

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

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

Date: Thursday, 12 March 2009

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. RotherFed
- presentation by Steve Ruffle

FOR MONITORING

8. Neighbourhoods 3rd Quarter (April to December) Performance Report (Pages 1 - 4)
- report of John Mansergh, Service Performance Manager
9. Housing Investment Programme (HIP) 2008/09 (Pages 5 - 9)
- report of Nisar Ahmed, Temporary Finance Manager
10. Sheltered Housing Neighbourhood Centres Review Update (Pages 10 - 18)
- report of Kirsty Everson, Director of Independent Living

11. Future Demand and Budget Pressures for Adaptations (Pages 19 - 26)
- report of Kirsty Everson, Director of Independent Living

FOR INFORMATION

12. Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods (Pages 27 - 28)
- minutes of meeting held on 16th February, 2009

MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

13. Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel (Pages 29 - 36)
- minutes of meeting held on 19th February, 2009
14. Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee (Pages 37 - 40)
- minutes of meeting held on 13th February, 2009

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 16 April 2009**

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

1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	12th March, 2009
3.	Title:	Neighbourhoods 3rd Quarter (April to December) Performance Report, 2008/09 All Wards Affected
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report outlines the 2008/09 key performance indicator 3rd quarter results for the Neighbourhoods elements of the Directorate.

6. Recommendations

That Scrutiny is asked to note the results and the remedial actions in place to improve performance.

7. Proposals and Details

At the end of the quarter, 13 (72%) key performance indicators are currently on track to achieve their year end targets. This is a deterioration from 90% last year.

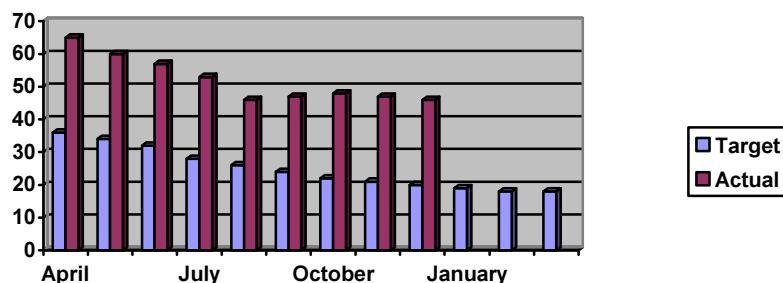
There are 5 indicators that are rated 'off' target, and are shown as a red triangle alert in Appendix A.

Exceptions

BV 212 Empty property relet times (ALMO)

Performance has improved since the start of the year but is still 'off target' and showing deterioration from 37 days to 46 days when compared with last year.

The number of void properties has decreased in December from 420 to 410.



NI 156 Number of households in temporary accommodation (Kirsty Everson)

Performance at end of December is 64 with a target of 51. This compares to 68 in November and ahead of the recovery plan control target of 80. Performance clinics have been held since September where operational issues were raised, an action plan has been developed to improve performance. January will see a further reduction in the number of people in temporary accommodation following the introduction of the new allocations policy in December.

Performance to the end of January 2009 is 58 households in temporary accommodation compared to the recovery plan control target of 75.

NM 72 Urgent repairs completed in time (ALMO).

Performance at the end of December is 97.86% with a target of 99%. Current trend is identifying a reduction in the % repairs completed in time.

BV 211a Programmed / Responsive repairs (ALMO).

Performance at the end of December is 47%, well behind the monthly control target of 59% planned and below the year end target of 53.66%.

NI 160 Overall satisfaction with the landlord service (Neighbourhoods).

There were 853 customer responses to the Status Survey completed in November 2008. 76% satisfaction against a target of 77%. Satisfaction has increased by 2% since the last survey.

8. Finance

The Councils financial management system is identifying rent lost as a result of voids of £948k. Based on current performance the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is forecasting a loss of income of £1.26m compared to £1.1m at the end of the last quarter.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The main risk is associated with the accuracy of our data which underpins each performance indicator. To mitigate this risk, the Directorate has developed a new Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan to improve the management of data quality.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The new national performance indicators contribute to the Councils Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) judgement which will be reported for the first time in November 2009. The Neighbourhoods elements of the Directorate are accountable for 14 National Indicators (NI). Some of these indicators are new so we are in the process of establishing reporting and measurement systems. Of the 14 indicators, 5 indicators are not yet available to be reported upon. The progress of these indicators are;

- 3 indicators (NI 3 Civic participation in the local area, NI 2 % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood, and NI 4 % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality. These are based on the Place Survey to be reported by March. Ownership of these are under negotiation between Chief Executives and Neighbourhoods.
- 2 indicators have been deferred by the Government (NI's 12 'Refused and deferred Houses in multiple Occupation' (HMO'S) licence applications leading to immigration enforcement activity) and NI 190 (Achievement in meeting standards for the control system for animal health) to 2009/10, and
- 2 indicators are currently unavailable for reporting due to the lack of information. These relate to NI 182 'Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulation services'. Information has been received on the levels of satisfaction and reporting will be available for March and NI 183 – 'National issues for collection of baseline data from Consumer Direct', which is an annual return (i.e. reported at the end of the year only).

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The report has been discussed with Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate Management Team. The performance results for Neighbourhoods are attached (Appendix A). The indicators rated 'on target' are shown as a green star and those that are rated off target are shown as a red triangle alert.

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Appendix A: Neighbourhoods and Adult Services - Neighbourhoods Performance Indicator Outturns for December 2008 (3rd Quarter)

Line No.	YTD	Measure	Good performance & Measure type description	Baseline 07-08	December	This time last year	DoT from same time last year	08/09 Target	Responsible Director / PI Manager
Outcomes Framework 1: Improving Health and Emotional Well-being									
1	★	NI 184 Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Bigger is better	NA	80.00%	NA	NA	75.00%	Michelle Musgrave Janice Manning
Outcomes Framework 2: Improved Quality of Life									
2	★	BV 66a % Rent Collection	Bigger is better, 100% is best	98.47%	99.02%	98.85%	✓	98.49%	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Simon Bell
3	★	BV 66b % of tenants in rent arrears	Smaller is better, 0% is best	2.89%	3.49%	2.82%	✗	2.87%	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Simon Bell
4	★	BV 66c % of tenants with an NSP	Smaller is better, 0% is best	11.25%	9.06%	7.97%	✗	11.23%	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Simon Bell
5	★	BV 66d % of tenants evicted	Smaller is better, 0% is best	0.27%	0.16%	0.19%	✓	0.26%	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Simon Bell
6	▲	NM 72 Urgent repairs completed in time	Bigger is better, 100% is best	98.48%	97.86%	98.34%	✗	99.00%	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Simon Bell
7	★	NM 73 Non-urgent repairs completed in time	Smaller is better, 0 is best	9.42	6.02	9.37	✓	9.00	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Simon Bell
8	▲	NI 160 Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services	Bigger is better, 100% is best	74.00%	76.00%	NA	NA	77.00%	Michelle Musgrave - Robin Walker
9	▲	BV 212 Average Relet Times	Smaller is better, 0 is best	37	46.14	35.00	✗	18	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Adrian Cheetham
Outcomes Framework 4: Increased Choice and Control									
10	★	BV 213 Homelessness cases prevented through housing advice casework	Bigger is better	8	6.30	6.00	✓	5	Kirsty Everson Martin Humphries
Outcomes Framework 6: Economic Well-being									
11	★	BV 64 Private sector homes demolished / made fit	Bigger is better	79	83	30	✓	120	Michelle Musgrave Paul Benson
12	★	NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered	Bigger is better	122	100	NA	NA	145	Michelle Musgrave Tracie Seals
13	★	NI158b % change in non decent council housing	Bigger is better 100% is best	29.70%	45.48%	18.86%	✓	54.95%	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Ramona Youhil
14	★	PSA 7 Number of vulnerable households no longer living in decent accommodation in the private sector	Bigger is better	344	477	32	NA	420	Michelle Musgrave Paul Benson
15	★	NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating	Lower is better	NA	60	NA	NA	62	Michelle Musgrave Paul Maplethorpe
16	▲	NI 156 Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation	Smaller is better	53	64	NA	NA	51	Kirsty Everson Martin Humphries
Outcomes Framework 9: Commissioning and Use of Resources									
17	▲	% Programmed / Responsive expenditure on repairs	Bigger is better	39.00%	47.00%	NA	✓	53.66%	2010 Rotherham Ltd - Gary Kyte
18	★	HMR2 % Housing Market Renewal Spend	Bigger is better, 100% is best	112.00%	64.20%	79.72%	✗	100.00%	Michelle Musgrave Joel Gouget
<p>▲ Red Triangle = Indicator did not hit target</p> <p>★ Green Star = Shows indicator did hit target</p> <p>↑ Improvement in performance from last year</p> <p>↓ Deterioration in performance from last year</p> <p>→ No change in performance since last year</p>									

