Total	% of Borough Total
Rotherham North	114	23	137	30
Rotherham South	29	4	33	7
Rother Valley West	25	27	52	12
Rother Valley South	2	26	28	6
Wentworth North	57	22	79	17
Wentworth South	56	25	81	18
Wentworth Valley	19	22	41	10
Total	302	149	451	100%

The review has entailed garage sites being assessed as to their sustainability in consultation with ward members, residents and 2010 Rotherham Ltd in an evolving process.

Issues include existing demand, quality, need, management problems and location and within proposed or existing neighbourhoods undergoing regeneration and masterplanning activity. For reference the following 'traffic light' categorisation of each site is still being applied:

- Red - Recommended for decommissioning
- Amber - Further consideration required following completion of HMR masterplanning and consultation.
- Green - Sustainable and to be retained as existing use

Of the total garage sites in the Borough, the analysis of sites now undertaken borough wide has recommended that 81% of sites are to be retained and improved and 19% of the sites be considered for disposal, subject to further consultation with Members and other key stakeholders. A final report on the findings of the review and

consultation, with recommendations will be presented to The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods in September.

7.2 Garage Site Improvement Programme

The garage site review continues to assist in directing investment into sustainable garage sites. The garage site improvement programme supported by Housing Investment Programme (HIP) funding is being delivered by 2010 Ltd. A HIP budget of £500,000 per annum has been allocated and £70,000 HRA to support delivery as submitted previously.

The 2007/08 budget allocated within HIP of £500,000 was spent in full

The 2008/2009 Garage Refurbishment Programme (GRP) is largely as proposed with a further £500,000 allocated within the HIP Programme.

2010 Ltd will continue to co-ordinate and deliver the investment programme, with strategic client support by the Neighbourhood Investment Team. Officers will continue to inform 2010 Rotherham Limited of any subsequent decisions taken to invest or otherwise on current 'Amber' classified sites and others identified during the review process as unsustainable.

7.3 Unsustainable Garage Sites

The final stages of the review and data collated previously has enabled the identification of a number of unsustainable sites recommended for decommissioning both to support the Affordable Housing Programme and for open market sale. These are subject to further consultation and approval.

It is proposed that subject to final consultation with ward members, sites proposed for decommissioning will be fully appraised prior to a final recommendation report being submitted to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods for approval.

7.4 Garage Site Management Issues

A number of management issues raised previously still require monitoring and actions are being agreed to resolve matters with 2010 Rotherham Limited as summarised below.

- Concerns regarding the general condition of garages and garage sites
- Site management protocols
- Dealing with damaged/derelict garages
- Tenancy termination process
- Demand and usage

Liaison with 2010 Rotherham Limited is ongoing and the Property Investment team will continue to be the key Council link.

8. Finance

The current investment programme (£500k) is financed from the Housing Investment programme (HIP) with a further budget contribution of £75K from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) through the garage site rental income stream.

Additional funding has been obtained linked to neighbourhood regeneration, in particular pathfinder funding areas to allow environmental and security works to be carried out to help sustain demand and investment in areas identified as crime and anti social behaviour hot spots.

Performance improvements will continue to be an important part of the letting and management of garage sites in order to sustain capital investment and maximise rental income streams in subsequent years.

The disposal of garage sites for affordable housing purposes, whilst achieving significant housing related benefits, also contributes to receipts in the corporate capital pot.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The capital investment requirement to improve and sustain garage sites will mean resources continue to be appropriately allocated and deployed within the HIP to deliver a sustainable garage site improvement programme. The ability of the HMR Pathfinder programme to invest in garage site decommissioning and demolition will be subject to the strategic priorities identified within the 08/11 programme.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Sustainable communities – the development of a comprehensive strategy and investment programme for garage sites will support the wider neighbourhood regeneration agenda and help deliver sustainable neighbourhoods. The alignment of the garage site investment strategy with HMR activity and potentially the Decent Homes programme will continue to maximise the impact of regeneration activity and investment within the neighbourhoods.

The re-use of garage sites to support the delivery of affordable housing contributes towards our key corporate strategic themes of:-

Rotherham Learning
Rotherham Proud
Rotherham Safe
Rotherham Alive
Rotherham Achieving

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 and options to meet household aspirations and an improved quality of life, meeting identified housing needs and addressing obsolete land use and environmental blight (Objective 6)
- Exercise Choice and Control – through enabling a range of housing options to be presented to households 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 allocations process. (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.

The garage site investment programme in addition continues to contribute to creating safer and more attractive neighbourhoods, by providing secure parking provision and in the reduction of enviro-crime and anti-social behaviour activity.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Garage Site database placed in the Members Room
- Garage site recommendation data

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	10th July, 2008
3.	Title:	Customer Access Strategy
4.	Directorate:	Financial Services on behalf of all

5. Summary

This report introduces the refreshed Customer Access Strategy that has been updated to cover the period 2008-2011 and is attached for consideration.

This refreshed Customer Access Strategy was endorsed by CMT on 9th June, 2008.

6. Recommendations

The Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- **note the draft Customer Access Strategy 2008-2011.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

The Council adopted its first Customer Access Strategy in 2005. To ensure that the strategy remains appropriate going forward the Council made a commitment within its 2007/08 Year Ahead Statement to carry out a review of the strategy.

At the same time the ICT Strategy has also been refreshed and both documents have been developed concurrently to ensure that there is a co-ordinated and strategic approach to delivery.

Both of these refreshed strategies were endorsed by CMT on 9th June, 2008 and referred to Cabinet for approval.

Delivering the overall vision of the Customer Access Strategy has been built around five strategic objectives. These are:

Strategic Objective 1 **Improving the customer experience** – Using customer information to shape service delivery around our customers needs so that they are delivered responsively, accurately and cost effectively.

Strategic Objective 2 **Refocusing our priorities** - Ensuring that we are an efficient and effective Council. One that continually reviews its processes and technological requirements to deliver cost efficient quality services in a timely manner that are appropriate to our customers needs.

Strategic Objective 3 **Joined-up service delivery** - Proactively seeking out opportunities to work collaboratively with our partners to continually improve access to information and services provided to our customers.

Strategic Objective 4 **Marketing and promoting ways to access our services**
- Encouraging self service where this is appropriate, for those who are able to contact the Council in this way, and publishing our achievements.

Strategic Objective 5 **Learning, development and training** - Providing empowered, well-trained, professional and knowledgeable staff to support the delivery of services and assist customers to be confident and competent users of ICT based access.

8. Finance

Delivery of significant elements of this strategy will be supported by the refreshed ICT Strategy which will be funded from the existing ICT Capital Programme and

existing Council budgets. Any additional funding for the Customer Access Strategy will be identified in the implementation plan – which will follow acceptance of the strategy – and individual business cases developed as appropriate.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The strategy is a critical element in ensuring the Council continues to develop its services for the benefit of its customers.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The development of the Customer Access Strategy is aligned to:

- 'Stronger and Prosperous Communities' Local Government White Paper which identifies the need to provide responsive services to our communities, and the requirement to drive efficiencies in service design.
- The national transformational government agenda, set out in Sir David Varney's Service Transformation Report (December 2006).

The Customer Access Strategy is a key corporate strategy and will therefore contribute to all policy and performance agendas.

A draft Equality Impact Assessment for the Strategy has been produced in conjunction with Chief Executive's Directorate.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Customer Access Strategy 2005-2007

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Customer Access in Rotherham

Vision & Strategy

2008 – 2011

Draft Version 0.9

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1. Introduction

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council recognises the important role that effective access to services has in building stronger communities, reducing poverty and improving well-being and satisfaction. Our Customer Access Strategy was first produced in 2004 and has provided a firm foundation for the future as we develop our services to meet the needs of our customers. Advances in technology have opened up the number of ways customers want to contact the Council, allowing that contact to be decided by customers, at a time and place most convenient to them. This refreshed Strategy provides a flexible framework for the delivery of customer access.

Later in this document we highlight the contributing ICT projects that will assist in delivering our vision and themes for customer access. These are outlined in more detail in the Council's Information & ICT Strategy.

We will review the strategy and the associated action plan annually in consultation with our customers and partners. Through effective community engagement we will reach out to all communities and involve them in the ongoing development of quality, accessible and cost effective services.

2. Current Position

The Council provides a range of different locations where customers can access our services including the Customer Service Centres, Neighbourhood Offices, Sure Start Children's Centres and leisure and cultural venues including libraries. Details of the Council's current customer access points and the services available are shown in Appendix 1.

By the end of 2010 a further 3 Service Centres will be opened – Maltby, Aston-cum-Aughton and Rawmarsh – which will also include a range of health services available. In addition, the Council is planning to open a further 8 Sure Start Children's Centres which will bring the total number in Rotherham to 20.

In 2007/08 the Council's Contact Centres dealt with just over 406,000 telephone calls via dedicated numbers for housing repairs, Streetpride (covering environment and waste management services), Jobline and general enquiries. For the same period over 76,000 face-to-face interactions were dealt with at the Customer Service Centres in the Town Centre and at Swinton and Dinnington.

In addition, there were over 584,000 cashiering transactions across the Council's 8 cash offices in either the Customer Service Centres or the Neighbourhood Offices. A further 27,000 payments were taken via the automated telephone payments line and over 5,000 payments were made using the internet payments facility on the Council's website.

3. What have we achieved to date?

The Council has already done much to improve access to services for customers. Just some of the many achievements the Council has realised since the first strategy was produced are listed here:

- Opened a new telephone contact centre and 3 new Customer Service Centres in the Town Centre and at Swinton and Dinnington.
- Having led the Local e-Gov National e-Benefits Project the Council became the first local authority in England and Wales to implement the e-Benefits system which automatically populates the Council's back-office systems with information that is captured via an intelligent electronic claim form.
- Introduced single benefit assessments for older people in their home as a part of a newly integrated team between the Council and The Pensions Service.
- Operating on behalf of the Home Office the nationality checking service from Swinton Customer Service Centre, thereby providing customers with increased choice of where to make their application for citizenship.
- Opened new 12 Children's Centres providing good quality integrated services (e.g. health, education, family support and care) to children in order to give every child the best possible start in life. These Centres will have a broad and lasting impact on children, their parents and the wider community
- Improved access to the Disabled Persons Parking permit – Blue Badge, and removed waiting times to receive decisions and badges. The improvements which have been made have been recognised by the Department of Transport and the Council has been short listed for a Centre of Excellence for delivering this service.
- Charter Mark accreditation achieved by the Library Service and retained for Neighbourhoods, The Visual Impairment Team, RotherCare, Community Meals and the Transport Service during 2007.
- Improved access to the adaptations service by decreasing the amount of time our customers wait for an adaptation from 16 weeks to 3 weeks and delivered over £500k in efficiency savings.

- Neighbourhoods and Adult Services have achieved improved access to services through the activities of the Customer Inspection Service, resulting in changes to customer access points, website and publications.
- Made it possible for 24 hour access for customers to make payments via the web site or telephone.
- Introduced a Corporate Consultation and Community Involvement (CCI) Framework which sets out the Council's vision, aims and objectives for CCI. It also sets out a range of actions to ensure that it underpins and is built into everything that the Council does.
- 'Through the eyes of the customer' Project implemented across Neighbourhood & Adult Services which involves customers challenging the quality of services by putting in place innovative mechanisms of testing customer opinion following service improvements
- Streetpride 'Golden Number' implemented, a unique number which customers call for all Streetpride issues has been widely and successfully promoted on roadside banners & vehicles. Customer contact is then channelled through the Rotherham Council Contact Centre, where if possible, their call will be resolved immediately, but where the call needs to be routed to other teams it quickly goes to the right people for resolution.
- 139 Streetpride Champions appointed across the Borough. Members of the public who either have no access to a phone or cannot afford to make a phone call to report a problem can call to see a Streetpride Champion in their area.
- Streetpride Service Standards booklets delivered to every house in the Borough, giving information on when & how to access the services offered by Streetpride and the standard of service which customers can expect.
- Introduced an automated telephone library book renewals line: 24 hour access can be made any time and from any place to renew items, check current loans, reservations etc, and access to library information including opening times and contact details.
- Developed MySpace page for Rotherham Theatres aimed at developing new communication channels. The page gives audiences the opportunity to see behind the scenes of productions and allows theatre fans to talk to each other.
- Neighbourhood Partnership Team - coordinates the 7 Area Assemblies and is based across Rotherham in local community offices. The team enables local communities to work in partnership to represent local need, Influence decision making and service delivery, and co-ordinate actions to meet community priorities through area planning.

- Engineers on Street Corners initiative: wherever Streetpride plan to improve the highway they give residents in the area the opportunity to input to the proposals. Residents are contacted by letter, making them aware of when & where an Engineer from the Streetpride team will quite literally “Stand on a Street Corner”. They can then go and speak to the Engineer face to face to find out what is happening and make suggestions based on their personal knowledge of the locality.
- Free Internet access and an email account for every citizen is available through Rotherham’s libraries, enabling contact with the Theatre and other Council services, as well as friends, family and colleagues throughout the world.
- All current (and a large number of historical) planning applications can be viewed online.
- To reduce potential barriers we provide access to interpreting and translation services, produce publications in other languages and formats on request as well as providing venues and facilities that can be accessed by disabled people.

4. Overview of the Strategy

The Council is committed to a model where services are built around customer needs and not organisational structures. We have adopted a co-ordinated and joined up approach for the development and use of different methods for accessing the Council’s services – otherwise known as ‘access channels’ - so we deliver real benefits to our customers and excellent customer service.

We are developing further the underpinning principles, people and processes with our partners to deliver a fully joined-up, end-to-end service that adds value to the customer experience, which will be tested by our staff and customers through our established forums, such as the Rotherham Access Audit Group and Learning from Customers Groups, using mystery shopping and other satisfaction testing approaches.

Equally important is offering customers choice and convenience through a multi-channel delivery structure in order that all customers are dealt with fairly and to a consistent quality from any location, as shown in Figure 1. We are continuing to re-engineer our processes to ensure customer enquiries are dealt with by staff in a professional and timely manner at the first point of contact and by whichever channel the customer chooses, to meet our published standards as outlined in Appendix 2.

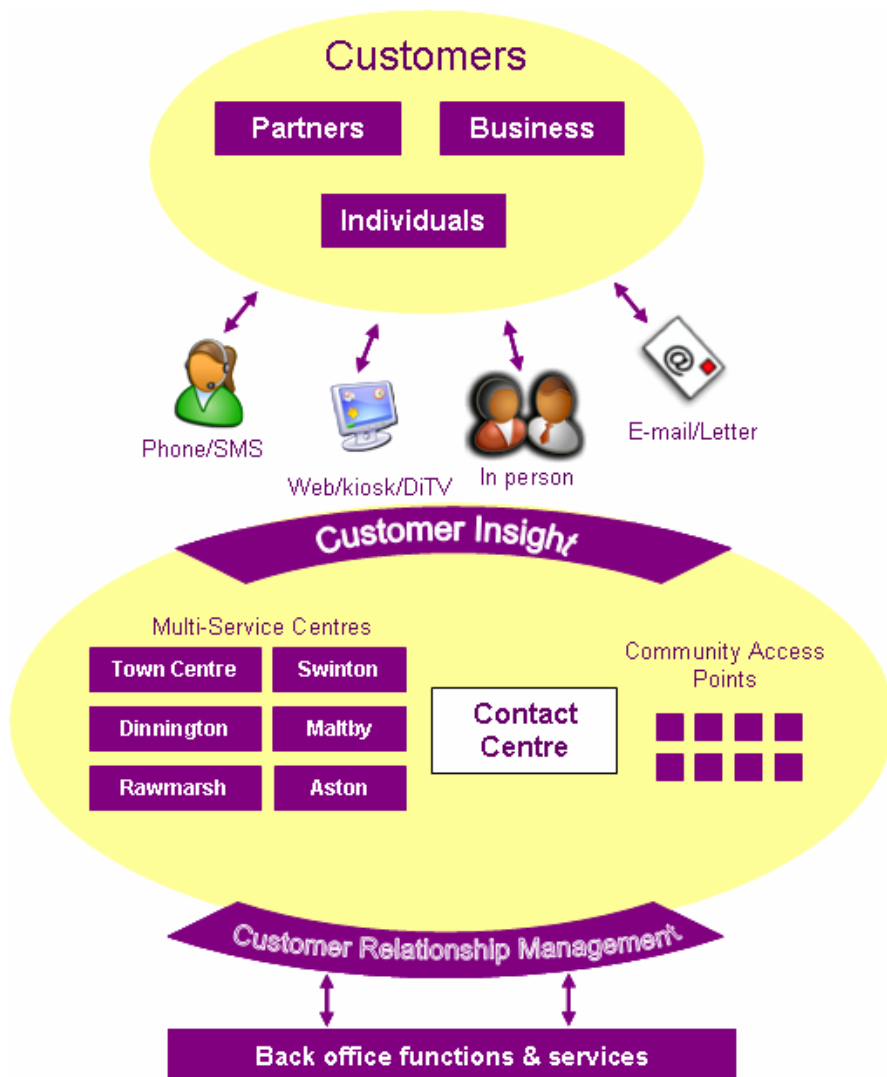


Figure 1 Delivering customer access across Rotherham

We know from our earlier research that our customers contact us for a variety of service related reasons, key among these are to:

- Ask for information
- Make a payment
- Request a Council service
- Use facilities e.g. sports and leisure centres, libraries
- Report a service issue
- Pay a compliment or make a complaint
- Respond to community engagement exercises
- Engage in the democratic process (political reasons)

We also know our customers still value traditional delivery channels where they can speak to a 'real person' either face-to-face or by telephone. This is particularly true for older residents and those with specific or complex needs. Our research from our customer survey, Rotherham Reachout, suggests that 59% of households in the Borough have internet access at home and use it. Therefore, whilst electronic methods will be developed in the future, the telephone and face-to-face is still important to customers as a means of contacting the Council.

Therefore, a mix of access channels will be available into the medium term. This mix will change over time as the move to electronic "self service" channels increases.

Our approach will be to encourage and help customers to move to more effective and efficient means of accessing services. We are going to be maximising the benefits of technology to offer a wide range of services electronically, providing the customer with greater choice and convenience. We recognise, however, that we will need to build people's confidence, trust and skills in using new access channels.

Having a range of different methods for customers to access Council services means we can make sure that our services are available to all of our customers. We will also continue to develop assisted access for those less able to use electronic access channels whether due to disability, sensory impairment, language needs, lack of access or confidence.

5. Our vision for customer access

The Customer Access Strategy applies to people who live, visit, work or study in Rotherham. It applies to businesses, other agencies, partners and our internal customers (e.g. employees). This strategy is driven by a clear vision which feeds directly into the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.

Our Vision is to make it easy for anyone living, visiting, working or studying in Rotherham to access Council services where and when they need them. We will deliver quality experiences for all customers that contact us, regardless of when or how they make contact and we will offer services that are joined up with other agencies where possible.

In practical terms this vision means that for all services and activities the Council will:

- Always put the customer first
- Listen to and act on feedback and tell customers what we've done
- Be courteous at all times
- Have a recognised and trusted brand
- Perform to our published standards
- Deliver the highest quality of work, within available resources
- Keep everyone informed
- Communicate in plain language

- Promote ease of access and equality of access to services

The Government's vision for customer access emphasises transforming how Councils deliver their services so that customers don't have to contact Councils multiple times to get the service they have requested. This approach – known as “avoidable contact” – will be measured by a new national performance indicator.

6. Links to national agendas and local strategies

Since the Customer Access Strategy was first developed in 2004 there have been some significant changes in the policy direction at a national and local level. The following summarises the context in which this strategy has been developed.