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	12th March, 2008
3.	Title:	Housing Investment Programme (HIP) 2008/09 – Progress to 15th January 2009
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

The report sets out details of the progress on the 2008/09 Housing Investment Programme (HIP) for the period to 15th January 2009.

6. Recommendations

THAT THE CONTENTS OF THE REPORT ARE NOTED.

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 Schemes totalling £82.457m were approved by the Cabinet Member on 31st March 2008, revised to £79.011m on 30th June 2008 and further revised to £79.019m on 8th December 2008. As at 15th January 2009 spending on the HIP totalled £56.422m (71.40%) of the approved programme. Details of the progress on schemes within the HIP are listed in Appendix 1.
- 7.2 The programme is divided into two sections, between the schemes managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd (totalling £66.863m) and those managed by the Council (totalling £12.156m).

2010 Ltd Managed Schemes

- 7.3 To date, 2010 Ltd-managed schemes have incurred expenditure of £51.413m (76.89%).
- 7.4 2010 Ltd have indicated there is a potential risk of an additional £216k expenditure on the windows budget due to an increase in the number of windows that need to be fitted. 2010 Ltd will seek to minimise the potential financial risk and manage spending within the overall programme to offset any impact.
- 7.5 Following the December report to Cabinet Member flood costs have been finalised at £0.149m and is contained within the overall budget managed by 2010 Ltd

RMBC Managed Schemes

- 7.6 The remainder of the programme is monitored by the Council and £5.009m (41.21%) of the programme has been spent.
- 7.7 Several of the larger schemes have had little or no expenditure as yet, but most are projecting to be on target by the end of the year. These include:
- 1 **Disabled Adaptations, Public and Private Sector (£3.104m)**–
The problems identified in the last monitoring report with the invoicing of work from 2010 Ltd is continuing to contribute to the relatively low expenditure figures in Appendix 1 and has also affected the ability of the RMBC Grants team to effectively monitor the budget. However both RMBC and 2010 Ltd finance staff are working closely to resolve this issue.
 - 2 **Dinnington Transformational Change (£715k)** – Monksbridge Terrace Acquisitions may not complete this financial year but reserve projects have been identified and it is expected that the funding identified will be spent.

- 3 **Non-Traditional Investment – Structural (£755k)** – Approval received from Cabinet Member in July to repair properties in Dalton, Catcliffe and Ulley. The programme commenced in early 2009 but it is now anticipated that two thirds of the work at Catcliffe (£500k) will be completed by the end of the financial year. This will result in a required commitment of £255k in 2009/10 and the corresponding resources will be rolled forward accordingly.
- 4 **Sheltered Housing Modifications (£1.706m)** – 2010 Rotherham Ltd began work on Phase 1 on 27th October and the tenders for Phase 2 have been evaluated. Provisional savings of £188k against the 2008/09 budget have been identified due to the competitive pricing by the building contractors.

8. Finance

- 8.1 To support the Approved Programme, resources totalling £79.011m were originally identified.
- 8.2 Receipts from Right to Buy (RTB) contribute to this total and sales to the end of October totalled 22 which is behind the revised yearly prediction of 100 with a forecast of not many more sales materialising. There is a risk that if no more RTB sales were achieved this could result in a £0.906m shortfall in resources, based on the current average usable amount received.

Cabinet Member may wish to consider requesting the use of part of the current balance of £3.471m from sale of HRA land which has not been used due to the removal of the ring-fence on capital receipts. This ring-fence previously allowed all HRA capital receipts to be utilised to fund the HIP. 100% of land receipts can be treated as 'usable' as long as they are used for Affordable Housing or Regeneration type works. In 2007/08 no such schemes were identified corporately for use on appropriate General fund schemes.

We may need to reprioritise schemes to take account of any shortfall in useable capital receipts.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- 9.1 The 2008/09 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 HRA rent income and Major Repairs Allowance resources). In line with paragraph 8.2 it would be prudent to prepare options to reduce the programme by up to £1.2m.
- 9.2 The report has highlighted potential cost pressures relating to decent homes refurbishment (para 7.4), floods (para 7.5) and disabled adaptations (para 7.7.1)

which will need to be managed and closely monitored in the year.

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 31st March 2008
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 30th June 2008
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 15th September 2008
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 13th October 2008
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 10th November 2008
Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 8th December 2008

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Interim Finance Manager
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HIP FORECAST FUNDING 2008/09**Appendix 1**

	REVISED PROGRAMME 2008/09 £	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE AS AT 15/01/09	PROJECTED EXPENDITURE AS AT 15/01/09
DECENT HOMES - PHASE 2			
Refurbishment	51,059,176	41,277,128	50,923,000
Windows	6,000,000	4,303,589	6,216,000
DSO DH Void Programme	1,500,000	461,517	1,647,000
Capital Management Fee	4,914,847	3,560,917	4,914,847
Phase 2 Sub Total	63,474,023	49,603,151	63,700,847
OTHER DECENT HOMES SCHEMES			
Replacement of Central Heating	1,225,000	853,374	1,225,000
Electrical Board & Bond	125,000	78,964	125,000
CO Meters to Vulnerable Properties	150,000	104,546	150,000
Install Smoke alarms + CO Meters to solid fuel properties	480,000	138,996	480,000
Other Decent Homes Sub Total	1,980,000	1,175,880	1,980,000
TOTAL DECENT HOMES EXPENDITURE	65,454,023	50,779,031	65,680,847
OTHER CAPITAL PROJECTS			
District Heating Conversions	750,000	572,271	750,000
Wharnccliffe Flats	125,000	21,202	48,000
Disability Discrimination Act Works	300,000	-4,208	150,000
One-Off Properties	100,000	16,660	100,000
Victim Support Scheme/Safer Homes	50,000	317	50,000
EPC Surveys	84,000	27,297	84,000
Flood Costs	0	464	149,000
Other Capital Projects Sub Total	1,409,000	634,003	1,331,000
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORED BY 2010	66,863,023	51,413,034	67,011,847
FAIR ACCESS TO ALL			
PRIVATE SECTOR			
Disabled Facilities Grants (Private Sector)	1,404,000	729,475	1,404,000
PUBLIC SECTOR			
Disabled Adaptations (Public Sector)	1,700,000	390,357	1,700,000
Fair Access To All Sub Total	3,104,000	1,119,832	3,104,000
REGEN./NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL			
PRIVATE SECTOR			
Home Assistance Grants	30,000	23,112	26,000
Maltby Transformational Change Masterplan(RHB)	860,000	311,893	1,208,000
Dinnington Transformational Change Masterplan(RHB)	715,000	98,048	440,000
Rural & West Baseline Report(RHB)	0	8,249	0
Private Sector Support(RHB)	118,000	170,624	247,000
Move on Accommodation(RHB)	227,000	0	110,000
Thurcroft(RHB)	290,000	2,500	258,000
Pathfinder Projects	3,500,000	1,890,065	3,500,000
PUBLIC SECTOR			
Tarran Estates and Miscellaneous Properties	100,000	287,697	0
Non-Traditional Investment - Structural	754,542	8,630	500,000
Dis-Investment Non-Traditionals(RHB)	40,000	0	0
Small Environmental Schemes	50,000	3,872	51,000
Sheltered Housing Modifications(RHB)	1,706,000	519,493	1,441,000
Garage Site Investment	500,000	462,206	500,000
Regeneration/Neighbourhood Renewal Sub Total	8,890,542	3,786,389	8,281,000
OTHER - PUBLIC SECTOR			
Research & Information	82,000	75,427	83,000
'Key Choices' Property Shop	79,000	11,288	21,000
Carry Overs from 2007/08	0	16,278	16,278
Other Public Sector Sub Total	161,000	102,993	120,278
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORED BY RMBC	12,155,542	5,009,214	11,505,278
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	79,018,565	56,422,248	78,517,125
ESTIMATE OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE			
	£m		
Supported Capital Expenditure(R)	1.264		1.264
Major Repairs Allowance	13.235		13.235
Almo Funding - £55m Less £1.881m to repay 07/08 Unsupported Borrowing	53.119		53.119
Disabled Facilities Grant	0.832		0.842
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	1.600		1.600
General Fund Contribution To DFG's	0.572		0.572
Tenants Contributions to DFG Grants	0.000		0.026
Cont.to Garage Scheme Works	0.000		0.013
Regional Housing Board	2.329		2.329
Regional Housing Board C/F from 07/08	0.835		0.835
DCLG Survey Funding	0.000		0.008
Pathfinder Grant	3.500		3.500
Capital Receipts	1.725		0.474
TOTAL	79.011		77.817

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:-	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:-	12th March, 2009
3.	Title:-	Sheltered Housing Neighbourhood Centres Review update
4.	Directorate:-	Neighbourhood & Adult Services

5. Summary

On the 29th September 2008 the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods received a report with proposals to review the usage and charging arrangements for the communal facilities attached to sheltered housing schemes. It was agreed that consultation with tenants and residents would take place, initially in relation to the charging policy. This report provides the outcomes from the consultation, as well as interim recommendations on proposed charges from April 2009.

6. Recommendations

- **That the Scrutiny Panel notes the report.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 On the 29th September 2008, it was agreed by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods that a full asset review should take place to appraise the options for the future use of the Neighbourhood centres attached to sheltered housing schemes. It was also agreed that specific consultation would take place in advance in relation to proposals to discontinue the provision of guest bedrooms, to increase the cost of using the laundry and to introduce a protocol for charges and use of the centres by tenants, residents and other stakeholders. The protocol is included as Appendix 1.

7.2 In line with what was agreed, a consultation programme commenced in November 2008 and was delivered by the Neighbourhood Centre Manager. The process was done by sending a letter explaining what was the consultation process would involve to every tenant in sheltered accommodation with on site communal facilities. A questionnaire was also sent with a prepaid return envelope. A series of 49 consultation meetings were held in Neighbourhood Centres to offer tenants a further opportunity to express their opinions. The response to the questionnaire was positive with 746 questionnaires returned. Overall attendance at the meetings was good, enabling lively discussions around the future use of the Neighbourhood Centres. The questionnaires were collated and analysed by the Neighbourhood and Adult Services Performance Team.

7.3 Overall, the response to the proposed changes was extremely encouraging. The vast majority of respondents agreed to the following proposals:

- the centres being hired to other groups at times where there is no regular tenant activity.
- Allowing the centre activities to involve the wider community with sensitivity to be taken into account in relation to activities such as grandchildren's parties and activities involving young people.
- non residents should be allowed to join in the regular activities as many tenants felt that activities would cease without their involvement.

Some concerns were however raised at the consultation meetings that the increased use of the centres may lead to more noise, parking problems and security issues on the schemes. In addition, there were mixed views about charging non residents for use of the centres, either by a regular weekly charge, or on a "pay as you go" basis. Indeed, a press article against the proposal to charge non residents was covered by the Rotherham Advertiser

in relation to a centre with a regular bingo club involving the wider community.

7.4 On the specific questions relating to converting the guest bedroom in centres to other usage, and on increasing the laundry charges, again the response was mixed. During the consultation meetings a small number of tenants expressed the view that the guest bedroom was an important part of their tenancy agreement and that it benefits them if they live in a one bedroom bungalow, and need family to stay with them at times when they are taken ill. This opinion is not however reflected in the usage of this facility more broadly across the schemes, and some have not been utilised for many months/years. The proposed increase in the cost of the laundry charges was by far the most contentious issue of the consultation process. Although 51% of tenants were favour of an increase, additional comments suggested that tenants felt that the proposed rise from 10p to £1 was too large an increase in one step and should be done in stages. The majority feedback suggested a rise to 50 pence.

7.5 Based on the above, it is proposed that:

- The protocol in Appendix 1 is introduced from 6th April 2009. The Neighbourhood Centre Manager should work with the wardens on every single scheme and establish where the pay as go approach should be introduced, and how the income collected would be safely deposited and accounted for. This includes identifying those non residents who would be willing to pay the weekly charge for full use of the buildings and making appropriate payment arrangements.
- The laundry charges are increased from 6th April 2009 from 10p per wash and 10p per dry to 50p, and from April 2010, this should be increased to £1 per was and £1 per dry.
- Any decision about the longer term use of the guest bedrooms be deferred until the broader review has taken place.

7.6 It is also proposed that all tenants are contacted and given feedback from the consultation and details of what has been agreed. This should take place immediately to enable 1 months notice of the proposed changes taking effect.

7.7 In relation to the broader review of the centres, Appendix 2 provides a summary of the work being undertaken by the Neighbourhood Investment Team. It is proposed that consultation commences with Elected Members during March and April to discuss and review the information currently held about the centres and to determine options for their future use. This will also include further consultation with tenants, before the first set of recommendations are presented to the Cabinet Member in June, with final recommendation due in September 2009.

8. Finance

- 8.1** All tenants who live on a Sheltered or Aged Persons Scheme with a Communal Facility pay £3.98 per week communal facility charge. This gives an estimated income of £445,000. This is the only source of income for the centres and is used to pay for maintenance, refurbishment, running costs and the Neighbourhood Centres Managers salary. All monies generated from the hire charges will be credited to the budget and reinvested back into the centres. The additional income will also be used to assist with meeting the costs of running the centres which has been increasing year on year.