- **The 'Transformational Government' agenda:** This followed on from the work on e-government and put an emphasis on 'transactions' carried out using the range of available technologies; offering real choice of interaction, at a time, place and method that is tailored to meet the needs of individuals.
- **Building on Progress in Public Services:** The next phase of government reform in public services will look to make services personalised according to the needs and preferences of users.
- **The 'Varney Report':** This sets the direction and objectives required to deliver world class services across the public sector.
- **Customer Service Excellence Standard:** The Government's replacement standard for Charter Mark launched in March 2008 that will focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude to assess the level of customer service delivery.
- **The National Indicators for Local Authorities:** The new performance framework for local government brings together national standards and priorities set by Government with local priorities.
- **Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA):** Following on from the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, a revised Performance Management framework encompassing greater efficiencies leveraged by effective deployment of technology; releasing more resources to front-line service delivery.
- **Inter-Agency working:** It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that arrangements for multi-agency governance, commissioning and delivery of services is in place across a range of local partners.
- **Efficiency Targets:** Increased expectations on quantifiable outcomes brought about by effective deployment of resources to enable staff to work smarter, not harder.
- **Customer Perception:** There is a focus for increased performance measurement under CAA, plus rising expectations of standards of service; availability and online capabilities to 'transact' with the Council and other public services.

- **Local Area Agreement:** There is a legal duty on the Council, working with the local strategic partnership, to deliver a Local Area Agreement containing performance targets which are priorities for the borough.
- **The Rotherham Community Strategy:** Describes the future vision for the borough and incorporated within the Strategy are the sixteen mandatory education and early years targets for 2008-09 and up to 35 indicators and targets that will form the basis of the 2008-2011 Local Area Agreement that Rotherham is in the process of committing to with central government.
- **The Council's Corporate Plan:** Includes the Local Area Agreement measures, and also a range of additional objectives and measures which reflect the Council's priorities, key service issues and commitments for the period through to 2011. The Plan effectively reflects those issues that are most important to the Council and which have greatest impact on our communities.
- **Regional Partnerships:** Work in partnership to ensure our strategies link with wider developments; encouraging joint-working in the interests of our customers, businesses and value-for-money.
- **Citizen and Business expectations:** Demand for multiple channels of access to Council service provision; rise of self-service fuelled by the ways in which the private-sector already do business (e.g. online banking, online Insurance quotations, secure payments by card, making applications and receiving decisions) and the need for quicker transactions to reduce costs (in terms of time and money), provision of information once, which is then shared securely and appropriately with others to provide seamless; life and business-event focused transactions/services/responses.
- **Corporate Equality Strategy:** Promotes equality for employees and the wider community, irrespective of race, colour, religion or belief, ethnicity, gender, family status, sexuality, disability or age. Recognises the diversity of our customers and acts to ensure services are fully accessible to people with disabilities, customers who use languages other than English and those who might otherwise find it difficult to access services.
- **Workforce Development Plan:** Aims to get "the right people in the right place at the right time". Together with the revised appraisal scheme which has been designed with a new competency framework, the necessary support mechanism is available to address issue of customer focus at all levels in the workforce. Competencies are used as a basis for future recruitment and selection, ensuring that new staff have the required behaviours and skills.

7. Expanding our knowledge of our customers

The Council currently much to consult with and gather data on our customers to inform specific issues and developments. Going forward we will wish to further develop our knowledge of our customers so we can tailor service provision where appropriate. We will further exploit the potential of the Council's customer insight tool, ACORN, to help inform on lifestyle profiling to have a coherent, holistic view of our customers across all services.

Further development and roll out of the Council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution, as illustrated earlier in Figure 1, will increase our ability to offer even more responsive services. CRM can help the Council to better understand its customers and facilitate the delivery of joined up services to customers. The current Seibel CRM within the Council is a powerful platform and its further development will be a key activity to underpin some of the plans in this strategy.

The ultimate aim of this strategy is to have systems and processes in place which make it easier for customers to contact the Council, means they can contact the Council at any access point and get the same services and as often as possible will have their questions or issues dealt at first point of contact.

Better information about our customers will also enable us to better meet their diverse needs including the provision of services in accessible formats such as Braille, large print, or in a variety of languages.

8. What outcomes do we expect?

The achievements across the Council to date, coupled with the significant investment made, act as a springboard for the Council to make a real impact and positively promote customer excellence, whilst improving both reputation and performance.

By 2011 the Council will empower customers to self-serve where it is appropriate and take the service to the customer rather than the other way around. Where face-to-face service is the best way of meeting the customer's expectations we will look to add value to their visit by identifying other services they may be eligible for through the development of integrated access points with our key partners.

The outcomes we expect to see between now and 2011 for our customers, staff and the organisation as a whole are:

For Customers

- Greater involvement in the design, review, and evaluation of services.
- Greater choice and convenience in the way they access our services.
- Excellence in customer service and the provision of information.
- Resolution to queries at the first point of contact and the removal of avoidable contact.
- Joined up services, where this makes it easier for our customers.
- No unnecessary red tape.
- Equitable service access and delivery outcomes for all communities.

- Improved quality of life.

For Staff

- Customer focussed organisation.
- Led by confident, decisive and supportive managers.
- Part of an organisation which is strikingly modern, fresh and progressive.
- Greater investment in frontline services.
- Greater empowerment and involvement in the shaping of improved services.
- Better management of information.
- Continuous process improvement.
- Training to enable the above to happen.

For Rotherham Council

- Clear focus on the customer.
- State of the art access channels, including a full range of electronic services.
- Reduced cost of delivery and better value for money.
- Improved relationships with key stakeholders and other service providers.
- Consistently higher customer satisfaction ratings.
- Contribution towards economic growth.

9. Delivering value for money services

Emerging technologies have greatly improved the Council's ability to provide its services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via the Internet and the Council's website. Customers can request services on the website via e-forms (an online version of a paper form) at any time. This provides our customers with greater choice and also saves them and us time and money in travelling.

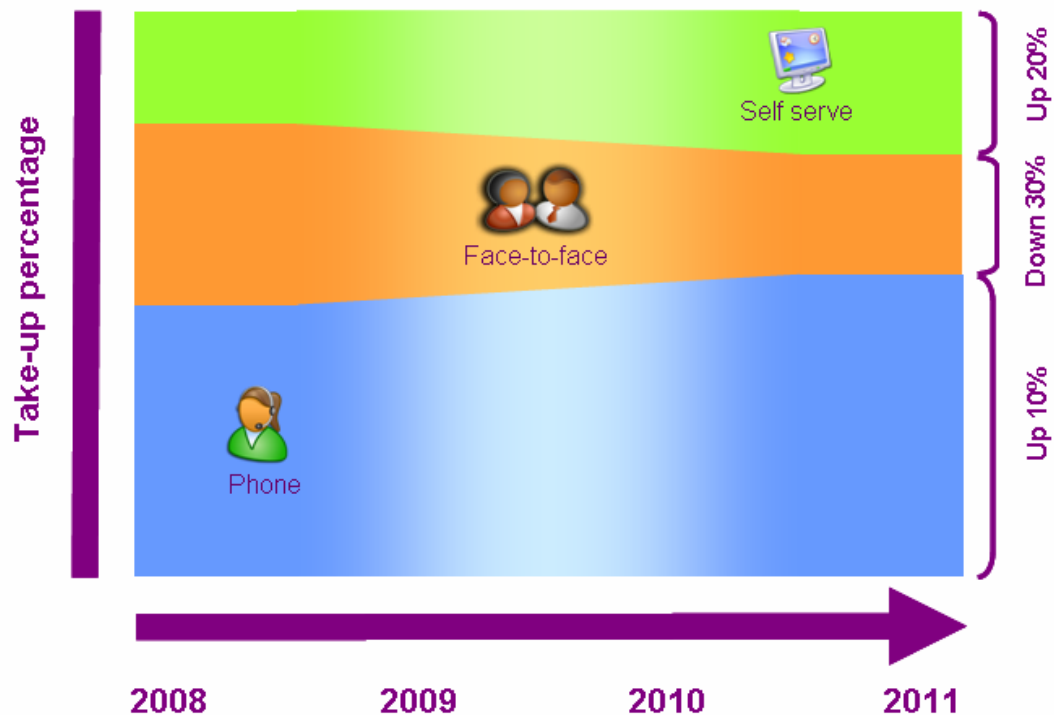


Figure 2 Take-up across core channels

As Figure 2 shows, the Council will be seeking to encourage the use of telephone and self-serve channels and moving to a position where its transactions are more cost effective than the national averages. A key first action will be to baseline costs across all access channels (i.e. face-to-face, web, telephone) to enable the Council to measure its cost-effectiveness between now and 2011.

As highlighted earlier it will be important that we continue to offer a mix of traditional and electronic means of access for our customers – and it will be equally important for us to encourage those customers who are willing and able to use modern, electronic routes, to do so.

This will enable the Council to provide existing services to more people and to further improve the quality of those services for everyone.

The Council and its partners are committed to improving the value-for-money of its services by reducing the cost per transaction of accessing services, whilst at the same time improving the quality of those services. This is one of a number of clear intentions to be realised through the successful delivery of this Strategy.

10. Our approach to implementation

This strategy is built around five strategic objectives which enable us to focus on how we are going to deliver on our vision. These are:

- Strategic Objective 1** **Improving the customer experience** – Using customer information to shape service delivery around our customers needs so that they are delivered responsively, accurately and cost effectively.
- Strategic Objective 2** **Refocusing our priorities** - Ensuring that we are an efficient and effective Council. One that continually reviews its processes and technological requirements to deliver cost efficient quality services in a timely manner that are appropriate to our customers needs.
- Strategic Objective 3** **Joined-up service delivery** - Proactively seeking out opportunities to work collaboratively with our partners to continually improve access to information and services provided to our customers.
- Strategic Objective 4** **Marketing and promoting ways to access our services** - Encouraging self service where this is appropriate, for those who are able to contact the Council in this way, and publishing our achievements.
- Strategic Objective 5** **Learning, development and training** - Providing empowered, well-trained, professional and knowledgeable staff to support the delivery of services and assist customers to be confident and competent users of ICT based access.

Through implementing this Strategy we will make a significant contribution to the delivery of the Priority Themes contained in the Rotherham Community Strategy. For each Strategic Objective we indicate where there is a contribution to the priorities of Rotherham SAFE, PROUD, ACHIEVING, ALIVE & LEARNING and the cross cutting themes SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT and FAIRNESS.

In addition, the Council has made a commitment within its Corporate Improvement Plan to achieve Council-wide accreditation against the Government's new Customer Service Excellence Standard (Charter Mark replacement) by Summer 2009. Once again for each Strategic Objective the contribution each will make to the assessment criterion is highlighted.

Strategic Objective 1: Improving the customer experience

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services should be customer focussed, easy to access, integrated and localised. • Every customer should be treated with respect, dignity and understanding. • The quality of the customer's experience of accessing the service is as important as the quality of the service itself. • If we design and review services with our customers, we are most likely to get it right. • Face-to-face services should be delivered in modern and accessible premises designed to meet the needs of all customers. • Services should be supported by technology and information that are appropriate to meet customer needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the success of the contact centre and joint service centres. • Ensure that access channels meet the needs of all customers. • Have a seamless technological infrastructure that supports all access channels. • Establish a knowledge base so that customers do not have to repeat what they have already told us. • Have high standards of customer care which are applied consistently across all our services. • Make effective use of customer insight to give us an accurate understanding of the customer profile. • Make sure that customers know what they need to know about how to access services. • Put in place systems for removing "avoidable contact". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business process re-engineering framework revised in line with the Business Improvement Pack by July 2008. • Service list for transformation and integration into CRM agreed by August 2008. • Complaints system revised by August 2008 and all relevant recommendations from the Complaints Scrutiny Review implemented by December 2008. • Council website refreshed by March 2009. • Joint Customer Services Centres opened: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maltby by September 2008 ○ Aston by May 2009 ○ Rawmarsh by May 2010 • Expand payment methods by December 2008. • CRM and customer insight data used to shape services by December 2008. • Customer service standards reviewed and implemented by July 2008. • Joint customer care standards with partners developed by March 2009. • Introduce customer satisfaction testing across all channels using intuitive easy to use technology for the customer by March 2009.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of customer facing contacts resolved at first point of contact by September 2009. • 'Avoidable contact' baselined by October 2008 and improvement targets set in line with the national timetable. • 'Tell Us Once' – a pilot project to enable customers to access various Council services by providing their information only once - Introduced in line with the national timetable. • Introduce clear charging information which is accessible, transparent and user-friendly across the internet by March 2009
<p>Contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotherham Achieving, Alive and Fairness • Customer Service Excellence Criterion 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. 		

What will this look like for our customers?

Example 1 - Mrs Patel's registration of birth visit

Imagine it's 2011, Mrs Patel calls the Council's contact centre to make an appointment for her and her husband to register the birth of their first baby. Whilst making the appointment Mrs Patel is asked by the customer service advisor if she would be interested on the day of the appointment in seeing a Tell Us Once advisor who would be able to assess Mrs Patel and her husband's eligibility for other government services, such as Child Tax Credits, Child Benefit and Housing Benefit, given their change in circumstances. Mrs Patel informs the advisor of her consent to participate recognising the benefit of this saving her time later and receiving all her service entitlements as early as possible.

The day before the appointment Mrs Patel receives a text message to her mobile phone confirming details of her appointment and a reminder of the key documents she and her husband will need to bring with them.

On arrival at the Registrars Office they are seen promptly at the time slot they were given and the Registrar undertakes the registration of the birth. Having completed the registration they are then seen by the Tell Us Once advisor, who proceeds with a review of their eligibility to other government services. The interview takes a further 15 minutes to complete and proves beneficial to the family since they are found to be eligible for a higher rate of Child Tax Credit and an increased level of Housing Benefit as well as Child Benefit. The Tell Us Once advisor securely e-mails the initial application details to the Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue and Customs and the Council's Revenues and Benefits Team. Payment to the family will start straight away and the Tell Us Once advisor informs them that they will receive written confirmation of their claim within 10 working days.

Finally, the Tell Us Once advisor registers Mrs Patel's baby with the Council's Imagination Library which will see her newborn receiving through the post a collection of age appropriate reading books each month until they are 5 years old. The advisor also registers the baby with her local library and provides details of Rhymetime activities. Mrs Patel provides her mobile phone number to receive future text alerts of aerobics classes at St Ann's leisure centre she is interested in attending.

Strategic Objective 2: Refocusing Our Priorities

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In getting the best out of resources. • In eliminating wasteful duplication or inefficient practices and processes. • In using resources released through more efficient ways of working to support service delivery. • That technology should support and enhance customer access and service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that services are focussed fully around the needs of the customer. • Redesign services from front to back and maximise the use of new technology. • Re-engineer processes, in order to improve first point of contact resolution and improve right first time resolution. • Invest in our staff to ensure they are fully skilled to deliver to the standards of customer service expected of them. • Rationalise and improve our property estate, including the co-location of services with other partners in line with the Council's Asset Management plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel shift targets achieved each year as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ By 2008/09 achieve a 10% reduction in face-to-face transactions and a 10% increase in telephone transactions. ○ By 2009/10 achieve a 20% reduction in face-to-face transactions and a 10% increase in telephone and web transactions. ○ By 2010/11 achieve a 30% reduction in face-to-face transactions, a 10% increase in telephone transactions and a 20% increase in web transactions. • Face-to-face contact to cost 3% less year-on-year to 2011. • Extend the range of services delivered by out-reach workers such as Social Workers by June 2009. • Implementation of an Agile Working Strategy for all staff by December 2008. • Hours of service consulted on by March 2009 to inform the business case for extended opening hours. • Customer Care Performance Management Framework including customer monitoring and reporting mechanisms implemented by October 2008. • CO₂ emissions reductions from the local authority operations being negotiated through the Local

		Area Agreement achieved.
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Contributes to:

- Rotherham Achieving, Alive, Sustainable Development and Fairness
- Customer Service Excellence Criterion 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

What will this look like for our customers?

Example 2 – Mrs Hughes’s Car Parking Permit

Imagine it’s 2009, Mrs Hughes would like to speak to someone about car parking facilities in her street. Although it is a Sunday she uses her broadband computer to access the Council’s web site and online forms. She logs her request for a car parking permit. The system confirms that she is eligible for a reduced permit - she buys it through the online payments system paying for it by debit card. By 2010, Mrs Hughes will be able to access this same service using her digital television set.

Strategic Objective 3: Joined-up service delivery

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That customers see local government as a single organisation and therefore the Council's processes need to be reviewed and simplified in order to function in this way. • That partnerships are fundamental to delivering excellent joined-up services. • That by working together better use will be made of resources and expertise. • That we will provide better access to services by working together to remove service, geographical, physical, attitudinal and professional barriers. • In the value of a strong partnership with business, community and voluntary organisations as well as other statutory agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a shared vision with our partners for excellent customer access in Rotherham. • Agree common customer care standards across all public sector partners and the concept of a consistent customer experience when accessing public services, irrespective of location. • Work towards achieving with our partners seamless customer service delivery. • Have common signage across access channels which enable customers with learning, language or literacy difficulties or sensory loss to access services more easily. • Share the vision and strategy with other key partners, identify areas of similarity/dissimilarity and potential barriers to implementation, and begin to take action to improve service delivery. • Continue to work with a wide range of partners such as Health, Police and the Pensions Service, etc to develop best practice approaches to redesigning service delivery. • Seek to establish combined customer forums and integrate consultation activity. Share feedback and research. • Actively support the voluntary and community sector to enable them to work with us and 'our' customers effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'satellite centre model' to support the network of primary customer service centres and access needs of the rural areas of the Borough. • Consult our Community Planning Partners by September 2008 to identify further opportunities for joined up and partnership working. • 'Tell Us Once' – a pilot project to enable customers to access various Council services by providing their information only once - introduced in line with the national timetable. • Joint customer access strategy with our partners developed by March 2009. • All customers authenticated to self-serve by September 2009. • All planned integrations of Council services into the CRM solution completed by 2010/11. • Joint Customer Services Centres opened: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maltby by September 2008 ○ Aston by May 2009 ○ Rawmarsh by May 2010 • Review of information-sharing protocols enabling the effective and secure sharing of data between partners completed by March 2009.

Contributes to:

- Rotherham Achieving, Alive and Fairness
- Customer Service Excellence Criterion 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

What will this look like for our customers?***Example 3 – Partnership working***

Imagine it's 2009, Mr Clarke has a complaint regarding noise being caused by his neighbour and graffiti on his estate. He is also concerned about security for his house and is looking for some advice on what he can do to improve this. He contacts the Contact Centre using the 336003 golden telephone number for Streetpride services as he is unsure whether this is an environmental service, Rotherham 2010 or Police matter.

As the Customer Service centre has a full understanding of the services provided by the Council and its partners, the Customer Service Advisor is able to assist Mr Clarke in recording his complaint, advising on the standard of service response he can expect and by generating service requests to the relevant service provider for response: the Council's Safer Neighbourhood Unit for the noise problem, Streetpride for the graffiti removal and the local Safer Neighbourhood Team for a Police Community Support Officer or Rotherham Warden to visit to reassure and provide advice on security issues.

During the first contact he is also advised on how he can photograph and text a picture of the graffiti from his mobile phone to support potential enforcement action and how he can make further complaints online.

Strategic Objective 4: Marketing and promoting ways to access our services

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognisable “brand” helps identify the Council to existing and potential customers and should be used consistently to link services to the Council. • In the reinforcement of brand awareness through targeted communications. • In promoting awareness of ICT, the Internet and its potential benefits among non-users and new users and assisting them to gain access and develop skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a single branding of the services that the Council provides, which is recognisable to customers. • Have an enhanced website facility ensuring consistency of terminology and service information. • Sign up to the LGA Reputation Campaign to which will help raise the awareness of the work of the Council across Rotherham. • Reduce the digital divide by extending electronic access to services through schools, leisure centres, Rotherham Visitor Centre, libraries and Joint Service Centres. • Promote and market new ways of accessing services to help customers to become confident in accessing services in new ways. • Monitor service take-up and satisfaction levels across Council services by disability, gender, ethnicity and other equalities data. • Make better use of research, information and consultation outcomes by co-ordinating, disseminating, and taking consistent action on the information gathered. • Ensure that the strategic objectives of the customer access strategy are reflected in our Service Plans • Engage customers in the design, review, management and delivery of services, and the development of access channels and local customer facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Branding strategy for the Council produced by September 2008. ▪ Communication and marketing plan for channel promotion produced by September 2008. ▪ Service Plans to include links to the Customer Services vision and strategic themes by June 2008. ▪ Channel migration completed - self serve up by 30%, telephone up by 10% and face-to-face down by 20%. ▪ A to Z Guide delivered to residents and businesses by Summer 2008 and refreshed annually. ▪ Achieve ‘Gold’ standard in the LGA Reputation Campaign by 2009. ▪ Performance information relating to customer service delivery will be presented in accessible formats by October 2008 to Members and key officers and will be available to customers via the Council website.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use feedback as part of service design, development, and delivery. | |
|--|--|--|

Contributes to:

- Rotherham Achieving and Fairness
- Customer Service Excellence Criterion 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

What will this look like for our customers?