9 Risks and Uncertainties

- 9.1** Neighbourhood centres have formed an integral part of RMBC's sheltered housing provision, and until now have been entirely funded from tenant's service charges. Any changes to the way sheltered housing is provided and funded would impact significantly on the viability of the centres in that they rely on income from tenants. Any proposals considered as part of the asset review will also need to ensure that the funding structure for the centres reflects their usage.
- 9.2** The current method of collecting charges for laundry is not sustainable, however most of the machines used in the laundry are not suitable for conversion to coin operated boxes. The introduction of the Key Fob system on Neighbourhood Centres will reduce the risk of the machines being used by non residents in the first instance. The wider asset review of the centres will need to take into account broader security issues and the overall control environment.
- 9.3** There has been some adverse publicity over the introduction of charges for non residents. However to satisfy the Housing Revenue Account rules, there must be some contribution for usage by non residents credited to the HRA. If income cannot be generated through the use of the protocol in Appendix 1, the Council would need to make provision from its General Fund resources to make a contribution in place of that due from non residents.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- 10.1** Neighbourhood Centres have the potential to be a community resource to assist older people and vulnerable people to live independently and contribute to their community. In addition they also offer opportunities to act as a base for more integrated local service delivery. However, since they were developed, usage of the centres, the profile of tenants and the role of the warden have all changed significantly. In addition, only a few centres are furnished to a modern, contemporary standard. Policy developments around self directed support and enabling older people to retain their independence do not necessarily mean that older people will want to use

an on site facility, preferring to access community and commercial facilities available to the wider population e.g. using high street hairdressers, using family friendly pubs for social activities and celebrations etc. The asset review will need to take account of the broader development across the Council to ensure that the centres compliment, rather than duplicate existing resources available locally.

10.2 As an RMBC asset, the centres could offer opportunities for locality based office accommodation, or touch down points for agile workers. The Worksmart initiative will be engaged to ensure that all possible uses for the centres in the future are explored as part of the review.

11. Background Papers and Consultation:-

Sheltered Housing – Neighbourhood Centres Review update – 29 September 2008

Sheltered Housing Community Building Review – 2nd April 2007

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Appendix 1

Protocol for hire and use of the Neighbourhood Centres

In April 2007, the Council approved the principle that Neighbourhood Centres on sheltered schemes should be opened up to more wider community and non-resident use as a means of generating extra income and making best use of the buildings as a community resource. In line with this, any income received from hiring out centres, or through non residents using the centres would be credited and ring fenced for use within the overall budget.

In terms of resident usage, it is proposed that from 6th April 2009:

- all regular activities for the residents of schemes should be given priority over other activities
- activities should be pre booked using the booking system organised and managed by the Neighbourhood Centre Manager
- Any resident may book the centre for either a group activity or for more personal use such as to celebrate a birthday or anniversary. If a resident books the centre for personal use, the centre must remain available for other residents to access it as normal. Residents using the centres for their own use will be responsible for guests and visitors' conduct whilst on site.

In terms of non-resident usage, it is proposed that:

- Any residents living in a nearby sheltered or aged person property who does not have access to a Neighbourhood Centre, is offered the opportunity to use the facilities. If the use is to be regular (at least twice a week), it is proposed that a payment of the communal facility charge of £3.98 a week is negotiated and added to their tenancy agreement by way of a variation. The charge would then be collected as a service charge through the normal collection methods by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. Any resident can arrange for this to take place through the Neighbourhood Centre Manager.
- For non- residents who wish to use the centres on a regular basis, but whom are not RMBC tenants, the weekly charge would need to be collected through an invoicing arrangement.
- Where existing activities already operating in the centres have non tenants participating, those non –residents will be charged on a “pay as you go” basis. The amount payable will be agreed between paying residents and the Neighbourhood Centre manager, with monies collected and deposited by either the organiser of that activity (such as a TARA treasurer) and paid over to the Warden working on the scheme. Alternatively, the Neighbourhood Centre will arrange for payments to be made periodically through the sundry debtors arrangements.

In terms of the centres being used by commercial business organisations, it is proposed that:

- All bookings will be made through the Neighbourhood Centre Manager at a cost of £10.00* per hour. Bookings must be made in advance and the Council's normal "conditions of hire" agreement will be issued relating to the use of Council buildings. This charge will also apply to small business operating form centres such as hairdressers.

In terms of centres being used for community and voluntary based organisations, it is proposed that:

- All bookings will be made through the Neighbourhood Centre Manager at a cost of £6.70* per hour. Bookings must be made in advance and the Council's normal "conditions of hire" agreement will be issued.
- This will include the use of the Centres for Councillors' surgeries, those run by the Neighbourhood Champions and any ad-hoc meetings such as Safer Neighbourhood Teams events.

Where there are requests to use the centres for activities involving young children (e.g. as a play group, crèche or to hold birthday parties for grandchildren), the Neighbourhood Centre Manager will conduct consultation in advance with every tenant on the scheme before a decision is made to the hire out the centre in this way. This is to ensure that concerns raised by some tenants about children using the centres is addressed, without providing a blanket exclusion on any activities involving children and young people.

No fee will be charged for use of the centres in the following circumstances:

- Where an event/ training/ surgery has been organised by the tenants of the sheltered scheme as part of their social activities.
- Where the centre is being used to hold meetings of local TARA's (Tenants and Residents Associations). There are often members of TARA's who are not residents of the particular sheltered scheme. This is because TARAs often cover geographical areas broader than the sheltered site. Usage will still be free as long as there is at least one sheltered housing tenant involved in the TARA for the scheme at which it is operating. If the TARA has no tenants from the scheme involved, then the normal hire charges will apply.

This protocol will be reviewed annually and will be managed by the **Neighbourhood Centre Manager**.

**These charges are in line with charges for similar venues made by other Council departments.*

Appendix 2

Neighbourhood Investment Services are undertaking an asset review of all Neighbourhood Centres. The review will appraise each centre to establish whether they are sustainable in their current form to enable us to determine a future use for the centres.

To support recommendations an overview database providing full details of each centre has been created, the details include:

- Centre Location
- Ward
- The facilities available within each centre.
- Condition of the centre.
- Service requirements/usage
- Identify risks
- Rental income, expenditure and the payback period
- Costs to improve to ensure 'fit for purpose' and DDA compliance
- Initial community comments/concerns/aspirations
- Other community facilities within the neighbourhood.

The database has highlighted that the expenditure, usage and investment requirement of centres varies significantly. This in addition will help to identify sustainable options relating to future use and viability

Neighbourhood Investment Services are also undertaking a review of Community Buildings in alignment with the Neighbourhood Centres Review. A mapping exercise of all Neighbourhood Centres and Community Buildings has been undertaken to establish where the facilities are located and the potential option of merging the activities / service provision where facilities are identified in close proximity to another. This has the potential to create cost savings, resolve issues outstanding with community group management at specific locations and provide an opportunity for an alternative sustainable development.

Resident consultation is being undertaken regarding the future use of guest bedrooms and the option to allow non residents, and others to hire the centres. Questionnaires are currently being evaluated to establish whether residents favour the centres being used in the wider context. This will include use for local service providers E.g. Safer Neighbourhood bases and Health provision.

Consultation with Ward Members will commence in the period March to April 2009 to discuss the review and information on centres within their wards and determine options that could support their future use.

Once initial consultation with Members has been completed, draft recommendations can then be formulated based on their use, condition, investment requirement, location and distance to other community facilities within the area.

Initial Recommendations will consist of:

- **Retain and Investment-** retain the centre in RMBC ownership for the use of the community and provide investment to improve the condition of the building.
- **Investigate demand and review-** work with the community to investigate ways to increase the usage of the centre and retain in our ownership. Following this exercise, review to establish a final recommendation.
- **Investigate an alternative use-** the centre is unsustainable in its current form. There is no demand and a high investment requirement therefore RMBC will investigate an alternative use for the building/land.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	12th March, 2009
3.	Title:	Future Demand & Budget Pressures for Adaptations
4.	Directorate:	NEIGHBOURHOOD & ADULT SERVICES

5. Summary

This report provides details about projected demand and subsequent budget pressures affecting the funds that the Council makes available to manage requests from disabled people to carry out adaptations to their properties. It follows on from a report presented on the 13th October 2008 in relation to the general pressures affecting the budget which at that time included works associated with the Decent Homes programme. This report provides an overview of:

- The number of Adaptations undertaken during 2007/2008 and the current year to the 31st January 09.
- An estimate of the likely costs over the next 3 years of adaptations and the implication on the budget.
- An analysis of the significant changes in the number of adaptations undertaken recently.

6. Recommendations

That the Scrutiny Panel notes the report.

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1** On 13th October 2008, a report was presented to the Cabinet Member outlining the general pressures on the funding available to provide adaptations to disabled people. At that time, it was agreed that one of the pressures relating to delivering adaptations aligned to the Decent Homes programme, should be contained by 2010 Rotherham Ltd as part of the overall Decent homes programme. This decision was welcomed and did alleviate the overall budget pressure, however there still remains more demand for adaptations than the available resources.
- 7.2** On the 7th September 2005, The Cabinet approved to increase the funding available to manage the projected future demands for adaptations. The indicative amounts agreed were as follows:

Year	Public sector Adaptations (Council stock)	Private Sector adaptations (for which the Disabled Facilities Grant is received as a contribution)
2005/06	£1.72m	£1.68m
2006/07	£1.72m	£1.68m
2007/08	£1.31m	£1.31m
2008/09	£1.43m	£1.43m
2009/10	£1.56	£1.56

- 7.3** For 2008/9, in line with what was agreed, the Council has maintained an additional contribution to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) - this is the grant provided by CLG to all Councils to use to meet their statutory obligations to provide adaptations in private sector accommodation. The total available for private sector adaptations was £1,404,000, of which £832,000 was comprised of the DFG. The Housing Investment programme also prioritised resources for public sector adaptations and the budget approved by the Cabinet Member for 2007/8 was £1.7m – higher than that anticipated in 2005. However, due to the reduced amounts of capital receipts from council house sales within the year, in part as a result of the economic downturn and the impact on the housing market, the resources available for the public sector have not reached the anticipated budget. This will be reported in a subsequent paper on the Housing Investment Programme, including recommendations to balance the budget.
- 7.4 Demographic and Population changes** - Based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment¹ conducted in 2007, there are an estimated 18,471 households in Rotherham with one or more members in an identified support needs group. This represents 17.3% of all households which is higher than the national average of 13.4%. 22% have a long term illness - 10.5% of whom are of working age with a long term limiting illness. The figure for children with a limiting long- term illness is identified in the 2001 census as

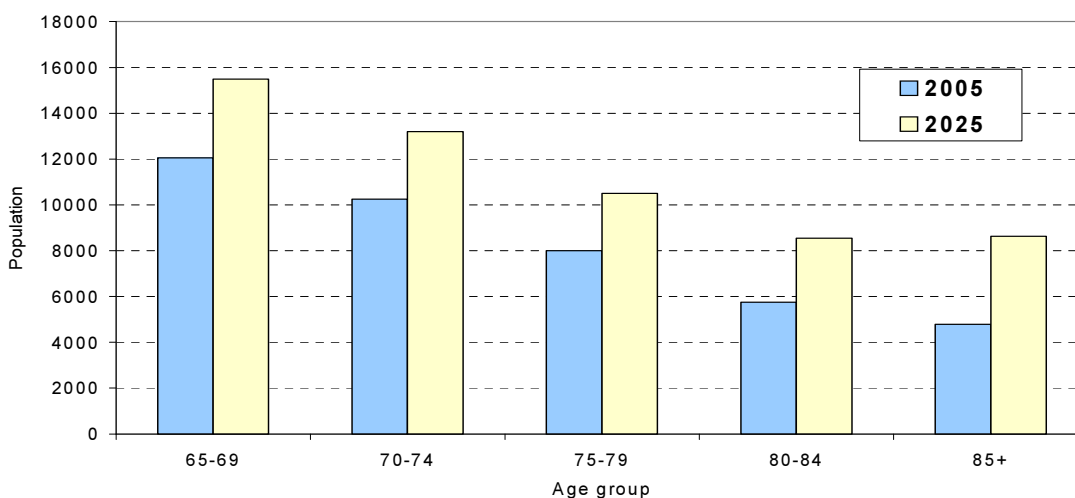
¹ S.H.M.A : Strategic Housing Market Assessment, *Fordham Research*, September 2007

being 2,913. This is 5.02% of all dependent children in Rotherham, which is 16% above the national average. The RMBC Housing Strategy also states that 34% of all households have one person with a disability and that a third of all households with a disabled person are likely to require further adaptations to their home.

According to JSNA², The most significant demographic change occurring in Rotherham is the growth in the number of older people. Rotherham now has more people aged over 50 (1 in 3 people) than people under 16 (1 in 5 people). The current projection for the number of over 65's in Rotherham is set to increase by approximately 3% by 2010. 40.8% of the Rotherham population is currently identified as over 65 and the projection to year 2020 indicates an increase by 13.6% which would mean that 54.4% of the Rotherham population would be aged 65 and over. In addition, the number of people over 85 years will increase by 80%. Although it is anticipated that people will remain healthy for longer than they do now, the increase in numbers of older people will have significant implications for health and social care services and for informal carers.

7.5 Projections for the growth in the numbers of older people are shown below:

Predicted Growth in the over 65 Population Groups from 2005 to 2025²-p3



7.6 Demand levels for adaptations - The statistical analysis above suggests that the consistent and incremental change in demographics will generate higher demand for adaptations to support individuals sustain their independence. This has already been experienced and the increase in the number of adaptations is evidenced in the table below:

Year	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09 to Jan 09
No. of adaptations	485	426	506	485	694	828

² J.S.N.A.: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, September 2008

7.7 The data above suggests that in 2008/9 the Adaptations team has experienced a 29 % increased in referrals compared to 2007/08. This is primarily attributed to the response by the Community Occupational Therapist team in dealing with an outstanding backlog of cases. By April 2009, it is assumed that there will be a gradual stabilisation of the level of normal through-put cases. Further stabilisation of demand from the public sector will be achieved by the impact of the adaptations carried out through the Decent Home programme. Figures to date suggests the installation of 586 Level access showers and 836 over bath showers. Nevertheless, a combination of the changes in demographic and the level of demands observed in the last five years indicate that there is likely to be an increase in demand for all types of adaptations that will have to be undertaken to meet the needs of disabled people living in Rotherham.

7.8 **Managing the impact of increased demand** - A strategy to manage the increases in cases in 2008/9 has been implemented by the Adaptations team to deal with increases in referrals. Whilst the current budgetary pressure can in part be attributed to the backlog of Occupational Therapy cases, it is important to note that this is likely to provide an indicator of the true demand in Rotherham for adaptations. Based on the budget set at the start of the year, should all the backlog cases up to January 2009 and the normal throughput of referrals (currently at a rate of 60 per month at an average cost of £4K per adaptation) be processed by the Adaptations team, then the budget would be overspent. To ensure that the remaining funding available for adaptations for 2008/9 remains within budget, the Housing Access Manager has strengthened the internal process for agreeing work, with each case being heavily scrutinised before being considered for approval. The Adaptations Panel, which considers all cases, has improved terms of reference and a new preferred partner contract has commenced so that costs for adaptations have now been agreed on a schedule of rates from 3 approved suppliers. However, as at 30th January 2009, there are 282 cases outstanding that have not as yet been processed due to the potential financial impact on the available resources. The total backlog of cases will increase by the end of the Financial year to 402 cases should referrals continue at the anticipated rate i.e. 60 per month. The impacts of this increase on overspend would then be as follow:

	Awaiting Approval	Potential cost of backlog cases	Remaining available budget as at January 09	Potential Overspend as at 31 st March 09
Public sector	176 cases	£704,000	£214, 000	£960,000
Private sector	106 cases	£424,000	£143, 000	£640,000

- 7.9 Recommendations** – Although pressure on the Adaptation’s budgets will be reduced in the longer run as benefits from the Decent Home programme and the 2010 Ltd Preferred contract agreement filters into the wider system, the ongoing demand and the changes in demographic profile require that there should still be an increase in the Adaptations budget for the next 2 years from 2010/11. It is proposed that a bid is made to the Corporate Capital programme to increase the amounts available from 2010/11. Assuming the Occupational Therapy backlog is reduced by April 09 and the demand for adaptations through the normal route does not exceed more than 20%, it is proposed that funding should be increased by 6% for each year from 2010/11. This would mean increasing funding by 6% for the public sector from the available resources in the Housing Investment programme. For the private sector, it is proposed that the Council’s contribution is increased by 6% more than the previously required 40% top up i.e. corporate funds would be allocated that represent 46% of the Government’s allocation under the Disabled Facilities Grant.

The table below represents the proposed sums that should be prioritised in the Housing Investment Programme from 2010/11 for public sector adaptations:

Year		Cost above baseline with 6% uplift for each year	Total budget required for public sector
2010/11	2009/10 baseline £1.8m	£114,894k	£1.914
2011/12	2010/11 baseline £1.914	£122K	£2.037m

The table below represents the proposed sums to be bid for corporately for the private sector budget, with an assumption that the private sector government allocation fund will increase by 2% year on year:

Year	Disabled Facilities’ Grant from CLG	RMBC contribution to Private sector adaptations @ 46% of the DFG	Total budget for Private sector
2010/11	£866K	£609K	£1.474M
2011/12	£883K	£625K	£1.508M

8. Finance

- 8.1** Rotherham’s Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) allocation for 2009/10 has been approved for the sum of £849K as the specified capital grants. In the past, Local Authorities have been required to fund at least an additional 40% of the grant value through their own resources. CLG have now lifted this

requirement with effect from April 2008 however the increasing demand for adaptations supports that this practice should be maintained.

- 8.2** For the public sector, funding is made available through the Housing Investment Programme allocation either from Capital Receipts or Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) and it is proposed that this is uplifted by 6% each year from 2010. The proposed expenditure for 2009/10 is set at £1.8m. This figure includes all minor adaptations types of works up to the value of £1,000 which are ordered directly by the Occupational Therapists to 2010 Rotherham Ltd. Historical data shows the cost for minor adaptations averages to the value of £250,000 per year. This is 13.8% of the public sector funding based on a budget of £1.8M.

9. Risk and Uncertainties

- 9.1** A major risk to funding through the HIP allocation relates to Capital Receipts which are not expected to be high in the following financial year due to the current economic climate. This may impact on available resources to the HIP allocation for adaptations.
- 9.2** Insufficient allocations for the provision of adaptations will impact on the Council's ability to deliver its mandatory duties, as well as impacting on performance indicators monitored by CSCI. The current backlog of cases will directly impact on the waiting times for both major and minor adaptations - it is projected that the average waiting time will increase to 12, against a target of 4 weeks. The alternative would be to process all outstanding claims and allow the budget to be overspent. As stated earlier, the increased demand in 2008/9 has been driven by the increased level of referrals from Occupational Therapists as a result of reductions in their backlog of assessments, as well overall increases in demand. There is a risk that should this demand continue the Adaptations backlog will also continue, impacting on customers needs. Failure to meet these objectives could also impact on the CSCI star rating for Adult services although the adaptations indicators are not threshold PAF indicators.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- 10.1** Promoting independence is a key area within the CSCI Self assessment survey which is informed by the timescales taken to deliver adaptation's service. The current backlog of cases will directly impact on the waiting time for both major and minor adaptations. The target time to commence adaptation work following an assessment is four weeks. Due to the current funding pressures the focus is on the urgent cases in order to remain within budget which is in turn resulting in a backlog. There are 282 cases in the backlog system which is expected to stabilise at approximately 400 cases by year end. To date 565 cases have been processed within 4 weeks period as specified within contractual agreements with providers. This means that by year end only 58.5% of cases would have been dealt within a 4 weeks period.

The requirement to undertake adaptations clearly aligns to a number of the key priorities set out in the Councils Corporate Plan. These include:

- Rotherham Alive; Rotherham people will feel good and they will be active and live life to the full, have fun and have good lives.
- Rotherham Safe; People will be protected and nurtured and a preventative approach will be taken to minimise accidents, hazards and to develop resilience.

10.2 Government emphasis is increasingly being placed on health improvement and the prevention of disability, these is reflected in the government document "Independence Matters." This document sets out the framework to modernise services for disabled people by:

- enabling people to live as independently as possible and improve their quality of life;
- creating fairer, more consistent services;
- developing services that respond to the expressed needs and aspirations of disabled people;
- ensuring that services fit the needs of individuals; and
- Maximising the control that people have over the services they receive.

10.3 In the "National Service Framework for Long Term Conditions", there is clear reference to how Local Authorities need to improve the delivery and timeliness of adaptations provided to disabled people and specifically states how Local Authorities should meet this requirement.

11. Background and Consultation

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods –a National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society. CLG - 2008

The Disabled Facilities Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008 (SI 2008/1189)

The Housing Renewal Grants (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2008 (SI 2008/1190)

Disabled Facilities Grant - The package of changes to modernise the programme (CLG)

Projected Future Demands for Disabled Adaptations – The Cabinet, 7th Sept 2005

Cabinet member for Neighbourhoods - Disabled Adaptations funding

Contact Name: **Kirsty Everson, Director of Independent Living**
Neighbourhoods and Adult Services
Tel: 01709 (82)3402
E-Mail: kirsty.everson@rotherham.gov.uk

CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 16th February, 2009

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair) and Councillor Kaye.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sims.

153. ADDENDUM TO THE ALLOCATION POLICY

The Director of Independent Living submitted details of a proposal as a result of learning from the first 3 months of the new Allocation Policy which was launched on 1st December, 2008.

Since its launch, the Policy has been closely monitored by the Housing Assessment Panel and, as a result of learning from recent cases, there were now several proposals for amendments. The reasons for the proposed changes were set out in the report submitted.

Resolved:- That the following Allocation Policy revisions be approved:-

(1) Applicants can be considered by the Housing Assessment Panel for the Priority Plus Group where they have been referred by the Assessment Team due to an urgent move being required because a member of the household had been diagnosed to be terminally ill.

(2) Households awarded Priority Plus status be offered "Like for Like properties". If the property offered was a different type to their original transfer application, the applicant be allowed to retain their original application date in the General Group. Offers would only be made to properties that the household was eligible for.

(3) Time limits of 28 days be given to all applicants in the Priority Plus Group. If the applicant had not made a request and suitable properties had been available, the Priority Plus status be cancelled.

(4) Households living in temporary accommodation (statutory homeless) who were not actively bidding (without any apparent good reason within a 28 days period), will be made an offer of suitable accommodation. This will be a final offer of accommodation within the meaning of Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996 and would be made in discharge of the Council's duty to homeless persons under that Section of the Act. For the purpose of this provision, the phrase 'actively bidding' means submitting bids for suitable available properties with the genuine intent of securing that available property.

(5) "Aged Persons" accommodation can be allocated to people under 60 assessed as needing bungalow provision on the grounds of evidenced medical conditions. This would apply only where there were no other persons over the age of 60 requiring the accommodation. The provision

of Rothercare remains a condition of the tenancy. The properties would remain exempt for the Right to Buy.