Example 4 – Contacting by text

Imagine it's 2010, a local Rotherham business operating in the town centre notices that there is a faulty street light close to their premises. A member of staff from the business recalls seeing a promotion from the Council advertising a new text number to report faults. They decide to send a text message to the Council using their mobile phone in the hope that this will speed up the response time.

The Council's integrated ICT means that the text message is automatically received into the Council's Customer database and an alert sent to the nearest Streetpride employee, on their mobile device, telling them of the problem needing attention. The reported fault is also put onto the Council's web site to indicate that this problem is known about and is being dealt with.

On completion of the repair the employee uses their mobile device to say they have completed the repair; the web site is automatically updated to say that the repair has now been done, and an automatic text message is sent back to the person in the local business to say that the job has been dealt with. They are also offered an opportunity to text back their level of satisfaction to the Council with this service, which is recorded and used to inform further service delivery planning.

Strategic Theme 5: Learning, development and training

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in the Council must be a customer champion. • That staff are our most valuable resource. • That every member of staff should be treated with respect, dignity and understanding. • In the value of a well trained, well managed, and well led workforce. • That the workforce should reflect the diversity of the wider local population and provide good role models for all. • That if we look after our staff well, we will be looking after our customers well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put customer access at the heart of all aspects of Council delivery; • Deliver services through a committed, well trained and motivated workforce. • Develop local and flexible ways of working, and enable change to be delivered effectively. • Implement a comprehensive change management process to support staff through a period of rapid and substantial change. • Improve internal communications and increase the capacity for staff to help shape the improvement of services. • Establish a planned and managed approach to succession planning and staffing reductions as required in areas of business growth and contraction. • Ensure that performance management information, key indicators and monitoring systems are in place to measure our progress toward achieving excellence in customer access. • Ensure Equality and Diversity training for all staff to deliver an appropriately sensitive service to a diverse community with diverse requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customer competency framework developed in line with national guidance by December 2008. ▪ Learning from customers forums will exist in every service area by December 2008. ▪ Customer service coaches and practitioners accredited by the Institute of Customer Services will exist in every service area by March 2010. ▪ All customer facing staff will have had customer focussed training through the Institute of Customer Services accredited programme by March 2010. ▪ All customer service related training needs identified through the annual PDR process met. ▪ Mobile and flexible working strategies are fully rolled out by December 2009. ▪ 80% of customer facing contacts resolved at first point of contact by September 2009. ▪ All staff will go through the Council's Equality and Diversity training.

Contributes to:

What will this look like for our customers?

Example 5 – Information Services

Imagine it's 2009, Miss Johnson a visually impaired customer suffers from diabetes and arthritis. She booked one of the People's Network computers with her family carer at one of the Council's new Libraries to do some research on diabetes through the Internet because she had heard how she could do this with the support of trained staff at her local library. The Librarian helped to change the computer screen settings and made sure that the information was displayed in large text for Miss Johnson's needs.

In conversation with the Librarian Miss Johnson mentions that she had visited her GP the previous day and was being booked to see a specialist to see what can be done to help her with her diabetes and arthritis.

The Librarian pointed out that Rotherham Library Service was part of the NHS Choose and Book service which allows her to choose the hospital or clinic for her consultation, and book her appointment (date and time) with the specialist, online whilst using the library computer, for free.

Miss Johnson is delighted with the information and assistance from the Librarian that she made her appointment there and then via the Internet.

11. Delivery of the strategy

The delivery of this refreshed Strategy is dependent on the £6 million Capital Programme monies approved by the Council's Cabinet for the establishment of the network of Customer Service Centres, along with the range of ICT projects that are to be financed over the next three years by the Council's £14 million ICT Capital Programme.

The following table highlights for each Customer Access theme which ICT projects will support the outcomes to be achieved.

Contributing ICT Projects	Theme 1 Improving the customer experience	Theme 2 Refocusing our priorities	Theme 3 Joined-up service delivery	Theme 4 Marketing and promoting ways to access our services	Theme 5 Learning, development and training
EDRMS	●	●	●	●	●
Identity Lifecycle Management	-	-	●	-	-
Customer Master Record development	●	●	●	●	●
CRM enhancements including SMS	●	●	●	●	●
Government Connect	●	-	●	●	-
Shared Learning Group Outcomes	●	●	●	●	●
e-Channel Developments	●	●	●	●	-
Town Centre Accommodation and Cultural Quarter Developments	●	●	●	●	●
Web site review and redesign	●	●	●	●	-
Joint Customer Service Centres	●	●	●	●	●

Workstyle	●	●	●	●	●
Complaints handling review	●	-	-	-	-
Technology Refresh Programme	-	●	●	-	●
Active Directory and Sharepoint roll-out	-	●	●	-	●
Public broadband access	●	●	●	●	●
Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery	●	●	●	-	-
Data security	●	●	●	●	-
Rotherham Grid for Learning	●	●	●	●	-
e-Learning	-	●	●	●	●
Digital TV	●	●	●	●	-

Individual Directorate service plans also contain actions that are associated with customer service delivery projects, a selection of these are listed in the following table.

Contributing Directorate Projects	Theme 1 Improving the customer experience	Theme 2 Refocusing our priorities	Theme 3 Joined-up service delivery	Theme 4 Marketing and promoting ways to access our services	Theme 5 Learning, development and training
ACORN Social profiling tool across the intranet	●	●	●	●	-
Updated Streetpride service standards booklet	●	●	●	●	●
Disabled access information on Public Rights of Way	●	-	●	●	-

Safer Neighbourhood Teams Shared Service Standards	●	●	●	●	-
Phase 2 Children's Centres (8 new developments)	●	●	●	●	●
e-Sure database of service take-up at Children's Centres	●	●	●	-	-
e-commerce facilities with Rotherham Visitor Centre and Archives & Local Studies service	●	-	●	-	-
Use ICT effectively to improve access to Museums and Archives collections	-	●	-	●	-
Introduce self-service facilities in libraries	●	-	●	●	-
New libraries (5 new developments)					
New e-enabled Mobile Library bus	●	●	●	●	●
Provide other health related services via libraries	●	-	●	●	●

12. Governance and monitoring arrangements

The Figure 3 below shows the various local and national strategies that impact on Rotherham’s Customer Access Strategy.

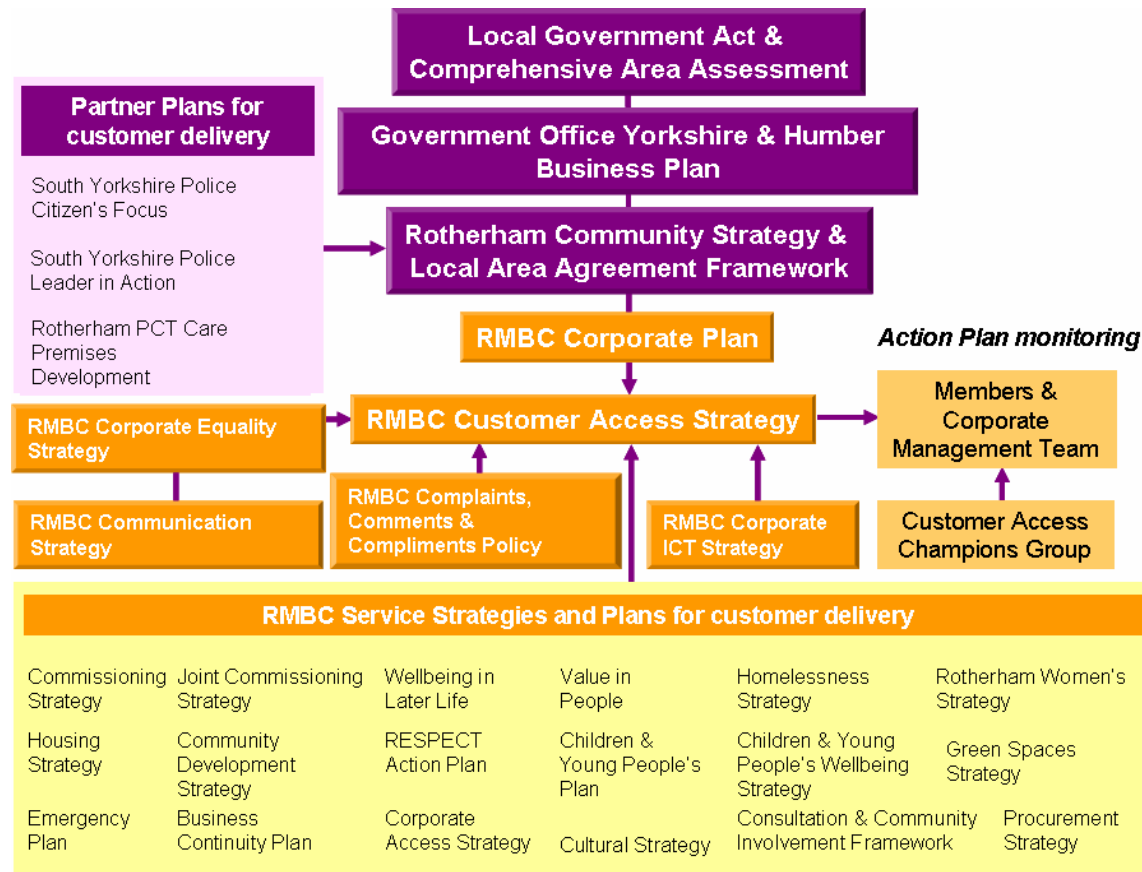


Figure 3 Governance framework

The implementation of this Strategy will be led by the Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Team who will work with Directorates and partners to agree the programme of projects and implementation plans to jointly deliver the strategy.

Progress on implementation will be formally reported through to Members and Corporate Management Team via existing reporting routes. Additionally, this Strategy will be reported to the Transformation Board that is being set up to direct the overall transformation activities across the Council in the areas of accommodation, workstyle, ICT and customer access.

13. Maintaining the Strategy

This Strategy has been discussed within and adopted by the Council. It is made available to staff and partners via the Internet and should be used when developing other strategies, policies and service initiatives, which impact on customers' access to Council services.

The Strategy will be reviewed annually and updated. It will be subject to formal review, update and re-publishing in 2011.

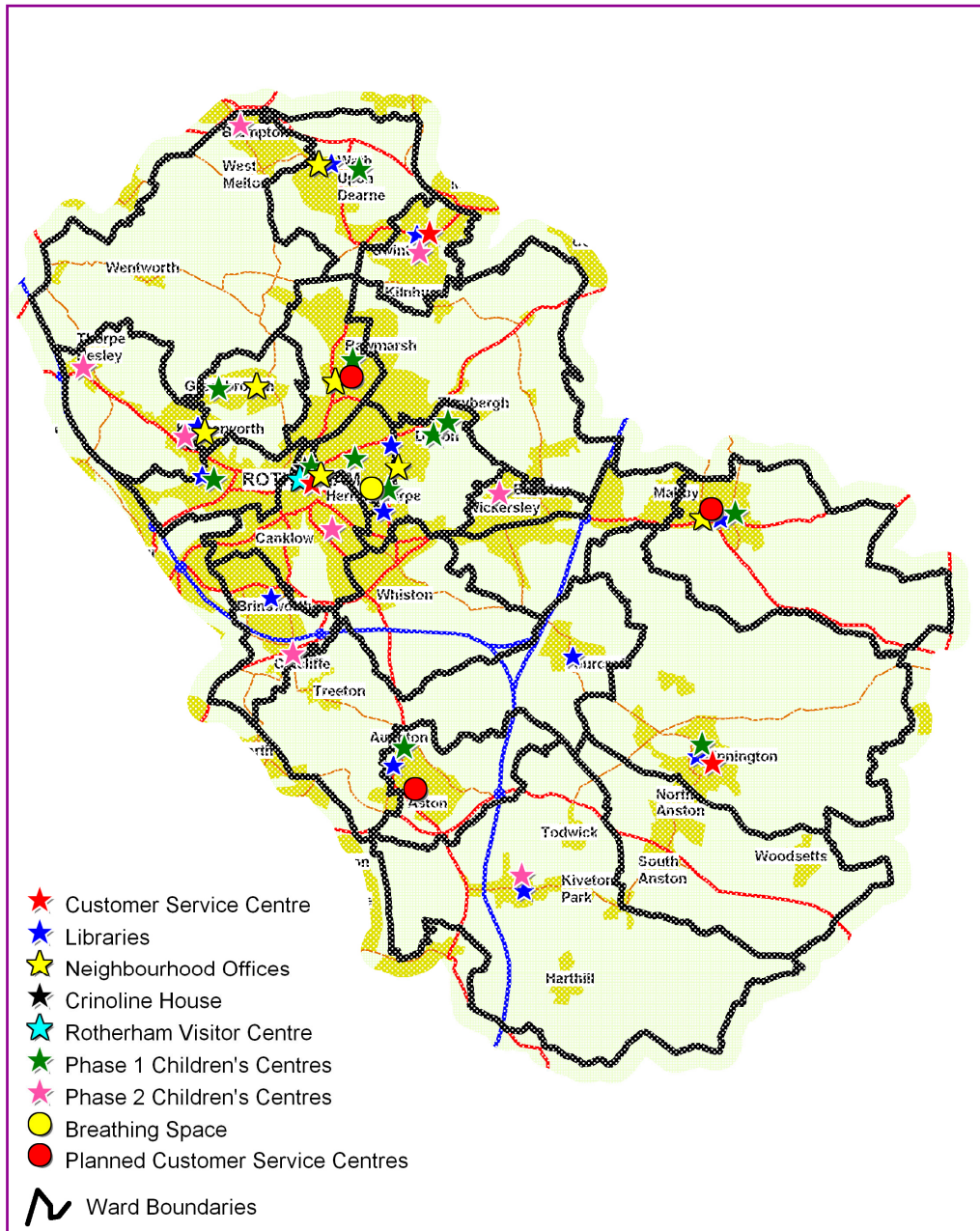
14. Consultation undertaken

In developing this strategy the following internal and external groups have been consulted:

- All Council Directorates
- e-Government Board
- Black and Ethnic Minority Workers Network
- The Women's Issues Network
- Disabled Workers Group
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Group
- Customer Access Champions Group
- Voluntary Action Rotherham
- Rotherham Older Peoples Experience of Services Group (ROPE) – PCT Group
- Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA)
- Youth Cabinet representatives
- Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Customer Forum
- Rotherham Access Audit Group

Consultation on this strategy will be an ongoing process to ensure that it is continuing to provide an effective delivery framework.

Appendix 1: Current and Planned Customer Access Points in Rotherham



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RMBC Public Access Points

Customer Service Centres

Customer Service Centres provide access to a range of services and information, including:

- Council Tax Enquiries.
- Benefit Enquiries.
- Planning and Building Control.
- Adult Social Services.
- Streetpride (which brings together all the Council services that help keep the environment of the Borough clean and tidy).
- 2010 Ltd Services (Housing).
- Rothercard.
- Make a range of payments including housing rents, Council tax.
- General enquiries.
- Freephone to Council wide services.
- Nationality checking service provided on behalf of the Home Office (Swinton Customer Service Centre only).

Opening Times: Mon to Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm.

Town Centre Customer Service Centre, Civic Buildings, Walker Place, Rotherham, S65 1UF	Swinton Customer Services Centre, Station Street, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8PZ
Dinnington Customer Services Centre, New Street, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 2EX	Due to open late Summer 2008 Maltby Customer Services Centre, Braithwell Road, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8LE
Due to open Summer 2009 Aston-cum-Aughton Customer Services Centre, Worksop Road, Aston-cum-Aughton, Swallownest, S26 4WD	Due to open Spring 2010 Rawmarsh Customer Services Centre, Barbers Avenue, Rawmarsh, Rotherham S62 6AE

Neighbourhood Offices

Provide information on all housing related issues including rents, payments and general queries, as well as information and guidance about childcare, early years education and other children's services, and Adult Social Services for care assessments and information on the issue and renewal of blue car badges.

Opening Times: Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri 8.45am - 4.30pm, Wed 9am - 6pm.

Rotherham North Neighbourhood Office	Kimberworth Park Neighbourhood Office, St Johns Green, Kimberworth Park, Rotherham, S61 3JL
Rotherham South Neighbourhood Office	Town Centre Neighbourhood Office, Norfolk House, Walker Place, Rotherham S65 1HX
Rother Valley South Neighbourhood Office	Dinnington Customer Services Centre, New Street, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 2EX
Rother Valley West Neighbourhood Office	Aston Neighbourhood Office, Norfolk House, Walker Place, Rotherham S65 1HX
Wentworth North Neighbourhood Office	Wath Neighbourhood Office, Town Hall, Church Street, Wath, Rotherham, S63 7RE
Wentworth North Neighbourhood Office	Swinton Customer Services Centre, Station Street, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8PZ
Wentworth South Neighbourhood Office	Rawmarsh Neighbourhood Office, Rawmarsh Hill, Parkgate, Rotherham, S62 6DT
Wentworth Valley Neighbourhood Office	Maltby Neighbourhood Office, Civic Centre, High Street, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8LE

Sure Start Children's Centres	
<p>The Sure Start Children's Centres provide access to a range of services and information for families with children under 5 years. The package of services varies between centres but all cover the following core services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Education and Childcare – provided by the centre, Childminders, other daycare providers, out of school clubs or extended schools. • Child and Family Health Services • Information for parents and carers • Information about training and employment. 	
Aughton Early Years Centre, Main Street, Aughton, Sheffield, S26 3XH	Coleridge Children's Centre, Coleridge Primary School, Coleridge Road, Rotherham, S65 1LW
The Willow Tree Children's Centre, Dalton Foljambe Primary School, Foljambe Drive, Dalton, Rotherham, S65 4HQ	Dinnington Children's Centre, Dinnington Primary School, School Street, Dinnington, Sheffield S25 2RE
The Arnold Centre, Goldsmith Road, Rotherham, S65 2LY	Sure Start Rotherham Central Children's Centre, The Ferham Centre, Ferham Road, Rotherham, S65 1AP
Kimberworth Community Children's Centre, Kimberworth Road, Kimberworth, Rotherham, S61 1HE	Maltby Stepping Stones Children's Centre, Tickhill Road, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 7NQ
Rawmarsh Children's Centre, Barbers Crescent, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 6AD	Rockingham Children's Centre, Rockingham Junior & Infant School, Roughwood Road, Rockingham, Rotherham, S61 4HY
Thrybergh Rainbow Centre, Thrybergh Primary School, Oldgate Lane, Thrybergh, Rotherham, S65 4JG	Wath Victoria Children's Centre, Wath Victoria Junior & Infant School Sandymount Road, Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7AB
Cortonwood Children's Centre, Brampton Cortonwood Infant School, Chapel Avenue, Brampton, Barnsley, S73 0XH	Valley Children's Centre, Broom Valley Infant School, Broom Valley Road, Rotherham, S60 2QU
The Meadows Children's Centre, Catcliffe Primary School, Rotherham Road, Catcliffe, Rotherham, S60 5SW	Silver Birch Children's Centre, Flanderwell Primary School, Greenfield Court, Flanderwell, Rotherham, S66 2JF
Park View Children's Centre, Redscope Primary School, Kimberworth Park Road, Kimberworth Park, Rotherham, S61 3JT	The Brookfield Centre, Swinton Brookfield Primary School, Lime Grove, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8TQ
Thorpe Hesley Children's Centre, Thorpe Hesley Infant School, Upper Wortley Road, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham, S61 2PL	The Sue Walker Children's Centre, Kiveton Park Meadows Juniors, Storth Lane, Kiveton Park, Sheffield, S26 5QT

Libraries	
<p>Rotherham Libraries offer a wide range of services including stocks of books, videos, CDs, DVDs, and free access to the internet. Every library has a children's area containing a wide range of material for all age groups, including text books and access to the internet.</p>	
<p>Aston Community Library, Aughton Road, Swallownest, Sheffield, S26 4TF</p> <p>Mon and Thur 9am - 6pm, Tue and Fri 9am - 5.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm. Closed all day Wed.</p>	<p>Brinsworth Community Library, Ellis Street, Brinsworth, Rotherham, S60 7DJ</p> <p>Mon 10am -12.30pm and 1.30pm - 5.30pm, Tue and Thu 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 7pm, Sat 9am - 1pm. Closed all day Wed and Fri.</p>
<p>Central Library, Walker Place, Rotherham, S65 1JH</p> <p>Mon and Thu 8.30am - 8pm, Tue Wed and Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm, Sat 9am - 4pm.</p>	<p>Dinnington Community Library, Laughton Road, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 2PP</p> <p>Mon, Wed and Thu 9am - 5.30pm, Tue and Fri 9am - 8pm, Sat 9am - 1pm.</p>
<p>Greasbrough Community Library, Coach Road, Greasbrough, Rotherham, S61 4PU</p> <p>Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri 8.30am - 1pm and 2pm - 6.30pm; Sat 9am - 1pm. Closed all day Wed</p>	<p>Kimberworth Community Library, Church Street, Kimberworth, Rotherham, S61 1HA</p> <p>Mon 10am -12.30pm and 1.30pm - 5.30pm, Tue 1.30pm -7pm, Thur 10am -12.30pm and 1.30pm - 7pm, Fri 1.30pm -5.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm, Closed all day Wed.</p>
<p>Kimberworth Park Community Library, Wheatley Road, Kimberworth Park, Rotherham, S61 3JU</p> <p>Mon 1.30pm - 7pm, Tue 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 5.30pm, Thur 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 7pm, Fri 1.30pm -5.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm, Closed all day Wed.</p>	<p>Kiveton Park Community Library, Wales Road, Kiveton, Sheffield, S26 6RB</p> <p>Mon and Thu 9am - 6.30pm, Tue and Fri 9am - 5.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm. Closed all day Wed.</p>
<p>Maltby Community Library, High Street, Maltby, Rotherham S66 8LD</p> <p>Mon and Thu 9am - 8pm, Tue, Wed and Fri 9am - 5.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm; Sun 10am - 2pm</p>	<p>Mowbray Gardens Community Library, Herringthorpe Valley Road, Rotherham, S65 2UQ</p> <p>Mon 1.30pm - 7pm, Tue 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 5.30pm,</p>

	Thur 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 7pm, Fri 1.30pm - 5.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm, Sun 10am - 2pm. Closed all day Wed.
Rawmarsh Community Library, Rawmarsh Hill, Rotherham, S62 6DS Mon and Fri 9am - 5.30pm, Tue and Thu 9am - 6.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm, Closed all day Wed.	Swinton Community Library, Station Street, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8PZ Mon and Thur 8.30am - 6.30pm, Tue and Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm, Wed and Sat 8.30am - 1pm.
Thorpe Hesley Community Library, Sough Hall Avenue, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham, S61 2QJ Mon and Wed 4pm - 7.30pm, Tue 9.30am - 12noon and 1pm - 3.30pm, Thur 9.30am - 12 noon and 1pm - 7.30pm, Sat and Sun 9.30am - 12noon.	Thurcroft Community Library, School Road, Thurcroft, Rotherham, S66 9DE Mon 1.30pm - 7pm, Tue 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 5.30pm, Thur 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 7pm, Fri 10am - 12.30pm, Sat 9am - 1pm. Closed all day Wed.
Wath Community Library, Montgomery Square, Wath, Rotherham, S63 7RZ Mon and Thu 8.30am - 7pm, Tue, Wed and Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm, Sat 8.30am - 1pm.	

Rotherham Information Centre	
Provides local and national tourist information, a local accommodation booking service as well as the sale of Disabled Toilet (RADAR) keys.	
Rotherham Visitor Centre, 40 Bridegate, Rotherham S60 1PQ Mon - Sat 9.30am - 5pm. Closed for lunch Saturday 1pm - 1.30pm	

Crinoline House	
Provide information on Adult Social Services care assessments and information on the issue and renewal of blue car badges.	
Crinoline House, Effingham Square, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S65 1AW Mon - Fri 8.30am - 5pm.	

Rotherham Breathing Space Centre	
Provides services and information from the Rotherham Primary Care Trust and Rotherham MBC for customers that have other health problems caused by their respiratory problems, such as obesity resulting from inability to exercise.	
Rotherham Breathing Space, Badsley Moor Lane, Rotherham	

Appendix 2: Rotherham Council Customer Charter Standards

Our Corporate Standards

We will:

- Make sure our services meet all our Customers needs by listening to what they say.
- Treat all people fairly and courteously.
- Treat people as individuals and respect their dignity and confidentiality.
- Explain in a clear and sensitive way if we are unable to provide a service that the customer wants.
- Deal with enquiries and complaints thoroughly, promptly and honestly and learn from the mistakes that we find.
- Give clear and relevant information in a format that all our customers can understand.
- Make sure that our buildings and services are safe and easy to find and use.
- Involve customers and staff when setting and monitoring standards throughout the Council so that we can constantly improve our services.
- Train and encourage our staff to develop their skills so that they can provide an excellent service and support them when they need help.
- Encourage partners and contractors to share our beliefs and principles on customer care.

Our Corporate Targets

These are our current published corporate targets, and we will monitor our performance against them. Moving forward, fresh and more challenging targets for achievement will be set on an annual basis.

- We aim to answer telephone calls made to the Council within 7 rings.
- We aim to respond to voicemail/answer phone messages left outside working hours within 24 hours of normal working.
- All emails (excluding to personal e-mail addresses) will receive an acknowledgment within 1 working day and letters within 3 working days.
- We aim to send a full response to letters and emails within 10 working days.
- We aim to see customers with an appointment within 5 minutes of the agreed time.
- We will acknowledge complaints within 3 working days and provide a full response within 10 working days.

Over and above the Corporate Standards and Targets individual council services have a set of standards specific to their service that are reviewed on a regular basis.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
2.	Date:	Thursday 10 July 2008
3.	Title:	Housing Revenue Account 2007/08 Outturn Report
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Services

5. Summary

The final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financial outturn position for 2007/08 was a deficit of £2.111m. The report summarises the key income and expenditure variances from the budget.

Attached at Appendix One is the HRA section of the Council's 2007/08 Statement of Accounts.

6. Recommendations

THE SCRUTINY PANEL RECEIVES AND NOTES THIS REPORT.

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 The final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financial outturn position for 2007/08 was a deficit of £2.111m. This was met by HRA balances which have reduced to £6.480m. The key income and expenditure variances from the budget are highlighted below. Appendix One is the HRA's section of the Council's 2007/08 Statement of Accounts, showing the Income & Expenditure Account, Movement on HRA Balances and more detailed notes.
- 7.2 Appendix One is the HRA's section of the Council's 2007/08 Statement of Accounts, showing the Income & Expenditure Account, Movement on HRA Balances and more detailed notes. The final accounts are required to be presented in a prescribed format, particularly regarding some of the more technical areas of the HRA such as depreciation and impairment of the housing stock's value which have to be reflected for accounting purposes but are not operational budgets directly managed by the service.
- 7.3 For 2007/08, the Income and Expenditure Account reflects an accounting Deficit on HRA Services of £46.516m, prior to adjustments to equate this to the actual HRA deficit for the year of £2.111m. The difference is due principally to the Depreciation and Impairment calculations which are required to be shown in the HRA Income & Expenditure Account but then adjusted for in determining the actual deficit needing to be funded by use of HRA balances. The sum of £44.405m has been credited to the HRA Statement of Movement on HRA Balance to produce the actual reduction in the HRA balance of £2.111m.
- 7.4 The £44.405m net credit in the Statement of Movement on the HRA Balance comprises adjustments for the following: Gain/loss on sale of Fixed assets, capital expenditure funded directly from revenue (RCCO), an adjustment for depreciation being greater than the Major Repairs Allowance received in the year and writing-out the value of deferred charges (capital expenditure which does not create a tangible asset).
- 7.5 The principal reasons for the overall reduction in the HRA balance were:
- An additional revenue contribution made to support capital expenditure (RCCO) of £1.028m. This was to fund the cost of upgrading the ROCC IT system to support the implementation of hand held technology for repairs operatives. This cost will be funded over the next three to four years on an Invest to Save basis by the efficiency savings achieved by 2010 Rotherham Ltd.
 - Supervision and Management costs, particularly the cost of District Heating schemes (£0.455m, principally due to increased gas prices) and the cost of administering abortive Right to Buy applications (£0.150m) which cannot be offset against receipts from the sales in the same way that the cost of administering completed sales can be.
 - The cost of interest on debts to be repaid was greater than expected (£0.416m).
 - The Management Fee to the ALMO (2010 Rotherham Ltd) was increased by £0.198m to fund additional pension costs, in line with the Management Agreement.

These additional cost pressures were partially offset by:

- Repairs budgets out-turned under the overall budget (although responsive repairs was £0.828m overspent and planned maintenance was under spent by £0.695m).
- Lower than expected bad debt provision for both rent arrears and tenants rechargeable repairs (£0.116m).
- Increased interest receivable (£0.110m).

8. Finance

The main implication of the outturn deficit position is a reduction in HRA reserves. The continued use of reserves to fund deficits will have a significant impact on future years and could result in the HRA being in an overall deficit position much sooner than anticipated. This will be reflected in an updated HRA Business Plan 30 year financial model to be reported to the Cabinet Member.

The financial position of 2010 Ltd and the key HRA managed budgets, particularly repairs will be the subject of close monitoring during 2008/09.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The ledgers of both RMBC and 2010 Rotherham Ltd have been closed down and no further transactions are expected to affect the out turn position on the HRA.

The accounts presented are subject to audit commencing in July 2008.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The CPA Use of Resources Action plan sets out the requirements to improve the financial monitoring and reporting to members and to maintain and improve budget monitoring and control.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

This report has been discussed with Strategic Director – Neighbourhoods & Adults, Strategic Director of Finance and Directors within Neighbourhoods & Adults.

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Service Accountant (Neighbourhoods)**

**Extension: 2031
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Appendix One

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2007/08

The HRA Income and Expenditure Account shows in more detail the income and expenditure on HRA Services included in the whole Authority Income and Expenditure Account.

The HRA itself summarises the revenue transactions relating to the provision and maintenance of Council dwellings and it is a requirement that the account is kept separate from other housing related activities. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires Authorities to ensure that all expenditure incurred on its Housing Revenue Account is met by income received (primarily from rents, Government grants and subsidies). Contributions from the General Fund are allowed for certain specific services.

The 2006/07 HRA has been restated following the incorporation of FRS17 requirements.

Restated 2006/07 £000		2007/08 £000	Note
	Income		
50,595	Dwelling rents	53,492	
1,125	Non-dwelling rents	1,241	
2,813	Charges for services and facilities	1,959	
12,190	HRA subsidy receivable	12,312	
66,723	Total Income	69,004	
	Expenditure		
15,520	Repairs and maintenance	13,774	
9,897	Supervision and management	10,725	
7,183	ALMO Management Fee	7,128	
0	Rents, rates, taxes and other charges	4	
15,748	Negative subsidy-payments to Secretary of State	13,950	
259	Provision for bad or doubtful debts	343	8
8,937	Depreciation and impairment of Fixed assets	59,800	
147	Amortisation of Deferred Charges	1,258	9
156	Debt management costs	184	
57,847	Total Expenditure	107,166	
-8,876	Cost of HRA Services as included in the whole Authority Income and Expenditure Account	38,162	
280	HRA services share of Corporate and Democratic Core	230	
271	HRA share of other amounts included in whole Authority Net Cost of Services but not allocated to specific services	277	
-8,325	Net Cost of HRA Services	38,669	
289	Gain or loss on sale of HRA fixed assets	70	10
5,676	Interest Payable and similar charges	8,343	11
-607	Interest receivable	-687	
104	Amortised Premium/Discounts	96	12
53	Pensions interest cost and expected return on pension assets	25	13
-2,810	Surplus (-)/Deficit (+) for the year on HRA services	46,516	

Statement of Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Balance

This statement takes the outturn on the HRA Income and Expenditure Account and reconciles it to the surplus or deficit or the year on the HRA Balance, calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Restated 2006/07 £000		2007/08 £000
-2,810	Surplus/Deficit for the year on HRA Income and Expenditure Account	46,516
4,650	Net Additional amount required by statute to be debited/credited to the HRA Balance for the year	-44,405
1,840	(Increase)/Decrease in the Housing Revenue Account Balance	2,111
-10,431	Housing Revenue Account surplus brought forward	-8,591
-8,591	Housing Revenue Account surplus carried forward	-6,480

Restated 2006/07 £000		2007/08 £000
0	Items included in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account but excluded from the movement on the HRA Balance for the year Difference between interest payable and similar charges, including amortisation of premium and discounts determined in accordance with the SORP and those determined in accordance with statute	0
-1,129	Difference between any other item of income and expenditure determined in accordance with SORP and determined in accordance with statutory HRA requirements (if any)	-40,987
-407	Net contribution made for retirement benefits in accordance with FRS17	-338
-289	Gain or loss on sale of HRA fixed assets	-70
-1,825	Items not included in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account but included in the movement on the HRA Balance for the year	-41,395
2,000	Capital Expenditure funded by HRA	4,085
4,310	Transfer to (+) / from (-) Major Repairs Reserve	-6,501
312	Employer's contributions payable to Local Government Pension Scheme and retirement benefits payable direct to pensioners	265
-147	Sums directed by the Secretary of State to be debited or credited to the HRA that are not income and expenditure in accordance with UK GAAP	-859
4,650	Net additional amount required by statute to be debited/credited to the HRA Balance for the year	-44,405

Notes to the Housing Revenue Account**Note 1 Housing Stock at 31 March 2008**

	Houses	Flats	Bungalows	Total
1 Bedroom	4	2,261	2,805	5,070
2 Bedroom	1,999	2,833	1,909	6,741
3 Bedroom	8,727	301	44	9,072
4+ Bedroom	239	9	0	248
Total	10,969	5,404	4,758	21,131

Note 2 Housing Stock Valuations**(a) Operational Assets including Dwellings**

Council Dwellings	£000
As at 1 April 2007	801,849
Additions in Year	78,397
Disposals and Demolitions	-8,396
Reclassification	-1,782
Revaluations in Year	14,480
Depreciation in Year	-18,635
Impairment	-40,101
Net Book Value as at 31 March 2008	825,812

Garages	£000
As at 1 April 2007	6,599
Additions in Year	0
Revaluations in Year	4,323
Reclassification	1,782
Depreciation in Year	-178
Disposals and Demolitions	-921
Impairment	-871
Net Book Value as at 31 March 2008	10,734

Other assets including district boiler houses have been classified as intrinsic to the day to day operation of the housing estates in which they are located and as such have no asset value in their own right. Garage structures are valued based upon capitalised income streams.

Other operational assets such as estate shops and area housing offices are held within the General Fund Asset Register.

(b) Vacant possession

	£m
Value as at 1 April 2007	1,757

The difference between the Balance Sheet valuation of dwellings shown at (a) above and the vacant Possession value reflects the economic cost to Government of providing Council Houses at less than open market rents.

Note 3 Major Repairs Reserve

The Council is required by regulation to establish a Major Repairs Reserve. The main credit to the account comprises the total depreciation charge for all Housing Revenue Account assets. Capital expenditure is then funded from the reserve without being charged to the Housing Revenue Account.

2006/07 £000		2007/08 £000
1,283	Balance as at 1 April	8,294
7,880	Depreciation in the year	18,813
0	Reversal of depreciation in excess of MRA	-6,501
4,310	Adjustment to MRR in respect of Depreciation	0
-5,179	Financing of Capital Expenditure	-20,606
8,294	Balance as at 31 March	0

The Council is entitled to reverse out of the account any depreciation charged in excess of the Government's Major Repairs Allowance (MRA). In 2007/08, the depreciation charged to the account less the MRA of £12.312m equals the reversal of the depreciation figure shown above (£6.501m).

Note 4 Financing of Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure on Land, Houses and Other Property within the HRA was financed as follows:

	2007/08 £000
Borrowing	52,116
Capital Receipts	3,099
Revenue Contributions	4,085
Government Grants/Other Capital Income	326
Major Repairs Reserve	20,606
Total	80,232

During the year total capital receipts of £9.660m were received by the HRA, of which £3.385m was available to support capital expenditure within the Council. To support the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) £3.099m of Right to Buy receipts were used (including a balance C/F from 2006/07 of £0.631m), leaving an accumulated balance of £3.471m unused.

To ensure that these items do not affect the amount of rent income from tenants that are required to balance the HRA budget, these costs are reversed out by means of an adjustment in the movement on the Housing Revenue Account Balance. This leaves the HRA to continue to bear its share of the Council's debt management and financing costs.

Note 5 Depreciation

A depreciation charge has been included in respect of dwelling houses within the Housing Revenue Account. This charge is based upon the value of the dwelling stock at the 1 April 2007 excluding the value of land. Depreciation has been calculated using the 'straight line' method over 30 years in line with Government Guidance.

An additional depreciation charge has been included in the total charged to the Housing Revenue Account in respect of garages. This charge is based upon the value at 1 April 2007 and has been calculated using the 'straight line' method over 25 years.

Note 6 Impairment

An impairment charge of £40.987m has been included in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account (£1.129m in 2006/07). This charge is reflected in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account in assessing the deficit on HRA Services but reversed out in determining the movement on the HRA Balance.

Additional information – An impairment charge is assessed where after taking into account depreciation and disposals, the value of the housing stock has not increased by an amount equivalent to that spent on it (e.g. on Decent Homes) plus new additions to the stock in the year. Thus an adjustment for this non-enhancing expenditure, known as an impairment charge, needs to be made. This charge is reflected in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account in assessing the Deficit on HRA Services but reversed out in determining the actual deficit reducing HRA balances.

Note 7 HRA Subsidy

2006/07 £000	Notional HRA for Subsidy Calculation	2007/08 £000
28,272	Management and Maintenance	29,570
12,190	Major Repairs Allowance	12,312
1,530	Rent Constraint Allowance	2,969
7,757	Charges for Capital	10,024
-17	Interest on Receipts	-11
34	Admissible Allowance	0
-53,627	Guideline Rent Income	-56,436
-3,861		-1,572
69	Defects grant and prior year adjustments	-66
-3,792	Notional Surplus (to be paid to Government)	-1,638

All councils are required to produce a notional HRA for subsidy calculation purposes using measures of income and expenditure determined by central Government. If there is a surplus on the notional HRA, that surplus has to be paid to central Government from the actual HRA. The notional HRA's net surplus, after allowing for receiving Major Repairs Allowance, to be paid to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is shown above. The Rent Constraint Allowance (RCA) seeks to offset lost actual rental income brought about by the DCLG capping an Authority's average rent increase to 5% in 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Note 8 Rent Arrears & Other Provisions for Bad and Doubtful Debts

2006/07 £000	Rent Arrears	2007/08 £000
893	Current Tenants	942
1,442	Former Tenants	1,641
2,335	As at 31 March	2,583

As at 31 March 2008, the level of rent arrears for current tenants as a proportion of gross rent income was 1.76% (1.95% 2006/07).

2006/07 £000	Bad Debt Provision in respect of rent income	2007/08 £000
1,027	As at 1 April	1,372
345	Increase in Provision	283
1,372	As at 31 March	1,655

Provision has also been made in the accounts for write-offs in respect of tenants' and former tenants' rechargeable repairs as shown below.

2006/07 £000	Bad Debt Provision in respect of the rechargeable repairs	2007/08 £000
750	As at 1 April	134
-86	Increase(+)/Decrease(-) in Provision	60
-530	Change in the year	-119
134	As at 31 March	75

Note 9 Amortisation of Deferred Charges

In 2007/08 the amortised cost of deferred charges debited to the HRA was £1.258m (£0.147m in 2006/07).