(6) Offenders who wished to voluntarily terminate their Council tenancy on sentencing if their sentence is more than 6 months, the Housing Assessment Panel would consider the voluntary termination and would determine whether there was any level of priority that needed to be awarded 1 month prior to release.

154. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

155. DECENT HOMES 2009/10 ALLOCATION OF WORKS

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods presented a report on behalf of 2010 Rotherham Ltd. seeking approval to award the contracts for the financial year 2009/10 to the refurbishment and window/door contractors in accordance with the Framework Agreement in place to deliver the Decent Homes Programme.

Resolved:- That the Decent Homes contracts for the financial year 2009/10 be approved as follows:-

(1) Refurbishment Works

Keepmoat	£19,905,394
Henry Boot	£15,220,358

(2) Windows and Doors

Anglian Windows	£3,883,780
Yorkshire Windows	£4,616,220

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
Thursday, 19th February, 2009

Present:- Councillor McNeely (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Blair, Falvey, Gamble, Gouly, Nightingale, P. A. Russell and F. Wright. together with Alex Armitage (Parish Councils), Bernadette Bartholomew (Parish Councils), Mr. J. Carr (Environment Protection UK), Derek Corkell (RotherFed) and Andrew Roddison (RotherFed)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Havenhand, Lakin and Walker.

87. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair announced that members of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel had been invited to attend the meeting for the item relating to Chesterhill Intensive Neighbourhood Management Pilot.

The Panel were advised that Councillor Sheila Walker's health was improving. Councillor McNeely passed on her best wishes for a speedy recovery.

88. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

89. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no members of the public and press present at the meeting.

90. ENFORCEMENT

Lewis Coates, Public Protection Manager, gave the following powerpoint presentation on Enforcement:-

Overview – Priority Drivers - Local

- National Priorities
- Local Area Agreement
- Community Strategy
- Noise Reduction Strategy
- Enviro-Crime Strategy
- Respect Agenda
- SNT
- Public

Service Provision and Impact – Services Provided:-

- Traditional Environmental Health functions
- Contaminated Land
- Closed Landfills

- Air Quality
- Off-Road Motorbikes
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Enviro-Crime
- Rotherham Wardens
- Dog Wardens
- Pest Control
- Licensing Enforcement

How Does it all fit together – National and Local

- Impact
- Vulnerable
- Quality of Life
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Contributory Factors

Actions – 2008/09 – Strategic and Policy

- Air Quality Strategy refreshed
- Enviro-Crime Strategy refreshed
- Out of Hours Service extended
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure refreshed
- 4% reduction in Domestic Noise compared with 2007/08 (8% compared to 2006/07)

Service Demand 2008/09 (Quarter 1-3)

- 16,685 Service requests investigated
 - Private Sector housing
 - Noise
 - Pollution Control
 - Enviro-Crime
 - Pest Control
 - Stray Dogs
 - Rotherham Wardens
 - Licensing Enforcement Investigations

Actions – Compliance 2008/09

- 349 Inspections of Private Rented properties
- 449 Planning Application consultations
- 114 Permitted Processes under Environmental Protection Act
- All licenses premises in the Town Centre, Maltby, Brinsworth and Aston received Multi-Agency Compliance visits in December

Actions – Enforcement 2008/09 (Quarter 1-3)

- 126 Statutory Notices service on Private Sector housing
- 214 Abatement Notices under Environmental Protection Act 1990
- 125 Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Actions
- 87 Licensing Enforcement Actions
- 337 Fixed Penalty Notices for Enviro-Crime

- 41 Prosecutions
- 6 Seizures

Challenges

- Multi-Disciplinary Teams
- 'Patch' Team Working
- Shared Partner Service Standards – Safer Neighbourhood Team – Police Pledge – Neighbourhood Charters – Anti-Social Behaviour Performance
- Increasing public reassurance and confidence
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Selective Licensing, Closed Landfill sites
- Stepping up customer/personalisation standards

A question and answer session ensued with the following points highlighted:-

- Whether the direct effects of air quality and noise control within the Borough were reported and if so how this was done. It was confirmed that noise control was monitored via the Noise Reduction Strategy at a number of levels. In relation to air quality monitoring reports were produced which included facts and figures and these were presented to Parish Councils.
- Concerns were raised about the air quality in the Brinsworth area, which was poor largely due to being located between the M1 and the Parkway. Confirmation was given that work was ongoing with Sheffield City Council to monitor the situation and it was hoped that with the introduction of improved engines in vehicles that in time the air quality would improve. Pressure was being applied to South Yorkshire Transport providers to ensure their vehicles were low emissions.
- Whether the Junior Warden Scheme would be re-introduced to encourage young people to take a pride in their community. Confirmation was given that this would only be possible if funding could be secured. However community officers did frequently go to local schools to raise awareness of initiatives which were taking place.
- Concerns were raised about raising children's expectations in relation to taking part in initiatives before funding had been agreed. It was felt that funding needed to be secured before offering places to children.
- The question was raised as to whether there was any evidence of a better service being provided, now that the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure had been refreshed. It was confirmed that the figures were proof of an improved service, which was largely down to the ASB officers working closely with Environmental Health officers.

91. DOG CONTROL - STRAY DOG ARRANGEMENTS UPDATE

Lewis Coates, Public Protection Manager reported on the changes in statutory duties relating to stray dogs which had removed all responsibility for dealing with them from the Police and placed them with the Council with effect from 1st July, 2008.

In order to provide the new service, a bespoke local kennelling unit had been provided. The portacabin was located close to the town centre and allowed members of the public, following contact with the out-of-hours service (Streetpride and Rothercare) who had a stray dog to place it into kennels temporarily ahead of collection by the contracted kennels. Over the first 3 months of the service the number of dogs reported and taken to the out-of-hours kennelling facility was:-

18 dogs during the evenings Monday to Friday
41 dogs during Saturday and Sundays.

There had also been an increase in the number of dogs seized by the Dog Warden Service from 99 in July-September, 2007 to 132 in the same period in 2008. This corresponded with the information from South Yorkshire Police that they were receiving around 350 stray dogs per quarter.

Pressure on service from the information provided from the Police had been anticipated and, whilst the numbers of stray dogs handled by the Service in the first quarter did not match the expected demand, the Rotherham Dog Rescue charity had raised concerns following their own assessment of more stray dog calls received.

A meeting had been arranged with the charity on site at the new kennelling facility. Access to the new service was discussed and the procedure for the out-of-hours service as well as a number of comments and suggestions made by the charity including:-

- Request for larger cages in the unit portacabin
- Request for lockable cages to prevent kennel sharing and theft of dogs
- Further information made available in the portacabin with reference to out-of-hours telephone numbers.

Resolved;- (1) That the continued 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 progress report be presented to the panel in six months time, to include service demand and associated costs for the first year of running the service.

92. SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING

Steve Parry, Safer Rotherham Partnership Co-ordinator presented an

update on the progress of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Neighbourhood Action Groups and the Joint Action Group of the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

The report described the relationship between each of the above-mentioned groups and highlighted the contribution they had made to make a difference to the communities in Rotherham. The continuous improvement of the Safer Neighbourhood structures, linking in to the strengthening of Area Assemblies and the further enhancement of communities in having an influence on how partner services delivered to local needs was also emphasised.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following points raised:-

- Whether it would be possible to let all members have the dates for the SNT meetings to enable them to attend those relevant to them should they wish to.
- The perception of the public about decreases in crime and how this is communicated to make it more meaningful (for example communicating actual numbers rather than percentages)
- What was being done differently to bring about this reduction in crime figures? Classic SNT issues were being addressed, problems were being identified and action plans formulated to manage them.