Note 10 Gain or Loss on Sale of HRA Fixed Assets

The payment of a share of housing capital receipts to the Government counts as a loss in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account, but is met from the usable capital receipts balance rather than Council Tax.

Note 11 Interest Payable and Other Charges

The cost of external interest payable together with the cost of debt redemption premium.

Note 12 Amortised Premiums/Discounts

The cost of debt redemption premiums charged to the HRA in 2007/08 was £0.096m (£0.104m in 2006/07). The total comprises Premiums of £0.191m and Discounts of £0.095m.

Note 13 Contributions to and from the Pensions Reserve

Local authorities are required to account for their pension costs on an FRS 17 basis, but to reverse the impact of FRS 17 based accounting to the Pensions Reserve to ensure that it does not impact on council tax or housing rents.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
2.	Date:	10th July 2008
3.	Title:	Neighbourhoods General Fund Revenue Outturn 2007/08
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report details the revenue outturn position for Neighbourhoods services accounted for in the General Fund. A separate report will cover Housing Revenue Account (HRA) services.

The budgets within Neighbourhoods have been managed all year with management actions put in place to ensure that the outturn position would not exceed the budget.

The final outturn position is a net underspend of £136k.

6. Recommendations

THE SCRUTINY PANEL RECEIVES AND NOTES THIS REPORT.

7. Proposals and Details

The table below shows the summary outturn position for the Directorate. Appendix 1 shows the more detailed analysis.

SERVICE	2007/08 Budget (Net)	Outturn to 31st March 2008	Variance from Budget (Under)/Over spend
	£000	£000	£000
Neighbourhood Services	111	162	51
Neighbourhood Standards	2,026	1,787	(239)
Community Safety	1,622	1,203	(419)
Neighbourhood Management	59	76	17
Community Services	238	693	455
Neighbourhood Development	554	553	(1)
TOTAL	4,610	4,474	(136)

Explanations in relation to the variances are set out below:

7.1 Neighbourhood Services +£51k

The majority of the overspend is due to under recovery of Crematorium and Cemeteries income. This is something which can be difficult to control but savings elsewhere in the Directorate have been effectively managed to offset this overspend.

7.2 Neighbourhood Standards -£239k

Within this service area there was a £78k overspend regarding closed landfill sites needing urgent work due to Environmental, Legal and Health and Safety issues. This includes work on fencing at Maltby Landfill site and emergency repairs at Kiveton to prevent leaking of Leachate. In addition, in February 2008 the Cabinet approved capital funding of £313k as a Priority A Major Strategic Project for preventative works at Wath and Carhill sites.

There were a number of underspends in this service area, mainly due to vacancies not filled in the early part of the year during the directorate restructure. Also, salary costs already budgeted for within this area for existing staff who have carried out work on the Smoke Free project have been partly subsidised by the Smoke Free Grant which ended 31.3.08. In addition, unbudgeted income related to Patented Grant (£21k) in Trading Standards and the Gambling Act (£50k) in Licensing was received.

7.3 Community Safety -£419k

The underspend includes the effect of staffing vacancies in all service areas. In addition, there was an underspend relating to Neighbourhood Wardens as the level of funding allocated was greater than the agreed level of service provision. Further, £50k of grant income relating to Anti-Social Behaviour was received which was not anticipated in the original budget.

7.4 Neighbourhood Management +£17k

The overspend relates to a below budget level of interest income received relating to Housing Association mortgages and Home Improvement Loans.

7.5 Community Services +£455k

There are two main reasons for the adverse variance. Firstly, income-related SIPs of £153k were not achieved in the year, as charges for communal room hire in sheltered accommodation were not reviewed and the originally anticipated expansion of the wardens service to vulnerable tenants did not occur. Secondly, the Independent Support Service (formerly wardens service) overspent by £285k, including the costs of a pilot for a more comprehensive service level which was extended beyond the originally assumed completion date of the end of October 2007 to allow a more fundamental review of the proposed level of service that could be afforded to be completed.

The outturn reflects payment of £55k income relating to Dispersed Units into an earmarked reserve, as the income from charges raised to replace furniture and fixtures at temporary units for the homeless is ringfenced to the service area. A programme of refurbishment of the units is in place for 2008/09 and beyond. This service sits alongside the furnished accommodation scheme operated in the HRA to help support the establishment of vulnerable tenancies.

7.6 Neighbourhoods Development

This service area has outturned on budget as anticipated. Within this balanced position is an underspend of £25k on the Community Leadership Fund for which Cabinet approval for this to be carried forward was given on 11.4.08.

8. Finance

Financial implications for each service area have been discussed in section 7 above.

A carry forward of £25k for the Community Leadership Fund approved at Cabinet on 11.4.08 is reflected.

Under the new regulations there is provision for services to automatically carry forward 20% of underspends. After allowing for the £25k CLF carry forward above, this would make £22k of the net underspend of £111k available in 2008/09 to assist with any new pressures identified.

Appendix 1

Revenue Budget/Outturn Position 2007/2008

	£	
Balances brought forward from 2006/2007 following decision of Cabinet 1 (Underspendings b/f '+': Overspendings b/f '-')	13,000	Approved Carry Fwd
2 ADD Approved Cash-limited Budget for 2007/2008	4,659,172	
3 ADD Supplementary Estimates approved in 2007/2008	100,000	Motorcycle Nuisance additional budget
ADD/SUBTRACT Virement from/to another Programme Area / Service Unit 4 approved in 2007/2008	-162,065	
5 RESOURCES AVAILABLE 2007/2008 (1+2+3+4)	<u>4,610,107</u>	
6 NET ACTUAL OUTTURN 2007/2008 (As reported to Members)	4,474,139	
7 Net under (-) / overspend (+) 2007/2008 (5-6)	<u><u>-135,968</u></u>	
8 REQUESTS FOR CARRY FORWARD INTO 2008/2009	25,000	
Carryforward requests:		
Members Community Leadership Fund	<u>25,000</u>	Approved at Cabinet 9/4/08. Ref B204
	<u>25,000</u>	

Net Variance Analysis 2007/08

Division of Service Budget	Approved Budget	Latest Revenue Monitoring Report	Actual Outturn	Under (-) / Over (+) Spending	Under / Over Spending as a % of Approved Budget
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGEMENT</u>					
MANAGEMENT & ADMIN	531,955	511,000	541,793	9,838	1.8%
CEMETERIES GENERAL	115,020	173,000	157,884	42,864	37.3%
CREMATORIUMS	-536,291	-538,000	-537,361	-1,070	0.2%
BEREAVEMENT SERVICES PARTNERSHIP	0	0	0	0	0.0%
SUB TOTAL	110,684	146,000	162,316	51,632	46.6%
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD STANDARDS</u>					
HEALTH & SAFETY	217,396	180,000	175,425	-41,971	-19.3%
SMOKE FREE	0	-24,000	-61	-61	N/A
FOOD & DRUGS	517,878	436,000	424,459	-93,419	-18.0%
ANIMAL HEALTH	39,384	37,000	38,744	-640	-1.6%
POLLUTION CONTROL	595,918	579,000	574,794	-21,124	-3.5%
PEST CONTROL SERVICE	55,599	63,000	51,228	-4,371	-7.9%
ENVIRO-CRIME TEAM	180,502	155,000	155,842	-24,660	-13.7%
TRADING STANDARDS	392,819	334,000	344,543	-48,276	-12.3%
LICENSING	-33,137	-120,000	-116,504	-83,367	251.6%
CLOSED LANDFILL SITES	59,818	128,000	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!
SUB TOTAL	2,026,177	1,768,000	1,786,617	-239,560	-11.8%
<u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u>					
AGENCY, GRANTS & ENFORCEMENT	87,847	88,000	80,598	-7,249	-8.3%
ENERGY ADVICE	15,732	17,000	16,649	917	5.8%
HGF MANAGEMENT & ADMIN	122,614	129,000	129,868	7,254	5.9%
RUSH HOUSE GENERAL	22,001	22,000	22,030	29	0.1%
HOMELESSNESS & ADVICE	48,831	54,000	55,871	7,040	14.4%
ROBOND	25,000	25,000	25,000	0	0.0%
SYHA VOIDS	0	0	0	0	0.0%
MEDICAL MOBILITY & COMMUNITY CARE	33,478	37,000	36,720	3,242	9.7%
HOUSING NEEDS (HGF GEN)	-151,081	3,000	2,115	153,196	-101.4%
DISPERSED UNITS	25,107	-35,000	25,107	0	0.0%
ASYLUM SEEKERS	0	-54,000	5,572	5,572	N/A
INDEPENDENT SUPPORT SERVICE	8,175	217,000	293,232	285,057	3486.9%
SUB TOTAL	237,704	503,000	692,762	455,058	191.4%
<u>COMMUNITY SAFETY</u>					
NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS	1,155,801	857,000	781,923	-373,878	-32.3%
COMMUNITY SAFETY UNIT (CSU)	44,187	33,000	33,363	-10,824	-24.5%
SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS (SNTs)	81,389	67,000	67,554	-13,835	-17.0%
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	52,893	51,000	51,650	-1,243	-2.4%
MOTORCYCLE NUISANCE	111,000	111,000	111,168	168	0.2%
GROUNDWORK TRUST	61,200	67,000	67,000	5,800	9.5%
ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	115,101	89,000	90,306	-24,795	-21.5%
SUB TOTAL	1,621,571	1,275,000	1,202,964	-418,607	-25.8%
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT</u>					
ESTATES DIVISION - GENERAL	0	0	0	0	0.0%
HMA GENERAL	39,521	45,000	48,223	8,702	22.0%
HOUSING ASSOCIATION - MORTG. ETC	-21,328	-5,000	-12,182	9,146	0.0%
HOME IMP LOANS PHY H'CAP GEN	-260	0	-123	137	0.0%
LIGHTING OF STAIRCASES	30,963	44,000	30,963	0	0.0%
CLEANING OF COMMUNAL DWELLINGS	13,104	20,000	13,104	0	0.0%
RIGHT TO BUY FLAT SERVICE	-2,601	-3,000	-3,169	-568	0.0%
SUB TOTAL	59,399	101,000	76,816	17,417	29.3%
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT</u>					
BUSINESS UNIT MANAGEMENT	0	0	0	0	0.0%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	0	6,000	6,340	6,340	N/A
NEIGHBOURHOODS TRAINING	24,619	22,000	21,091	-3,528	-14.3%
HOUSING MARKET RENEWAL MASTERPLANNING	0	0	-8,265	-8,265	N/A
HOUSING MARKET RENEWAL DELIVERY TEAM	0	0	0	0	N/A
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT MGMT & ADMIN	106,191	117,000	117,785	11,594	10.9%
MEMBERS COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND	77,000	52,000	51,350	-25,650	-33.3%
NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY - CLIENT	0	9,000	9,829	9,829	N/A
NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY - RMBC	131,263	88,000	89,159	-42,104	-32.1%
LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	48,184	0	0	-48,184	-100.0%
NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY - ADMIN	-28,000	-28,000	-28,000	0	0.0%
SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE	0	0	-12	-12	N/A
MANAGEMENT & ADMIN/AREA ASSEMBLIES/COMM PLANNIN	195,315	183,000	187,419	-7,896	-4.0%
STRATEGIC SERVICES	0	206,000	105,968	105,968	N/A
SUB TOTAL	554,572	655,000	552,664	-1,908	-0.3%

Reasons for Variance from Approved Budget 2007/08

<u>Division of Service</u>	<u>Under / Over</u>		<u>Key Reasons (for variances +/-£25k or +/-5%)</u>
	<u>Under (-) / Over (+)</u> <u>Spending (£)</u>	<u>Spending as a % of</u> <u>Approved Budget</u>	
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGEMENT</u>			
MANAGEMENT & ADMIN	9,838	1.8%	
CEMETERIES GENERAL	42,864	37.3%	Under recovery of income
CREMATORIUMS	-1,070	0.2%	
BEREAVEMENT SERVICES PARTNERSHIP	0	0.0%	
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD STANDARDS</u>			
HEALTH & SAFETY	-41,971	-19.3%	Posts unfilled due to restructure plus Smoke Free grant subsidised existing staff costs
SMOKE FREE	-61	0.0%	
FOOD & DRUGS	-93,419	-18.0%	Posts unfilled due to restructure plus Smoke Free grant subsidised existing staff costs
ANIMAL HEALTH	-640	-1.6%	
POLLUTION CONTROL	-21,124	-3.5%	
PEST CONTROL SERVICE	-4,371	-7.9%	Extra income from HRA
ENVIRO-CRIME TEAM	-24,660	-13.7%	Extra income from Fixed Penalty Fines
TRADING STANDARDS	-48,276	-12.3%	Staff vacancies plus unbudgeted Patented Grant income
LICENSING	-83,367	251.6%	Staff vacancies unfilled due to restructure plus additional licensing income
CLOSED LANDFILL SITES	78,329	130.9%	Unplanned essential repairs due to Environmental, Legal & Health & Safety Issues
<u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u>			
AGENCY, GRANTS & ENFORCEMENT	-7,249	-8.3%	Staff vacancies plus additional income from fees.
MINOR FIXINGS	0	0.0%	
ENERGY ADVICE	917	5.8%	5% Vacancy factor not achieved due to full staff throughout the year.
HGF MANAGEMENT & ADMIN	7,254	5.9%	SIP of £20k Facilities Management Service charge income not achieved in full.
RUSH HOUSE GENERAL	29	0.1%	
HOMELESSNESS & ADVICE	7,040	14.4%	5% Vacancy factor not achieved due to full staff throughout the year.
ROBOND	0	0.0%	
SYHA VOIDS	0	0.0%	
MEDICAL MOBILITY & COMMUNITY CARE	3,242	9.7%	5% Vacancy factor not achieved due to full staff throughout the year.
	153,196	-101.4%	SIPs not achieved for expected income generation due to roll out to the Private Sector of the ISS being delayed.
HOUSING NEEDS (HGF GEN)			
DISPERSED UNITS	0	0.0%	
ASYLUM SEEKERS	5,572	0.0%	
INDEPENDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	285,057	3486.9%	Wardens service currently under review as proposed structure is not sustainable.
<u>COMMUNITY SAFETY</u>			
NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS	-373,878	-32.3%	Outturn reflects original anticipated level of funding for the year less vacancies that arose in the year.
COMMUNITY SAFETY UNIT (CSU)	-10,824	-24.5%	Staff vacancies unfilled due to restructure
SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS (SNTs)	-13,835	-17.0%	Unbudgeted HRA contribution
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	-1,243	-2.4%	
MOTORCYCLE NUISANCE	168	0.2%	
GROUNDWORK TRUST	5,800	9.5%	Insufficient budget transferred from CEX to cover current annual costs
ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	-24,795	-21.5%	Unbudgeted Grant income received which has offset some of the salary costs already budgeted for
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT</u>			
ESTATES DIVISION - GENERAL	0	0.0%	
HMA GENERAL	8,702	22.0%	Reduction in Interest received
HOUSING ASSOCIATION - MORTG. ETC	9,146	0.0%	Reduction in Interest received
HOME IMP LOANS PHY H'CAP GEN	137	0.0%	Reduction in Interest received
LIGHTING OF STAIRCASES	0	0.0%	
CLEANING OF COMMUNAL DWELLINGS	0	0.0%	
RIGHT TO BUY FLAT SERVICE	-568	0.0%	
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT</u>			
BUSINESS UNIT MANAGEMENT	0	0.0%	
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	6,340	0.0%	Income no longer received for EMS contribution. 2010 now obtain the service on an as and when basis and pay throughout the year. Charges to be reviewed in 0809.
NEIGHBOURHOODS TRAINING	-3,528	-14.3%	Additional contribution to training budget received from Adults service at year end.
HOUSING MARKET RENEWAL MASTERPLANNING	-8,265	0.0%	
HOUSING MARKET RENEWAL DELIVERY TEAM	0	0.0%	
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT MGMT & ADMIN	11,594	10.9%	Unbudgeted salary costs for HR staff involved in restructure work and charged to this cost centre
MEMBERS COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND	-25,650	-33.3%	Cabinet approved carry forward for 07/08 anticipating this underspend
NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY - CLIENT	9,829	0.0%	
NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY - RMBC	-42,104	-32.1%	Staff vacancies unfilled due to restructure
LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	-48,184	-100.0%	Staff vacancies unfilled due to restructure
NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY - ADMIN	0	0.0%	
SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE	-12	0.0%	
MANAGEMENT & ADMIN/AREA ASSEMBLIES/COMM PLANNING	-7,896	-4.0%	
STRATEGIC SERVICES	105,968	0.0%	SLA with 2010 terminated, with deficit partly reduced by HRA contribution
Total Variance	-135,968		

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
2.	Date:	Thursday 10 July 2008
3.	Title:	Housing Investment Programme (HIP) 2007/08
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

The final outturn position for the 2007/08 Housing Investment Programme (HIP) is £86.851m against the approved Programme of £88.040m, an overall underspend of £1.188m. This includes an overspend of £2.233m on schemes managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd and an underspend on RMBC managed schemes of £3.422m.

Appendix 1 provides a scheme by scheme analysis of spend against the approved Programme. Explanations for any significant variance are detailed in the main body of this report.

6. Recommendation

THE SCRUTINY PANEL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE REPORT.

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 The 2007/08 HIP was approved by the Cabinet Member on the 18th June 2007 and included schemes totalling £88.040m. The outturn position for each of the schemes and the overall Programme is presented at Appendix 1.
- 7.2 A previous report to Cabinet Member (dated 18 February 2008) made reference to a projected outturn of £85.842m against the approved Programme. The final outturn position is £86.852m which represents an underspend of £1.188m against the Programme (equating to nearly 99% of the Programme being delivered). Within this overall underspend, it is worth noting that schemes managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd (£73.4m) overspent by £2.233m, whilst there was a £3.42m underspend on the £14.67m schemes managed by the Council. The following paragraphs of Section 7 to this report provide the Cabinet Member with explanations for the variances from the approved Programme.

2010 Rotherham Ltd Managed Schemes

- 7.3 For the schemes managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd, £75.596m has been spent which equates to an overspend of £2.233m against the approved Programme (£73.36m).
- 7.4 The main reasons for the overspend are:
- Decent Homes – Phase 2 : the programme of schemes overspent by £1.871m
 - Flood costs: as a result of the June 2007 flooding emergency additional costs of £1.118m were incurred that were not part of the approved Programme.

Decent Homes – Phase 2

- 7.5 The 2008/09 Phase 2 Programme was approved as £67.032m. The outturn against the Programme was £1.871m higher due to the following overspends:

Refurbishment	+ £1.169m	(Budget £52.4m)
Windows	+ £402k	(Budget £7.9m)
DH Void Programme	+ £301k	(Budget 1.5m)

The additional expenditure was caused by 916 more properties undergoing works bringing them up to the Decent Homes standard. Also, there was an acceleration of other work undertaken by 2010 Rotherham Ltd and their contractors from January 2008 onwards.

Flooding costs

- 7.6 Following the floods in June 2007, 47 council houses were affected. The original financial assessment of the work required (to be completed by Henry Boot PLC) was £627,000. However, this estimate increased to £1.200m as further works were identified as these properties were stripped out and dried. The outturn expenditure figure was £1.118m, with a small retention to be paid in 2008/09, which is currently being agreed with Henry Boot PLC.

- 7.7 At the Cabinet Member meeting of 3rd September 2007, flood costs were identified as an additional cost pressure. At this the Cabinet Member sought to contain the impact of the floods within the existing Programme through the identification of savings from elsewhere in the Programme. £387k of savings from RMBC-managed budgets towards these costs were approved at Cabinet Member meeting of 18th February 2008 and these were achieved.
- 7.8 It has not been possible to contain the net overspends above within the underspend of £306k on other decent homes schemes and the underspend on other capital projects (£449k).

RMBC Managed Schemes

- 7.9 The remainder of the programme (£14.677m) is managed by the Council and £11.255m, or 76.7%, of the programme was delivered. The main variances to the Programme are detailed below:
- **Pathfinder Projects (Budget £5.099m, Expenditure £4.181m)** – Strategic acquisitions were pursued across all four ADF areas so as to drive forward the delivery of the 2006-08 Programme. There have, however, been some delays in acquiring these relevant assets. An element of EDS's capital spend on Street Scene schemes was also included in the original Programme and this also accounts for some of the underspend.
 - **Gypsy and Travellers Site (Budget £1.6m, No expenditure)** – as previously reported to Cabinet Member, there was no expenditure in 2007/08 due to difficulties in identifying potential land for any site. As a result, the Council is not yet in a position to submit its proposed bid for £1.6m for government funding. A bid for Regional Housing Board (RHB) resources of £2m for 2009/10 has been submitted.
 - **Unsustainable and Non-Traditional Properties (Budget £860k, Expenditure £277k)** – the underspend of £583k was used to meet some of the additional flooding costs. Some of the Programmed spend here was met from other Programme budgets where grant funding was available e.g. Maltby.
 - **Non-Traditional Investment (Budget £250k, Expenditure £369)** – The works to bring a number of non-traditional houses in East Dene up to the Decency standard were completed – due to the nature of these works, the expenditure has been reflected in the 'Refurbishment' heading in the Decent Homes section of the report.
 - **Sheltered Housing Modifications (Budget £900k, Expenditure £158k)** - EDS are now responsible for managing this programme of works. Due to the relatively late start to these arrangements, only £158k was spent by the year end. Unspent RHB grant has been rolled forward into 2008/09.

- **Fair Access to All – (Budget £2.865m, Expenditure £3.967m)**
- a) **Disabled Adaptations – Private Sector (Budget £1.265m, Expenditure £1.684m)** – The Council was notified of an increase in its specified capital grant (Disabled Facilities Grant) which led to a revised budget of £1.387m being available in 2007/08. Difficulties in accurately monitoring spend this year have been experienced primarily due to the later than expected implementation of a revised invoicing system for works completed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd.
- b) **Disabled Adaptations – Public Sector (Budget £1.6m, Expenditure £2.283m)** - As mentioned above, the problems with 2010 Rotherham Ltd invoicing caused difficulties with monitoring this budget effectively, contributing to the the overspend of £683k. In addition, the outturn includes additional planned adaptations work on bathrooms and the salary costs of the Occupational Therapists who have been solely dedicated to these works.

8. Finance

8.1 The following table shows the resources used to finance the HIP in 2007/08:

Resource Type	Amount Used £m
Capital Allocations –SCE(R)	1.380
Specified Capital Grant – Disabled Facilities Grants	0.832
General Fund Contribution to Disabled Facilities Grants	0.555
ALMO Funding	50.000
SYHMR Pathfinder Grant	4.154
Grants/Contributions	2.122
Major Repairs Allowance (MRA)	20.606
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	3.057
Capital Receipts	3.099
Unsupported Borrowing	1.881
Total	87.686

8.2 Included within the resources used to fund the Programme there is £835k of expenditure accruals that were incurred in 2006/07, but were not required to be funded until 2007/08.

8.3 The main changes in the resources used to finance the Programme are:

- A reduction in the available capital receipts due to a fall in the number of RTB sales – originally it was estimated that there would be 200 RTBs in 2007/08; only 138 RTB sales were completed
- The use of affordable Prudential Borrowing - it is proposed to reduce the 2008/09 Decent Homes programme by an amount equivalent to this year's overspend (£1.881m) in order to use ALMO borrowing approval to repay the prudential borrowing utilised this year. A revised 2008/09 HIP report will be presented to the Cabinet Member meeting of 30th June 2008 for approval.

- 8.4 It should be noted that there is currently a cumulative balance of £3.471m from the sale of HRA land which has not yet been used – 100% of these land receipts can be treated as ‘usable’ so long as they are used to fund affordable housing or regeneration works.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- 9.1 The 2007/08 programme, as in previous financial years, is supported by assumed levels of RTB Receipts. The Council has no direct control over the numbers of these sales (which also affect rent income and MRA resources).
- 9.2 In 2007/08, no appropriate schemes were identified for utilising available HRA land receipts. There is a risk that continually rolling forward these receipts without a definite plan to spend them appropriately may cause 50% to be pooled retrospectively i.e. paid to central government.
- 9.3 To improve the monitoring of progress on Decent Homes schemes, partner contractor workloads and repairs 2010 Rotherham Ltd’s Asset Team has been strengthened with two recent appointments who will work closely with the finance teams of both 2010 Rotherham Ltd and RMBC Neighbourhoods.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The HIP supports the following Corporate Plan Priority and Cross Cutting Themes and is central to the longer term Housing Strategy:

- Rotherham Safe
- Sustainable Development
- Fairness

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 18th June 2007
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 17th September 2007
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 12th November 2007
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 18th February 2008

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HIP PROGRAMME 2007/08

APPENDIX 1

	APPROVED PROGRAMME 2007/08	PROJECTED OUTFURN FEBRUARY 08 2007/08	OUTFURN EXPENDITURE 2007/08	VARIANCE 2007/08
SCHEMES MANAGED BY 2010 ROTHERHAM LTD				
Decent Homes - Phase 2:	£	£	£	
Refurbishment	52,400,000	52,400,000	53,568,612	1,168,612
Windows	7,900,000	7,900,000	8,301,576	401,576
DSO DH Void Programme	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,800,993	300,993
Capital Management Fee	5,232,150	5,232,150	5,232,150	0
Phase 2 Sub Total	67,032,150	67,032,150	68,903,332	1,871,182
Other Decent homes schemes:				
Replacement of Central Heating	2,500,000	1,900,000	2,315,211	-184,789
Electrical Board & Bond	200,000	200,000	213,382	13,382
CO Meters to Vulnerable Properties	150,000	130,000	14,815	-135,185
Other Decent Homes Sub Total	2,850,000	2,230,000	2,543,408	-306,592
TOTAL DECENT HOMES EXPENDITURE	69,882,150	69,262,150	71,446,740	1,564,590
Other Capital Projects:				
District Heating Conversions	1,850,000	1,650,000	1,722,384	-127,616
Wharcliffe Flats	900,000	900,000	834,928	-65,072
Disability Discrimination Act Works	500,000	460,000	396,928	-103,072
One-Off Properties	180,000	120,000	27,555	-152,445
Victim Support Scheme/Safer Homes	50,000	50,000	49,293	-707
Other Capital Projects Sub Total	3,480,000	3,180,000	3,031,088	-448,912
Flood Costs	0	1,200,000	1,118,286	1,118,286
TOTALS FOR SCHEMES MANAGED BY 2010 ROTHERHAM LTD	73,362,150	73,642,150	75,596,114	2,233,964
SCHEMES MANAGED BY RMBC				
Fair Access to All:				
Private Sector - Disabled Facilities Grants	1,265,000	1,387,000	1,684,167	419,167
Public Sector - Disabled Adaptations	1,600,000	1,600,000	2,283,312	683,312
Fair Access To All Sub Total	2,865,000	2,987,000	3,967,479	1,102,479
Regeneration/Neighbourhood Renewal:				
Private Sector -				
Home Assistance Grants	50,000	50,000	19,932	-30,068
Eco Homes - Henley Rise(RHB)	221,000	226,000	227,108	6,108
Maltby Transformational Change Masterplan(RHB)	395,000	401,000	408,478	13,478
Dinnington Transformational Change Masterplan(RHB)	400,000	423,000	317,404	-82,596
Rural & West Baseline Report	85,000	23,000	10,066	-74,934
Private Sector Support(RHB)	150,000	149,000	128,273	-21,727
Move on Accommodation(RHB)	600,000	600,000	580,832	-19,168
Rotherham West Affordable Housing(RHB)	150,000	150,000	150,000	0
Thurcroft	135,000	55,000	7,550	-127,450
Pathfinder Projects	5,098,729	5,099,000	4,180,929	-917,800
Gypsy and Travellers Site	1,600,000	0	0	-1,600,000
Public Sector -				
Unsustainable and Non-Traditional Properties	860,000	654,000	276,617	-583,383
Non-Traditional Investment	250,000	260,000	369	-249,631
Small Environmental Schemes	150,000	18,000	23,004	-126,996
Laughton Common	25,000	25,000	25,415	415
Sheltered Housing Modifications(RHB)	900,000	400,000	158,524	-741,476
Garage Site Investment	500,000	500,000	572,807	72,807
Regeneration/Neighbourhood Renewal Sub Total	11,569,729	9,033,000	7,087,308	-4,482,421
Other - Public sector:				
Research & Information	195,000	82,000	78,138	-116,862
'Key Choices' Property Shop	48,000	49,000	56,220	8,220
Other Public Sector Sub Total	243,000	131,000	134,358	-108,642
Carry Overs from 2006/07	0	49,000	66,343	66,343
TOTALS FOR SCHEMES MANAGED BY RMBC	14,677,729	12,200,000	11,255,488	-3,422,241
TOTALS FOR APPROVED PROGRAMME	88,039,879	85,842,150	86,851,602	-1,188,277
Outturn as a percentage of the approved Programme			98.65%	
FUNDING THE APPROVED PROGRAMME				
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
SCE(R)	1,380	1,380	1,380	
MRA	20,606	20,606	20,606	
Almo Funding	50,000	50,000	50,000	
DFG	741	832	832	
RCCO	3,057	3,057	3,057	
GF Contribution	524	555	555	
Regional Housing Board	2,816	2,316	2,122	
Pathfinder resources	5,099	5,099	4,154	
Gypsy & Travellers Grant(Est)	0	0	0	
Receipts	3,065	2,730	3,099	
Prudential Borrowing	0	0	1,881	
TOTAL FUNDING	87,288	86,575	87,686	Note 1

Note 1: The funding includes £835k to finance the cost of expenditure accruals incurred in 2006/07 that are required to be financed in 2007/08

NEIGHBOURHOODS
16th June, 2008

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Sims, McNeely and Stone.

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

15. CAINE GARDENS, KIMBERWORTH

Consideration was given to Minute No. 248 of 21st April, 2008, referred by the Cabinet Member for Economic and Development Services.

Stuart Savage, Senior Engineer, reported that a 15 signature petition had been submitted from residents of Caine Gardens, Kimberworth, requesting a number of parking measures. The issues raised by the petitioners were listed in the report together with the Service Area's responses. Reference was also made to the Council's current Policy of prioritising the introduction of residents' parking controls in and around the town centre.

The matter had been referred as grass verges were not adopted highways.

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

(2) That should refurbishment works take place to the bungalows in the future, consideration be given to the issue of parking facilities at that stage.

16. SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM REVIEW ACTION PLAN

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods submitted a report on the outcome of a Safer Neighbourhood Team Review which had taken place between March, 2008 and April, 2008.

The scope of the review was informed at a strategic level, Neighbourhood Action level and information from current working practices. Information was also gained from a formal stakeholder event that had taken place in March, 2008.

The key areas in need of more continued work were:-

- Access to Safer Neighbourhood Teams that would give quality experience to all customers regardless of how and when
- Enable communities to make choices on issues of community safety and neighbourhood issues that affected them and increase their confidence in the area they lived
- Joint action with communities and partners in problem solving to ensure cleaner safer neighbourhoods

- Sustainable solutions to problems and feedback to customers on results.

Resolved:- That the outcomes of the Safer Neighbourhood Team Review be supported.

17. DOG CONTROL - NEW STRAY DOG PROVISIONS

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods submitted an update on the introduction of the Stray Dog Provision of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 which placed sole responsibility for dealing with stray dogs with the Council and removed previous duties from the Police.

The relevant section so the Act had come into force on 6th April, 2008. Within South Yorkshire there had been a 3 months transitional arrangement in place with the Police which would come to an end on 1st July, 2008.

The report highlighted:-

- 1,400 reports of stray dogs in 2007/08 with 344 seized by the Dog Wardens. The Police had given their stray dog numbers for the same period as 394;
- DEFRA had provided £4M additional Revenue Support Grant funding across England and Wales.
- The Council will be required to provide a cost effective service. There was no expectation on the Council to provide a search and collection service for stray dogs outside of office hours as this had not been a service typically offered by the Police.
- During office hours local authorities would be expected to collect dogs that were reported to them and accept any brought to them.
- Outside office hours, local authorities would be expected, where practicable, to provide a place to which a stray dog could be taken and accepted into local authority care. That place would not have to be to a local authority managed kennel but could be kennels operated by a commercial or charitable interest.
- South Yorkshire Police were to demolish or re-use existing kennels at Police stations.
- Proposals to establish a local out of hours receiving facility.
- Necessary to increase kennel provision to account for the anticipated increase of in and out of office hours stray dogs.

The preferred option for an out of hours arrangement in Rotherham was the provision of a secure drop-off point for members of the public who found stray dogs. The extended Service would mean that members of the public would have 24 hour access to the service via the use of RBT Connect (Streetpride 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.) and Rothercare outside those hours. The Council's Dog Warden would continue to operate a search and find plus collection Service for stray dogs between 8.30 a.m-

5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday; outside of those hours member of the public would contact Rothercare where they would be given directions and keypad access numbers to enter the new drop-off kennels.

Resolved:- (1) That the positive progress taken to introduce the statutory requirements of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 in relation to stray dogs be welcomed.

(2) That a further report be submitted in October, 2008, providing analysis of the impact of the legislative change and new stray dog arrangements.

18. PETITION - LILIAN STREET, ROTHERHAM

The Democratic Services Manager reported receipt of a petition, containing 13 signatures, from residents of Wellgate House and Lilian Street, Rotherham, regarding the problem of anti-social behaviour around Wellgate House and Lilian Street car park.

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

(2) That the issues raised be investigated and a report submitted thereon in 2 months.

19. RMBC HOUSING STRATEGY 2008-11

The Neighbourhood Investment Manager submitted the final draft of the Council's new Housing Strategy which covered the period up to April, 2012, which had been developed in conjunction with a range of key stakeholder and partner organisations. A 9 month period of consultation had also been undertaken with feedback incorporated into the completed document.

The Strategy had been developed to meet the existing "fit for purpose" criteria, however, the Government was presently consulting over changes to the criteria and expected to make an announcement later in the year.

The new Strategy had been in development since mid-2007 and included feedback from consultation responses. It had 3 thematic topic areas of balancing housing markets, quality housing and place making and inclusion and access which corresponded to the themes used in the regional and sub-regional housing strategies. This enabled plans and activities to be translated through from local to regional level thus maximising inward investment and resource potential.

Delivery of the Strategy would involve monitoring against the action plan on a regular basis by the Directorate Management Team and the multi-agency Strategic Housing Partnership.

Resolved:- (1) That the draft of the Housing Strategy, as at Appendix A,

be approved for web publication.

(2) That the draft Strategy be released to the Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside for their comments and assessment.

(3) That the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods be authorised to make any minor drafting amendments required up until the date of publication.

20. 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.

21. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND REVENUE OUTTURN 2007/08

The Service Accountant reported that the Housing Revenue Account had outturned at a net underspend of £136,000.

The report included narrative, with the respective under/overspend, for each Service.

Discussion took place on the underspend and the Community Leadership Fund.

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – contains contractual and financial information)

22. USE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND COMMUTED SUMS

Further to Minute No. 83 of 3rd September, 2007, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods submitted proposals to extend the provisions previously agreed to priorities, where opportunity permitted, purchase of suitable new build dwellings as affordable housing, either for social rent or shared ownership, determined by local need, in the geographical areas where the commuted sum was generated.

In light of the current downturn in the housing market in terms of development, building and house purchase, potential opportunity was emerging in the marketplace to acquire new built property at significant discount on open market values. Where suitable dwellings were made available for sale by developers or where previously owned Council houses were offered for sale in the Wards previously identified, it was proposed that the Neighbourhood Investment Team enter into negotiation for the acquisition of dwellings, utilising commuted sums for the purpose

of affordable housing for social rent or shared ownership as determined by local need.

Resolved:- That the recommended release of commuted sums to support the affordable housing activity specified within the report submitted and in addition to that identified in Minute No. 83 of 3rd September, 2007.

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

23. HOUSING MARKET RENEWAL PATHFINDER PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Neighbourhood Investment Manager submitted a summary of investment delivered to date through the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Programme as well as an overview of the 2008-11 proposed programme of activity.

Rotherham's successful track record of delivery, its strong strategic masterplanning framework and robust delivery arrangements had been instrumental in provisionally securing £25.9M of Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder funding for 2008-11.

The report set out of the Programme's achievements to date and the distribution of resources for the next period.

The 2008-11 Programme was to be considered by the Transform South Yorkshire at its meeting on 4th July.

Resolved:- (1) That the report and progress achieved to date be noted.

(2) That the proposed programme of activity for 2008-11 be supported.

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

24. STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS PANEL

It was noted that a meeting of a Complaints Panel had been held on 4th June, 2008, comprising Councillors Gosling (in the Chair), Littleboy and McNeely. The Panel heard a number of complaints received from Mr. M. relating to his application for an adaptation to his property

The Panel had requested that the Cabinet Member consider adopting the practice of inviting disabled occupants (or a friend/relative authorised to speak on the applicant's behalf) to meetings when their application was considered.

The Panel had also requested that the Cabinet Member review the decision previously made on 21st April, 2008, refusing the applicant's favoured option of adaptation.

Resolved:- (1) That the Panel's findings be noted.

(2) That the application be re-submitted as a matter of urgency incorporating the views/wishes of the applicant, consideration of the family's needs and input from the Occupational Therapist.

(3) That the proposal of inviting disabled applicants to Cabinet Member meetings when their application was being considered be not adopted.

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

25. PETITION UPDATE - EAST DENE

In accordance with Minute No. 210 of 17th March, 2008, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods reported that the actions of the Safer Neighbourhood Team partners had had a positive impact on the issues raised in the petition. This had resulted in successful intervention with a beneficial outcome for the victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

Anti-Social Behaviour Officers had liaised with 2010 Rotherham Ltd. to visit residents and to offer diary sheets; the street had also been visited on 3 occasions and petitioners spoken to. The Safer Neighbourhood Team had also monitored the behaviour of the family members concerned with a view to serving Acceptable Behaviour Contracts on individuals who undertook anti-social behaviour.

The situation would continue to be monitored by the partners in the Safer Neighbourhood Team and appropriate action taken should issues arise.

Resolved:- That the actions undertaken by partners be welcomed.

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

26. PETITION UPDATE - PARKGATE

In accordance with Minute No. 211 of 17th March, 2008, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods reported that the actions of the Safer Neighbourhood Team partners had had a positive impact on the issues raised in the petition with what was believed to be a successful intervention in reducing fear of crime perceptions.

Anti-Social Behaviour Officers had liaised with 2010 Rotherham Ltd. to visit residents and to offer diary sheets. Contact letters were sent out to all petition signatories to which 19 had responded. From the information received, it was clear that the concerns focused mainly on the presence of youths at weekends approximately 7.00 p.m.

After discussion at the Safer Neighbourhood Team meeting, Police Community Support Officers had been tasked to pay attention to the area at the relevant time.

No further requests for service have been received by partners relating to this Issue. The Team would continue to monitor the area as part of their routine patrols.

Resolved:- That the actions undertaken by partners be welcomed.

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

27. PRIVATE SECTOR APPLICATION EXCEEDING DELEGATED POWERS

The Interim Adaptations Team Leader submitted 1 Disabled Facilities Grant application (private sector) for consideration.

Resolved:- (1) That application No. 22132 be deferred.

(2) That a further report be submitted as soon as possible setting out all the avenues explored and the legal advice received.

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

28. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (HIP) 2007/08

The Service Accountant submitted the final outturn position for the 2007/08 Housing Investment Programme (HIP).

By 31st March, 2008, £86,851M had been spent against the approved Programme of £33,040M, an overall underspend of £1.188M. This included an overspend of £2.233M on schemes managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. and an underspend on Council managed schemes of £3.422M.

Appendix 1 of the report submitted provided a scheme by scheme analysis of spend against the approved Programme with explanations for any significant variances.

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – contains contractual and financial information)

29. APPROPRIATION OF PROPERTY, KIMBERWORTH

A report prepared by Jill Jones, Neighbourhood Manager, was considered proposing the transfer of ownership of a property to Neighbourhoods and Adult Services from Economic and Development Services in order to allow Decent Homes works to be carried out.