Resolved:- (1) That the achievements resulting from the Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership working be welcomed.

(2) That it be noted that the Scrutiny Panel recognises the further development of the partnership approach by strengthened working arrangements to ensure continuous improvement.

93. CHESTERHILL INTENSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT PILOT

Catherine Dale, Neighbourhood Initiatives Manager presented a report on the Chesterhill Intensive Neighbourhood Management Pilot outlining the progress and impact made and how the learning would be shared and the approach rolled out across the Borough.

Chesterhill Avenue had been identified in 2007 as the most vulnerable community in Rotherham and in need of intensive neighbourhood management arrangements. A pilot neighbourhood was established covering around 650 households and a 12 month period of intensive management began in September, 2007.

In 12 months the change on stabilising the neighbourhood, mobilising the community and changing residents' perceptions were clearly evident:-

- Improved level of satisfaction with the local area
- Reduced perception around anti-social behaviour

- Increased community influence and participation
- Improved trust of partner agencies
- Significant reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour

Chesterhill Avenue consisted of 143 properties and, since the decision to demolish and redevelop, approximately 95% of all tenants had been rehoused and dispersed across the Borough. The total cost of delivering the pilot, including mainstream re-directed resource, external funding and funding from Housing Market Renewal, was £152,000 with 50% met by utilising existing mainstream resources.

A discussion ensued on the report. The following issues were highlighted:-

- Whether the next initiative had been identified. It was confirmed that a Steering Group would be set up to formulate how the next initiative would be identified to ensure that the next neighbourhood was chosen fairly.
- Anyone wishing to put forward suggestions for a vulnerable neighbourhood which they feel would benefit from this initiative should raise it through the NAG process.
- It was felt that more emphasis should be placed on preventing problems rather than waiting for them to happen.
- Concerns were raised about the lettings policy and allocation of properties. Confirmation was had been highlighted as part of a review of Key Choices, which was currently being undertaken

The Chair requested that a report be brought to a future meeting giving details of the next phase, which would include achievements made, the way forward and how to sustain progress made.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress and impact of the pilot, along with the planned roll out of the learning and the approach into other vulnerable neighbourhoods across the Borough, be noted.

(2) That a report be presented to a future meeting in relation to the next phase.

94. SCRUTINY REVIEW - VOIDS TURNAROUND TIMES

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, submitted a proposal for a Scrutiny review of void turnarounds.

Voids turnaround had been identified as a key concern for Members. Whilst performance was improving, it still fell below expected levels. With high demand for housing, it was important that properties were re-let on a timely basis to maximise both revenue and housing options for tenants.

Resolved:- (1) That it be agreed for the review of voids turnaround be undertaken.

(2) That the following members be part of a small steering group to scope the review and determine the panel wished to interview:

- Councillor R McNeely
- Councillor F Wright
- Councillor G Nightingale
- Alex Armitage
- Andrew Roddison

(3) That the meeting scheduled for 16th April, 2009 be used for evidence gathering.

95. CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Panel noted the decisions made under delegated powers by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods held on 5th and 19th January and 2nd February, 2008.

96. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2009, were agreed.

97. PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 19th December, 2008 and 16th and 28th January, 2009, were noted.

98. NEW ARRIVALS WORKING PARTY

The minutes of the above Working Party held on 28th January, 2009, attended by Councillors Sharman (in the Chair) and Rushforth were noted.

99. RECYCLING GROUP

The minutes of a meeting of the Recycling Group held on 6th January, 2009, attended by Councillors R. Russell (in the Chair), Ali and Nightingale were noted.

100. MEMBERS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP

A discussion ensued about the minute relating to allotments and it was suggested that this issue be explored in more depth. The Chair reported that she would approach the Councillor Boyes, the Chair of Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to ascertain whether further work was planned, and if so register an interest in being involved.

Agreed:- That the minutes of the above Advisory Group held on 9th

January, 2009, attended by Councillors Wyatt (in the Chair), Austen, Gosling, and Pickering, be noted.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
13th February, 2009

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Russell); Councillors Austen, Barron, Boyes, Burton, Gilding, J. Hamilton, Jack, McNeely and Swift.

Also in attendance were Councillors Akhtar (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods) and Smith (Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development) for item 179 below (Budget 2009/10)

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

173. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

174. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

175. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th January, 2009 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

176. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor McNeely reported that the review of choice based lettings was ongoing.

(b) Councillor Austen reported:

- the Working with Parish Councils Part II Review report had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 11th February, 2009
- the Debt Recovery Review Group was meeting this afternoon

(c) Councillor Jack reported (i) the latest meeting of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had considered:

- a presentation on the Local Involvement Network (LINK)
- Neighbourhood and Adult Services Forward Plan
- diabetes was to be the health condition that the Panel would review

(ii) the review group looking at supporting older people to live at home had met on Wednesday.

(iii) she had attended a conference last week regarding the super regional burns unit.

(d) Councillor Boyes reported:

- the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel had received a presentation on Waverley
- that a first draft of the review of PE/Sport in Schools would be available shortly
- that a scoping meeting had been held with regard to the review of traffic around schools

(e) The Mayor reported that the latest meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered:

- ratification of membership of parent governor representatives
- Young Carers' Strategy : Impact Assessment
- Imagination Library – One Year On
- Foundation Stage Assessment Results Summer 2008
- Key Stage 1 Assessment Results Summer 2008
- OFSTED Profile of Schools
- Review of Children and Young People's Services

(f) Cath Saltis reported on a positive first meeting of Yorkshire South Tourism where protocols had been agreed constructively. Meetings would take place on a quarterly basis.

177. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.

178. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (staffing and

financial/business affairs).

179. BUDGET 2009/10

Further to Minute No. 163 of the meeting of this Committee held on 16th January, 2009, Andrew Bedford, Strategic Director of Finance, outlined briefly the latest budgetary position and reporting timetable and referred to the additional savings proposals to be presented to meet the funding gap.

(A) Tom Cray, Strategic Director of Neighbourhood and Adult Services, outlined the aims of the 2009/10 budget for both Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, together with a reconciliation of proposed savings. He then presented the proposed additional savings and answered questions from the Committee in respect of :-

- phased introduction of home from home quality premium payment scheme, the differing gold, silver and bronze accreditation levels and impact on the Directorate's CSCI judgement
- negotiating additional investment from NHS Rotherham, progress made so far, outcomes achieved and the way forward
- management structure savings proposals and transferred functions
- community partnership budgets and impact on parish council network
- social work staffing establishment
- quality of home care service purchased from the independent sector

(B) Matt Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive, presented the proposed additional savings in respect of the Chief Executive's Directorate and answered questions from the Committee in respect of :-

- training budget
- continued scrutiny to achieve efficiency savings
- efficiency savings over the last three years

(C) Joyce Thacker, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services, referred to the priorities being safeguarding children and school standards.

Joyce presented the further savings and investment proposals and

answered questions from the Committee in respect of :-

- increased NHS Rotherham contributions to care packages, negotiations, outcomes achieved and the way forward
- Outdoor Education Services
- NEETs targets and outcomes
- fostering budget/foster carer levels/fostering service

(D) Phil Rogers, Director of Culture and Leisure Services, presented the additional savings proposals in respect of the Environment and Development Services Directorate and answered questions from the Committee in respect of :-

- Book Fund
- staffing levels across the Directorate
- promotions, events and tourism
- management levels
- training
- external income

Resolved:- That the information and additional savings proposals be noted and officers be thanked for their presentations.