The current tenant had lived in the property since April, 1994, as a secure tenant. The property was purchased by EDS in 1970 for a proposed highway improvement scheme and was managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. on their behalf. As part of the agreement to manage the property, responsive repairs were carried out but not improvement works.

Resolved:- That the ownership of the property be transferred to Neighbourhoods and Adult Services to allow Decent Homes work to be carried out.

(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act – contains contractual and financial information)

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
Thursday, 12th June, 2008

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillors Blair, Cutts, Falvey, Havenhand, Lakin and P. A. Russell. together with Mr. J. Carr (Environment Protection UK), Andrew Roddison (RotherFed) and Derek Corkell (RotherFed)

Also in attendance were Councillors Akhtar and Hussain.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkin, Goulty, Nightingale and F. Wright.

1. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair reported receipt of an invitation from South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service for a representative of the Scrutiny Panel to attend a Performance District Forum even to be held in the Town Hall on 30th June, 2008, 10.00 a.m.-12.00 Noon.

Anyone interested should contact Councillor McNeely.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

3. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from the public and press.

4. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTEEES FOR 2008/09

The Scrutiny Adviser reported on the progress made in co-options to the Panel.

Resolved:- That the following be co-opted onto the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel as follows:-

Mr. Jack Carr UK	representing Environmental Protection (Yorkshire Division)
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Mr. Andrew Roddison	representing RotherFed
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Mr. Derek Corkell	representing RotherFed
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Mrs. B. Bartholomew	representing Parish Councils (2008-2010)
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Mr. A. Armitage	representing Parish Councils
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Councillor Havenhand

Women's Refuge

7. FORWARD PLAN/WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SCRUTINY PANEL

The Scrutiny Adviser submitted an Outline Work Programme for 2008/09 which set out issues identified for future consideration by this Scrutiny Panel during the forthcoming Municipal Year.

The work programme is flexible and issues may be referred to the Panel which arise throughout the course of the year.

In the Forward Plan for Scrutiny Services, the proposals for work included reviews of:-

- The Council's Housing Allocation Policy – the consumer perspective
- Touching the Voids – what would be a reasonable turnaround time
- The Housing Needs of EU Migrant Workers – how the private sector can meet this challenge

Together with:-

- Working with RotherFed
- Community planning
- Private sector enforcement
- Farepak – Government proposals
- Increasing the provision of Council-owned housing
- HMT: Four Years on – what progress?

The Chair also suggested that 1 of the Local Area Agreement targets was selected and tracked for 2 years to ascertain what progress had been made. It was proposed that "Serious Acquisitive Crime Rate" be chosen as many agencies worked on it, availability of statistics at Ward level and Members able to contribute both with ideas for improvements and whether they had seen improvements in their own Ward.

Resolved:- (1) That the Scrutiny Adviser be requested to subject the possible Scrutiny Reviews to the Scrutiny checklist for suitability.

(2) That the "Serious Acquisitive Crime Rate" LAA target be selected as outlined above.

(3) That there be a 20 minute slot at the commencement of each Panel meeting for a short "showcase" of various sections of the Directorate.

8. PRIORITIES AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair congratulated Councillor Akhtar on his new post as Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods. She took the opportunity to thank ex-Cabinet Member and Councillor, Sue Ellis, with whom the Panel had had an excellent working relationship with who had always been available to

answer question/queries and be accountable for her portfolio. An invitation was extended to Councillor Akhtar to attend the monthly Panel meetings.

Councillor Akhtar gave a powerpoint presentation as follows:-

Key Areas of Responsibility

- Neighbourhood Management
- Area Assemblies
- Strategic Housing
- Housing Management
- Homelessness
- Adaptations
- Sheltered Housing
- Community Safety and Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- Regulatory Function

Achievements 2007/08

- 94% of Neighbourhoods' Key Performance Indicators achieved their target for 2007/08
- Improved Community Safety performance
- Implementation of Smoking Ban
- Incidences of noise reduced by 9% through the Noise Reduction Strategy
- Improved energy efficiency ratings
- Improvements in the Adaptations Service
- 23 ultra thermally efficient homes built and occupied – Henley Rise
- Beacon Status in partnership with EDS for 'Better Public Places'

Other Notable Successes in 2007/08

- 100% delivery of Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Programme plus £2m overprogramming spent
- Area Assembly Team won the Local Government Yorkshire and Humberside "Stepping Up to the Challenge" award
- 3 out of 4 Housing Performance achieved
- New Domestic Violence Strategy adopted
- Retained Charter Mark for all Neighbourhoods customer facing services
- Neighbourhoods recognised as 1 of only 17 nationwide "Standard Bearers" for the new Government standard for customer excellence in recognition of the commitment and record in delivering customer focussed services

The most difficult issues facing Neighbourhoods in 2008/09

- Reducing the perception of crime
- Delivering Decent Homes
- ALMO achieving 2* - maintaining funding for Decent Homes
- Investment in private sector housing

The Year Ahead

- Make Area Assemblies work
- Deal with the future of 2010 Rotherham Ltd.
- Tackle anti-social behaviour
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams all operate at the same level and through the Area Assemblies
- Build and plan more affordable housing
- Sort out the Choice Based Lettings Scheme
- Review the approach to Older People Housing

A question and answer session ensued with the following points raised/clarified:-

- o Although not specifically mentioned, the responsibility for the monitoring of air pollution, reporting of infectious diseases etc. still laid with Neighbourhoods and Adult Services;
- o The Respect Action Group had been reshaped to include more senior members of staff from Children and Young Peoples' Services as well as ensuring the new Locality Managers were part of Safer Neighbourhood Teams;
- o The first Youth Area Assembly had been launched;
- o An issue that had come through Area Plans was activities for young people. 1 of the themed based meetings in each Area Assembly would be on this topic. The Locality Managers would work closely with young people to organise such;
- o Positive marketing was required as members of the public were reluctant to take up an equity based loan
- o Council's Access Strategy in process of review

Councillor Akhtar was thanked for his presentation.

Resolved:- (1) That the Directorate's work programme for 2008/09 be submitted to the July Panel meeting.

(2) That the first "information" slot be from the Air Pollution Team.

(3) That a report be submitted by the Victim Support Unit to a future meeting.

9. PRIORITIES AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair congratulated Councillor Hussain, Cabinet Member for Communities and Involvement, who had been presented with his MBE by His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, at Buckingham Palace the previous day.

Councillor Hussain gave a powerpoint presentation as follows:-

Portfolio – Key Work Streams

- Parish Network
- Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- Equality Work
- Local Democracy Week
- Rotherham LiNK
- Celebrating Diversity
- Gypsy and Traveller site allocation
- Promoting Community Cohesion
- Managing EU Migration
- Tackling Deprivation – Narrowing the Gap
- Voluntary and Community Sector

Local Democracy Week 15-21st October, 2007

- Youth Cabinet Manifesto Launch and Launch of the election process for UK Youth Parliament
- Political speed dating
- Question Time event at Thomas Road College and RCAT
- Question and Answer session with representatives of the BME Schools Council
- 2008 Local Democracy Week to be held 13-17th October – will incorporate citizenship which will provide a means of bringing individuals and communities together to celebrate shared values and distinct heritages

Narrowing the Gap

- Deprivation in Rotherham had fallen – now ranked 68 on the average IMD score compared to 63 in 2004
- Main causes of deprivation in Rotherham remained education, health and employment
- Following actions proposed in 2008/09:-
 - Production of a Tackling Health Inequalities Action Plan
 - Production of a Working Neighbourhoods Plan that addresses worklessness
 - Learning from Neighbourhood work (Eastwood and Springwell Gardens)

The Local Involvement Network (LiNK) for Rotherham

- Getting Ready for LiNKS Working Group set up in October, 2007
- OJEU procurement process to appoint a Host organisation
- Voluntary Action Rotherham appointed in May, 2007, to act as Host for the LiNK
- Volunteers had been sought to work with VAR to develop
- 1st meeting of Steering Group, Working Group and VAR to be held in July/August

EU Migration

- Mapping of RMBC/2010 Rotherham Ltd. responses and gaps October-December, 2007
- Multi-agency conference in January, 2008, and Education

- conference in June, 2008
- Rotherham Partnership commitment to accelerate proactive approach
- Future Work:-
 - Welcome pack and Induction Centre
 - Raising housing standards
 - Myth busting
 - Improving cohesion
 - Engaging employers in English classes
 - Assessing impact on schools
 - Improving access to health and social care

Community Cohesion

- Rotherham Community Cohesion Strategy refreshed
- £540,000 funding for cohesion allocated from the Area Based Grant 2008-2011
- Areas of activity agreed and process underway
- Future work to include
 - Interfaith dialogue
 - Intercultural engagement
 - Intergenerational dialogue
 - Education programmes for faith leaders
 - Empowerment and support for women
 - Publicity campaigns to challenge prejudice and discrimination

Diversity

- Bollywood Boulevard – part of IIFA celebration
- Black History month
- Rotherham Diversity Festival 2007
- China Day 19th July, 2008

Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation

- South Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment completed in July, 2007 and subsequent approval by Cabinet to identify pitch needs in Rotherham
- Appraisal of land and property in all ownerships as possible site
- Conditional offer by a Housing Association to work with the Council in developing a permanent social rent site
- Future actions:-
 - Procurement of a social partner to own, develop, finance and manage a permanent site
 - Commence the development of a social rent permanent site
 - Launch of Awareness and Balance Programmes highlighting lifestyles

Parish Network

- 1 Parish Council achieving Quality Status with others currently working through the application process
- Reviewed and updated the Council and Parish and Town Councils

Joint Working Charter

- Rotherham Parish Councils' website developed and funding secured to assist individual Parish and Town Councils to develop their own
- Future Actions:-
 - Continue to promote and assist Parish Councils to meet Quality Status
 - Continue training for Council staff on the role of Parish and Town Councils
 - Develop wider understanding and engagement with Parish Councils through publicity material

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

- Prevention of homelessness for 41 of the 45 families given right to remain
- Rotherham's Integration Strategy approved by the LSP
- Asylum Team successfully provided its contracted service to the Home Office
- Number of asylum seekers in the borough expected to continue to reduce over the next year
- Continued work under the Case Resolution Programme to support those given right to remain and so continuing to prevent homelessness

Equality

- Equality Mark awarded to the Council for the achievement of Level 3 of the ESLG – Level 4 was achieved in March, 2007
- Action Plan development and agreed to achieve Level 5 by December, 2008

Voluntary and Community Sector

- Base Budget Review of the Sector informing future strategy
- Apply the Compact Code of Practice
- Hold regular meetings with VAR to monitor their role in developing the VCS in the Borough
- Negotiated a new Service Level Agreement with VAR
- Long term sustainability of VCS

A question and answer session then ensued with the following points clarified:-

- Issues had been identified in the BME Housing Strategy
- The Housing Strategy 2008-11 was to be considered by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods on 16th June picked up on vulnerable communities. A Vulnerable Person's Design Protocol was being developed
- The current review of the Housing Register would give up-to-date information and which communities applicants were from

Councillor Hussain was thanked for his presentation.

10. CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Panel noted the decisions made under delegated powers by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods held on 21st April and 19th May, 2008.

Resolved:- (1) That the Chesterhill Intensive Neighbourhood Management Pilot Mid-Term Review and Impact (Minute No. 225 of 21st April, 2008 refers) be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel.

(2) That the Housing Strategy 2008-11 be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel.

11. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th April, 2008, were noted.

12. PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 11th and 25th April, 2008 were noted.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
23rd May, 2008

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell), Councillors Austen, Jack, McNeely, P. A. Russell and Swift.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Boyes, Burton, J. Hamilton and Sangster (Chair of the Audit Committee).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

2. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

3. HEALTH INEQUALITIES ACTION PLAN

Steve Turnbull, Head of Public Health, presented the submitted report indicating that the Council, PCT and Rotherham Partnership approved the Health Inequalities Action Plan in September, 2007. The report, received by the Cabinet at its meeting on 30th April, 2008, provided an update on progress against the plan and also reflected on the feedback from the first revisit of the National Support Team (Health Inequalities).

The report drew specific attention to :

- Life Expectancy Statistics
- Overall Performance
- Areas of focus and emergent areas
- Feedback from National Support Team

There was no guarantee that implementing successfully and undertaking all actions within the plan would be successful in meeting the national health inequalities targets. This emphasised the importance of maintaining the action plan as an evolving and live document, delivering on longer term public health actions and ensuring that public health infrastructure was fit for purpose. It was also a reflection of the complexity of securing step changes in health status across a large diverse and evolving population and that there was a limited evidence base for securing such improvements as were necessary. The action plan was one of the first of its kind in the country.

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

- life expectancy
- quality of life
- women's health

- mental health promotion and suicide
- officer representation at the Youth Cabinet

Resolved:- (1) That the latest life expectancy statistics be noted.

(2) That the progress against the Health Inequality Action Plan and the assessment of progress by the National Support Team be noted.

(3) That the work ongoing to strengthen the place in the plan for actions to address mental health and suicide and accidents in young men, be noted.

4. PAYMENT OF INVOICES WITHIN THIRTY DAYS

Further to Minute No. 179 of the meeting of this Committee held on 28th March, 2008, 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%

Outturn performance for 2007/08 achieved 94% which was an improvement on the 2006/07 outturn performance of 91%.

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 95%

Details of late goods received notifications by directorate were submitted as appendices to the report.

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

- Chief Executive's Directorate champion
- cost implications
- impact on vulnerable small suppliers
- ROCC system
- lessons learnt/discussions with neighbouring authorities

Resolved:- That the information be noted and mitigating actions be supported.

5. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 169 of the meeting of this Committee held on 28th March, 2008, Sarah McCall, Performance Officer, presented 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 supplies 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.

The action plan produced following the base budget review of third sector funding had now been incorporated into reporting of the Strategy Action Plan.

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

6. PROCUREMENT LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Further to Minute No. 168 of the meeting of this Committee held on 28th March, 2008, 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 and year end reported performance.

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

- seven were status amber with performance on target
- three were status red with performance under target
- two were still under development
- one had work ongoing to baseline the current position
- two were for information/monitoring only without targets
- three related to the Ringway contract (highways) with reporting yet to commence

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

- maintaining level of spend with local businesses at 35% of core trade spend

- fair trade
- engaging/working with the third sector

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

7. REVIEW OF FRAMEWORK FOR PRODUCTION OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Further to Minute No. B215 of Cabinet held on 30th April, 2008, Andrew Bedford, Strategic Director of Finance, presented the submitted report which reviewed the way the Annual Governance Statement was produced. It took account of :

- The new CIPFA/SOLACE Framework publication "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" issued in 2007
- The Annual Governance Statement Rough Guide for Practitioners which takes effect from 2007/08

The review showed that only minor amendments were needed to present processes.

The report drew specific attention to:-

- Legislation, Proper Practice and CIPFA's Rough Guide.
- Purpose of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).
- Corporate Ownership.
- The Assurance Gathering Process and the production of the Annual Governance Statement.
- Scope of the Process (Key Players and Key Sources of Assurance).
- Timetable and Reporting.
- Summary Proposal.

There were no direct financial implications. However, any governance gaps identified that required remedial action and had financial implications, would be the subject of a separate report.

The robustness of the Council's governance framework was extensively tested by external audit annually. The Council had been found to have robust arrangements for producing its Annual Governance Statement and for reviewing its Local Code of Corporate Governance annually. Rotherham had achieved the top score of 4 in the Use Of Resources Key Lines of Enquiry for the past two years. It was important that it continued to demonstrate an up-to-date approach in its governance arrangements.

Resolved:- (1) That, as far as this Committee is concerned, the amended framework for producing the Annual Governance Statement be endorsed.

(2) That the continuing need for Strategic Directors and Cabinet Members

to sign off a year end Statement of Assurance, to inform the production of the Annual Governance Statement, be noted.

8. CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

Mark Evans, Customer Services Client Manager, presented the submitted report which provided details of the complaints received and handled during Quarters 2 and 3 of 2007/08, across the Council and 2010 Rotherham Limited.

The report drew specific attention to :-

- Overview of Performance
- Actions being taken to improve complaints management
- Local Government Ombudsman complaints
- Learning from Complaints
- Customer Satisfaction

The formal complaints procedure had allowed the Council to address risk to the organisation at a strategic and operational level. Individual complaints could identify potential risks at an early stage and allowed immediate preventative action.

A positive response to complaints was reflective of an organisation committed to continual improvement and a willingness to communicate with stakeholders and customers. Failure to respond appropriately to complaints was likely to result in an increasing litigation against the Council and in the volume of Local Government Ombudsman investigations.

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

- customer satisfaction survey
- customer signatures on planning applications available on the internet
- progress since the last CPA inspection
- need for more effective management at stage one
- identifying lessons learnt
- complaints review informing the actions to improve complaints management
- complaint information on a ward basis

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

(2) That the quarterly corporate complaints reports be shared with the Council representatives on 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

9. CORPORATE COMPLAINTS SCRUTINY REVIEW

Robin Stonebridge presented the submitted report setting out the findings and recommendations of the review group. The review document was submitted. Highlighted were the background to the review, membership of the review group, scope of the review, terms of reference, legislative requirements and implications, complaints handling performance, findings, best practice and key recommendations.

The review examined the following areas :-

- current performance in managing complaints arising from inconsistencies in this area across the Council
- the role of staff – referred to in the review as complaints officers – dealing with complaints across the Council
- staff and members training and development issues
- the current complaints procedure in operation
- customer satisfaction with outcomes
- member involvement in the handling of customer complaints

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

- lack of training
- qualified staff in post
- need to include petitions in recommendation 3
- member training re complaints handling as part of the induction process

In concluding, Robin Stonebridge thanked everyone involved in the review.

Resolved:- (1) That the review, together with the findings and recommendations, be supported.

(2) That the review and its recommendations be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

(3) That this Committee be made aware of the guidance on petitions when finalised.

10. **ADVICE SECTOR SCRUTINY REVIEW - INTERIM REPORT**

Robin Stonebridge presented the submitted report setting out the findings and recommendations of the review group. The review document was also submitted. It was noted that this was an interim report owing to the very broad nature and detailed of the services under review. Highlighted were the background to the review, membership of the review group, scope of review, terms of reference, findings, gaps in provision and interim recommendations.

The review examined the following areas :

- current advice and information provision
- gaps in service provision
- priority groups who require advice
- funding sources
- strategic management of the service
- workforce development and training
- staff resources including the role of volunteers
- audit, quality and standards performance monitoring

The Chairman welcomed Annette Cassam (Rotherham Citizens Advice Bureau), Mick Hall (Co-optee Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel) and Janet Wheatley (Voluntary Action Rotherham) who all endorsed the work and findings of the review group,

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

- important to recognise the level of need
- changing funding regime
- move towards commissioning services
- hierarchy of information and advice centres
- need to understand the advocacy tier

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- closure of the Law Centre
- Advice Plus
- request from voluntary community sector for a seat on the Corporate Working Group
- outreach services
- need to ensure no conflicts of interest regarding Corporate Working Group participants and future potential tenderers

In concluding, Robin Stonebridge thanked everyone involved in the review.

Resolved:- (1) That the review together with the findings and recommendations, be supported.

(2) That the review and its recommendations be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

(3) That the urgent action taken in response to the findings of this review to resource the Voluntary Community Sector Advice Service provision be acknowledged.

(4) That the detailed findings relating to Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) for the advice sector should be incorporated into the review of the NRF.

(5) That Cabinet be advised that, subject to clear terms of reference for the Corporate Working Group, to avoid potential future conflicts of interest, it would be helpful for the Voluntary Community Sector to be represented on the Corporate Working Group.

11. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT BOARD

Resolved:- That Councillors Austen and Whelbourn be the scrutiny representatives on the Corporate Improvement Board.

12. CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY ANNUAL CONFERENCE - LONDON- 10TH JUNE, 2008

Resolved:- That Councillors Austen, Boyes, Jack and Whelbourn, or substitutes, be authorised to attend the above.

13. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, presented briefly the submitted draft Annual Report 2007/08 describing the activities and achievements over the past year.

Resolved:- That, subject to the textual additions/amendments now discussed, the content and structure of the draft Annual Report 2007/08 be approved, finalised and published accordingly.

14. DRAFT FORWARD PLAN

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, presented briefly the submitted draft Forward Plan 2008/09.

Resolved:- That, subject to textual additions/amendments now discussed, the content and structure of the draft Forward Plan 2008/09 be approved.

15. MINUTES

Resolved:- (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th April, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

(2) That, with regard to Item 194 (Yorkshire South Tourism), it be noted that a meeting was to be held at 10.00 a.m. on 24th June, 2008 at the Mansion House, Doncaster to which officers and members of the four South Yorkshire local authorities had been invited.

16. WORK IN PROGRESS

There was no progress to report due to no meetings since before the local elections.

17. 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 matter referred to)

18. MEMBERS CONSULTATION ADVISORY GROUP

Reference was made to the representation on the above Group.

Resolved:- That consideration of this matter be deferred pending a review of the role and remit of the Group following which a report be submitted to this Committee in September, 2008.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
13th June, 2008

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell); Councillors Barron, Boyes, Burton, J. Hamilton, Jack, McNeely and P. A. Russell.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Austen, Gilding and Swift.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

20. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

21. RBT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Paul Hamblett, RBT Enterprise Programme Office Manager, and Paul Briddock, Director of Operational Services, 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 January to 31st March, 2008.

The presentation covered:-

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

Highlights for the period included:-

- SLA failure within Customer Services in January.
- Services respond to the Civic asbestos scare in February.
- New Housing Repairs system.
- Council Tax year-end billing and its impact on services.
- Maltby JSC recruitment commenced.
- 'Tell Us Once' pilot continues.
- Welfare Rights and Money Advice Services 2007/08 performance.

- Payroll Accuracy SLA achieved across the quarter.
- Annual pay award process complete.
- Job Evaluation phase 2 commenced.
- Work on Local Government Pension Scheme changes started.
- HR Consultancy work increased.
- All ICT SLAs achieve their contractual targets.
- RMBC CMT directs that all RMBC graphic design and print requirements to be commissioned via RBT Design and Printing Service.
- SLA failures in Procurement in March.
- BVPI8 performance improvement in 2007/08.
- Procurement Service supports local business.
- Benefits Service retains its 4* CPA score.
- Revenue collection performance.
- Revenues and Benefits SLA performance.

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:-

- Contact centre drop in performance over Christmas.
- Job evaluation implications.
- Trading position regarding print and photographic services for South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive.
- Accessing Council Intranet from home.
- Council tax payments.
- Welfare rights review.
- Complaints by ward.
- Viability of a single contact to trigger necessary arrangements for cancelling services etc regarding the registering of a death.
- Percentage of catalogued goods or services delivered within the lead times displayed in the item file.
- Percentage of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services that were input within 25 calendar days of such invoices

- being received by the Purchase to Pay team.
- Percentage of NNDR collected for the year.
- Annual number of reductions in benefit entitlement.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

22. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT 2008 - 2011

Further to Minute No. 183(4) of the meeting of this Committee held on 11th April, 2008, Vince Roberts, Partnership Manager, presented the submitted report summarising the current position regarding the development and approval of Rotherham's Local Area Agreement 2008-2011.

Highlighted were the key issues raised at the respective scrutiny panel meetings during March and April, 2008. The Committee considered scrutiny involvement in the performance management of the Agreement and the review/refresh planned for the autumn of this year.

The general feeling was that a small number of key issues/measures should be identified for in depth examination every couple of months, along with any 'exception' issues.

Serious acquisitive crime was particularly referred to as a potential measure.

Resolved:- (1) That the current position regarding the development and approval of Rotherham's Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 be noted.

(2) That a report be submitted in late July, 2008 outlining the risks and performance of the existing Local Area Agreement 2006-2009.

(3) That, regarding involvement in the review/refresh of the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011, a report be submitted suggesting key measures that could be finalised for in depth examination.

23. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Tim Littlewood, Principal Officer Performance Management, presented the submitted report highlighting the progress made to date with implementation of the Corporate Improvement Plan and actions achieved or on target for completion, actions not achieved or delayed. Also highlighted were any new ideas which needed to be introduced as part of its regular updating.

To date, 77% of the actions had either been achieved, were ongoing or were on target for completion.

The report covered:-

- Areas of achievement/significant progress in respect of:-

- CPA Service Blocks.
- Sustainable Community Strategy/Local Area Agreement/Corporate Plan Refresh.
- Our Future.
- Financial Management.
- Data Quality.
- Awards.

- Areas of delay/concern in respect of:-

- Direction of Travel.
- Customer Access Strategy.
- Health Scrutiny.
- Management Development Centres.
- Conditions of Footways.
- Single Partnership Community Newsletter.
- White Paper Publications.

- Revisions to the Corporate Improvement Plan.

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

- Single partnership community newsletter and editorial control.
- Health Scrutiny capacity building day.
- Produce and submit annual Direction of Travel Statement – not achieved.
- Improve Direction of Travel programme indicators – not achieved.
- Improve consultation and involvement of service users through development and introduction of a detailed councillor call for action – delayed.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress being made with the implementation of the Corporate Improvement Plan and the actions raised as delayed/areas of concern be noted.

(2) That the suggestions additions to the Corporate Improvement Plan be noted.

(3) That Tracy Holmes, Head of Communications and Marketing, be requested to attend a future meeting of this Committee to update Members on the editorial control of the single partnership community

newsletter.

24. PROSPEROUS PLACES: TAKING FORWARD THE REVIEW OF SUB - NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

Deborah Fellowes, Policy and External Affairs Manager, presented the submitted report which detailed the Government's published findings into the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration on 17th July, 2007. It proposed widespread implications for local authorities and sub-regional groupings in terms of devolving responsibilities and funding regimes, in relation to economic development.

On 31st March, 2008 it published the long awaited consultation paper on how this review was to be taken forward. This paper contained a draft response to the consultation paper. The response deadline was 20th June, 2008.

The report submitted provided further information on the key issues and next steps.

There were no direct financial implications at this stage. The Sub-National Review proposed a number of significant changes that would require primary legislation to implement. It was likely that this would take a number of years to achieve e.g. abolition of regional assemblies and transfer of responsibilities was not expected before 2010. However, the proposals would ultimately have financial implications for local authorities in terms of devolved funding, but also in terms of the additional costs of administering devolved responsibilities.

Many of the details of the proposals set out in the Sub-National Review were yet to be worked through. Therefore, at this stage there was an opportunity to get involved and try to influence the emerging plans for implementation.

The Committee considered the draft response, focusing on the scrutiny element.

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

- Proposed deletion of first sentence in the response to question 3 regarding potential conflict of interest.
- Role of overview and scrutiny.
- Role of the Leader's Forum.
- Weakness of links with learning skills.

- Submission of report to the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel.

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

(2) That the draft response be supported.

25. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER - QUARTERLY REPORT TO 31ST MARCH, 2008

Steve Merriman, Governance and Risk Manager, presented the submitted report which showed the latest position in how the Council's most significant risks were being managed.

The report drew specific attention to:-

- Corporate risks at a glance.
- Current Risk Assessment.
- Target Risk Assessments, after mitigating controls put in place.

The risks contained in the register required significant ongoing management action. In some cases additional resources may be necessary to implement the relevant actions or mitigated risks. Any additional costs associated with the risks would be reported to the Corporate Management Team for consideration on a case by case basis.

It was important to review continuously the effectiveness of the Council's approach to capturing, managing and reporting corporate risks. This report was aimed at retaining the top score of 4 in the Use of Resources Key Lines of Enquiry.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and particular concern was expressed regarding schools ensuring requirements were met in respect of engagement with physical activity in schools.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the updated corporate risk register be noted.

(2) That it be noted that there were presently no residual red risks.

(3) That no further risks be added to the register at the present time.

(4) That, with regard to the provision of physical activities in schools, Steve Merriman, Cath Saltis and Matt Gladstone liaise to consider a way forward.

26. REVIEW OF THE LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Steve Merriman, Governance and Risk Manager, presented the submitted report indicating that it was best practice to review the Local Code of Corporate Governance annually.

This year the Code was being amended to take account of the new CIPFA/SOLACE framework publication "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" issued in 2007.

The revised framework recognised the modern roles of local authorities. One focus of the new framework was on the six core principles of good governance emanating from the 2004 OPM/CIPFA (Langlands) Report "The Good Governance Standard for Public Services" as amended by CIPFA/SOLACE in 2007.

The differences between the present code and the proposed amended code were detailed in the report.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and particular reference was made to Good Governance Principle 5:- "Rotherham will develop the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective".

Resolved:- (1) That the amended Code be noted and supported.

(2) That it be noted that the amended Code would be used to help test the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements in order to inform the production of the Annual Governance Statement.

(3) That the Good Governance Principle 5 be referred to the Members' Training and Development Panel for consideration.

27. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny Services, presented briefly the submitted draft work programme for the Committee for 2008/09.

It was noted that work regarding Yorkshire South Tourism was ongoing.

Concern was expressed at the removal of telephone boxes, particularly in rural areas which was seen as a potential area of work. Cath Saltis undertook to pursue this matter.

Resolved:- That the draft work programme, as now submitted, be approved.

28. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May, 2008 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

29. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

- (a) Councillor Boyes reported that the first meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel in the new municipal year had considered issues relating to:-
 - Pre-payment for parking.
 - Scrutiny review work on the image and identity of Rotherham.
- (b) Councillor Jack reported that the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had set the work programme for the year.
- (c) Councillor J. Hamilton reported that the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel had considered a report and the results of an officer audit relating to promoting effective written communication and the use of plain English within the Council.
- (d) Councillor Whelbourn reported that the scrutiny reviews relating to Corporate Complaints and Customer Advice Centres had been submitted to Cabinet.
- (e) It was noted that the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel had set its work programme for the year and included would be:-
 - A one day scrutiny review of allocations from the consumer perspective.
 - Approach to the voids problem.
 - Review of the housing needs of migrant workers.
 - LAA project.
- (f) It was noted that the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered:-
 - Priorities for Children and Young People's Services 2008/09.
 - Future challenges for the Youth Service.
 - Work programme for the year.

30. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

NEW ARRIVALS WORKING PARTY
Friday, 13th June, 2008

Present:- Councillor Sharman (in the Chair); Councillors Akhtar and Hussain.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Rushforth and S. Wright.

1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30TH JANUARY, 2008

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 30th January, 2008, were agreed as a correct record.

2. NEW EUROPEAN MIGRATION

A report was presented on behalf of the Community Engagement and Cohesion Manager on progress in developing a partnership approach to respond to the impact of migration of people from EU accession countries to the Borough.

Leadership structures for managing new migration, including monitoring arrangements, had been agreed by the Rotherham Partnership Board as well as joint working through the Community Cohesion Partnership and this Working Group. Designated strategic lead officers from each partner agency had been designated by each partner agency to work together to accelerate progress on identified priorities.

Discussion and comment was made on the proposals for further action to be led by the Community Engagement and Cohesion Manager together with a strategic level manager from Rotherham PCT and South Yorkshire Police Rotherham Command.

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

(2) That the development of a welcome pack be discussed at the Corporate Management Team.

3. REVISED REGIONAL CLUSTER LIMITS FOR DISPERSED ASYLUM SEEKERS

The Asylum Team Leader submitted a report on the revised regional cluster limits for dispersed asylum seekers.

The regional working group established by the United Kingdom Borders Agency (UKBA) had revised the cluster limit of 1 asylum seeker per 300 host population as opposed to the previous ratio of 1 in 200. This would mean Rotherham's maximum number of asylum seekers would reduce from 1,247 to 844.

The UKBA was working towards a more equitable distribution of asylum

seekers across the region and had identified that numbers should fall in Rotherham to around 600.

The process would start in November, 2008.

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

4. CASE RESOLUTION PROGRAMME

The Asylum Team Leader reported on the outcome of the family phase of the Case Resolution Programme which had had minimal effect on Rotherham.

The next phase of the Programme was currently being formulated by UKBA where any asylum claim made before March, 2007, will be considered. Once UKBA had identified the profile of claimants for each local authority area, they would meet with the local authority to review the Programme's impact.

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

5. ASYLUM PROJECT TEAM - BUDGET

The Asylum Project Team Leader gave a verbal update on the final budget position for the 2007/08 financial year which had shown a surplus.

Agreed:- That a report be submitted to the next meeting detailing the budget outturn and projected budget.

6. NEW ARRIVALS FROM EASTERN EUROPE - IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The Director of Inclusion, Voice and Influence presented a report on the impact of new arrivals from Eastern European on the Children and Young People's Services. A verbal update was given on the current situation which showed that numbers had stabilised in the past year.

All authorities had been campaigning for additional funding for new arrivals. The Government had announced proposals on how it would fund Children's Services and the numbers required to trigger additional funds.

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

(2) That a report be submitted to the September meeting on school admission figures for newly arrived children.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That a further meeting of the New Arrivals Working Party be held on Wednesday, 23rd July, 2008, commencing at 9.00 a.m.

(2) That a report be submitted on the work undertaken by the Locality Teams, Children and Young Peoples' Services.

1 MEMBERS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP - 13/06/08**MEMBERS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP
FRIDAY, 13TH JUNE, 2008**

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Councillors Gosling and Pickering.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hodgkiss, McNeely and Walker.

60. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 10TH APRIL, 2008

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Members Sustainable Development Action Group, held on 10th April, 2008, be accepted as a correct record.

61. NERC ACT BIODIVERSITY DUTY

Carolyn Barber, Ecology Development Officer, gave a powerpoint presentation on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act as follows:-

Introduction

- Biodiversity – the variety of life on Earth, all plants and animals and the natural systems that support them
- Sustainable Development – biodiversity and the protection of natural resources was a core component
- NERCT Act October, 2006 – all public authorities had a duty to regard the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions

Biodiversity – Why Conserve?

- The Ecosystem Approach – Integration and management of the range of demands placed on the natural environment in such a way that it can indefinitely support essential services and provide benefits to all
- Provision services – food, water, fuel, medicines
- Regulating services – air quality, climate regulation, water purification, pollination
- Culture service – education, recreation, heritage landscapes
- Supporting services – soil formation, photosynthesis, nutrient cycling

Sustainable Development

- Biodiversity conservation is a core component of sustainable development which underpins economic development and prosperity and offers a range of quality of life benefits across a range of local authority service areas
- Action to improve the environment underpins and reinforces other objectives such as economic development, regeneration and reducing health inequalities

The Biodiversity Duty

“Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”

- The Biodiversity Duty was introduced by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act and came into force on 1st October, 2006
- Conserving biodiversity includes restoring and enhancing species populations and habitats as well as protecting them
- The Duty affects all public authorities and aims to:-
 - Raise the profile and visibility of biodiversity
 - Clarify existing commitments with regard to biodiversity
 - Make it a natural and integral part of policy and decision making

Implementation Evidence

The impact of the Biodiversity Duty will be reviewed by DEFRA in 2009, key activities to be demonstrated by public authorities include:-

- Integration of biodiversity considerations into all relevant service areas and functions
- Raised awareness – staff, managers and members
- Appropriate management of land holdings
- Demonstrated contribution to key local biodiversity initiatives
- Demonstrated progress against biodiversity indicators and targets

Local Authority Services

Each service area can incorporate biodiversity measures to create environmental, economic and social improvements for all

- Housing and Property Management
- Economic Development
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Education
- Health and Social Care
- Planning Policy and Development Control
- Leisure, Recreation and Tourism
- Transport and Highways
- Waste Collection and Disposal

Each service area will need to provide evidence to demonstrate how the Biodiversity Duty is being implemented

Implementing the Duty

- How can Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council demonstrate the key activities?
 - Integration of biodiversity considerations into all relevant service areas and functions
 - Raised awareness – staff and Members
 - Appropriate management of local authority land holdings
 - Demonstrated contribution to key local biodiversity initiatives
 - Demonstrated progress against biodiversity indicators and targets
- What does this mean for RMBC Elected Members?
 - Providing leadership in the community

3 MEMBERS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP - 13/06/08

- Integration of biodiversity considerations into relevant service areas and functions
- Awareness of important wildlife species, habitats, sites and strategies
- What do RMBC Elected Members need to know?
 - Wildlife Legislation
 - Site protection
 - Biodiversity action planning
 - Local Area Agreement and Corporate Performance Indicators
 - What is in your local area
 - What is in your service area

Discussion ensued on the presentation. It was felt that it would be of interest to Area Assemblies and Parish Councils.

Agreed:- That an all Members Seminar be held on this issue.

62. ROTHERHAM WATERWAYS STRATEGY

The above Strategy had been commissioned by the Sustainability Partnership. The consultants were looking at all the waterways, open water and redundant waterways and hopefully would make recommendations to take forward.

The final report would be with the Council by the end of August when the Strategy and action plan would then go out to consultation.

63. WASTE MANAGEMENT PFI

Tom Knight, Director of Streetpride, gave a verbal update on the current situation regarding the above. This included:-

- Background to the decision to proceed with a 3 authority approach to securing a joint facility(ies)
- An Expression of Interest submitted to DEFRA in 2007 together with outline business case. Considered by a Project Review Group and informed in April, 2007, of successful bid
- Now into procurement phase. No stipulations made as to how the problem should be solved but had specified the recycling rates that should be achieved
- Competitive Dialogue System of OJEU being operated to which 12 pre-qualification questionnaires had been returned by last week's closing date
- Once analysed, move to ISOS stage where prospective companies invited to submit by 20th August
- If successful, they would be invited to submitted detailed solutions by 5th January, 2009 with the contract finally being awarded and started in May, 2010
- The Planning process was proceeding in parallel. The 3 authorities' Planning Officers had written a Waste Development Plan document

- focussing not just on municipal waste from the 3 but all waste
- 55 sites had been identified for waste treatment sites – 9 in Barnsley, 30 in Doncaster and 16 in Rotherham. Initial consultation had taken place on those sites earlier in the year with a further meeting with the potential market place
- There was agreement by the 3 Leaders that the cost of any site investigations would be shared equally
- The financial model was continually updated

Tom was thanked for his update.

Agreed:- That the Group be kept informed of developments.

64. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

David Rhodes, Corporate Environmental Officer, presented an update report as follows:-

- NI185 (Percentage of CO₂ reduction from LA operations) had been provisionally accepted as a stretch target covering areas of:-
 - Energy use in operational buildings
 - Energy use in streetlights/furniture
 - Fleet mileage
 - Private car mileage covered during Council activities
- Work had focussed on compliance with the Energy Performance in Buildings Directive
- The Corporate Environmental Statement for 2007/08 was being developed and would performance manage the Environmental Policy
- EMAS verification audit of the statement on 28th-31st July, 2008

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

65. LOCAL ACTION 21

Emma Bridge, Policy Officer, presented David Wilde (LA21's), progress report highlighting the following issues:-

- Successful internal EMAS audit at GreenCheck schools
- Supergrounds project celebrated at West Melton Primary School
- Planning for St. Ann's Dream Playground project
- LA21/Groundwork representation at Thrybergh Environment Fair
- Ecological Footprinting sessions with gifted and talented at Swinton Community School
- Planning for Aston Comprehensive/South Yorkshire Development Education Centre's Big Green Challenge footprinting project with partner Makanduchi School
- Rotherham EDS Partnership meetings and updated school's brochure design
- Preparation of briefing for Children and Young People's Services to

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- request increased support for LA 21 project
- Positive independent evaluation of LA21 project from Centre for Local Economic Strategies

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

(2) That the updated ESD brochure be submitted to the next meeting of this Group.

66. POLICY UPDATE

Emma Bridge, Policy Officer, gave a brief overview of recent Policy announcements which included:-

Release of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan
Building a Low Carbon Economy
Health and Climate Change Adaptation Study
Yorkshire and Humber Environment Index results
World Environment Day celebrations

Policy updates can also be access via
<http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/graphics/YourCouncil/Policy+Research+and+Consultation/Sustainable+Development.htm>

Agreed:- That Emma report to the next meeting on national Indicators and Comprehensive Area Assessment.

67. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Agreed:- That future agendas include the following:-

- Allotments Strategy
- Supplier/Contract Environment Audit
- Performance Management (LAA, use of resources)
- Planning and Sustainable Development
- ABLE Project

68. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on Friday, 5th September, 2008, commencing at 10.30 a.m.