

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

Venue: Rotherham Town Hall,
Moorgate Street,
Rotherham

Date: Monday, 15th June, 2009

Time: 10.00 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006).
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Energy Performance Certificate - 6 Month Update (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Longfellow Drive - New Housing Scheme Fencing (Pages 5 - 9)
5. Longfellow Drive (Pages 10 - 14)
6. Decent Homes Enhanced Support for Vulnerable Customers (Pages 15 - 22)
7. Development of 2010 Rotherham Ltd.'s Improvement Plan (Pages 23 - 27)
8. 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.
9. HMR Pathfinder Programme Financial Update (Pages 28 - 35)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))
10. 2010 Rotherham Ltd. 2009/10 Capital Programme (Pages 36 - 38)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

11. Repairs and Maintenance Service (Pages 39 - 91)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))
12. Neighbourhoods General Fund Revenue Outturn 2008/09 (Pages 92 - 98)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))
13. Housing Investment Programme Outturn 2008/09 (Pages 99 - 104)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following item to enable the matter to be processed)

14. Homes and Communities Agency invitation to Council's to Build Council Housing (Pages 105 - 111)
(Exempt under Paragraph 3 of the Act - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council))

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods
2. Date:	15th June 2009
3. Title:	Energy Performance Certificates – Six Month Update
4. Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

Effective from the 1st October 2008, Landlords and Property Owners are required to provide Energy Performance Certificates for all rented homes, commercial properties less than 2,500 m² and all remaining homes for sale.

This requirement was reported to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods (Minute No. 95), 27th October 2008 and it was advised that a further report be submitted in six months.

The following report provides an update.

6. Recommendations

- **That the Cabinet Member notes the contents of the report.**

7. Background

Effective from the 1st October 2008, landlords and property owners are required to provide Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) for all rented homes, commercial properties less than 2,500 m² and all remaining homes for sale.

Landlords are required to commission an EPC and ensure a copy of it, including the recommendation report that shows how to improve the dwelling's energy efficiency, are available free of charge, to prospective tenants at the earliest opportunity.

The EPC is designed to help the prospective tenant to make an informed choice in respect of the possible energy consumption costs of the property. As a minimum, this should be provided when prospective tenants are first given written information about a dwelling or are arranging to view it and before any tenancy contract is entered into.

An EPC rates a property on an incremental scale, A-G. Only new-build properties, constructed to Level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, that is, very high energy efficiency standards, can achieve an 'A'. The typical score for a three-bed semi-detached house would be in the range C-E, depending upon the construction, design and heating installed.

EPCs have a ten year life for rented accommodation from day of production irrespective of change of tenancy. EPCs are strictly recorded on a National Database using bespoke software.

There are two 'EPC certificate' routes offered by the Council for private sector landlords initially. The Neighbourhood Investment Services offered the service in the interim before Rotherham's Quality Landlord Scheme was up and running and formal provision made via the RQLS.

The price of an EPC has risen slightly over recent months for private sector housing from £45 to as much as £80 which probably reflects the declining number of qualified EPC officers as the recession continues to affect the housing market and qualified assessors look for other work outside the field of Energy Performance Certification. At present this is not affecting the rented market because landlords have access to accredited schemes such as that offered by Key Choices Property Management where an accredited officer is employed by the Council and offers EPC's at £50

In the social sector EPC are undertaken on all void properties as they become available for rent. The very high number of EPC reflects the high demand for social rented properties as opposed to the present low demand for private housing.

7.2 Progress

The EPC requirement was reported to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods (Minute No. 95), 27th October 2008 and it was advised that a further progress report be submitted in six months.

There are four service areas within the Council affected by EPC legislation:

- **Key Choices Property Management (KCPM)**

As part of the KCPM service (previously known as Rotherham's Quality Landlord Scheme), properties belonging to private sector landlords joining the accredited scheme or benefiting from initiatives such as Rent in Advance (RIA) are required to have a current EPC in place, prior to the property being occupied.

Within KCPM, there is a registered EPC Assessor and to date 12 properties have been assessed.

- **Trading Standards**

The requirement to provide an EPC is self-regulating to a degree; in that to sell a property on the open market, an EPC is required as part of the Home Buyers pack. Property cannot be marketed by an estate agent without one and as with structural surveys; EPCs are required by lenders to satisfy mortgage purposes.

For rented property the new tenant is entitled to receive an EPC, however what is not yet known is what level of EPC awareness there is amongst households moving within the private rented sector. If they do not know that they should receive an EPC they cannot be expected to complain.

To date, Trading Standards have not taken any enforcement action in relation to non-compliance with EPC legislation.

- **Neighbourhood Investment Service**

A very limited capacity exists within Neighbourhood Investment Services to carry out an EPC assessment. This opportunity has been made available to private sector landlords registered with the Council's Registered Quality Landlord Scheme, at a very competitive rate. To date no appointments have been made.

- **2010 Rotherham Limited**

EPCs apply to all social housing. 2010 Ltd employs two accredited Agency Surveyors to carry out EPCs on all voids, vacated and Right to Buy properties. 2010 Ltd intend to employ in-house operatives to carry out EPCs in due course; further information can be provided by the Stock and Planning Manager at 2010 Ltd (Joanne Crossley)

2,622 EPCs (40 per week) have been carried out to date, out with an average rating of 'D'. EPCs are made available to prospective tenants through the lettings process.

8. Finance

Neighbourhood Investment Services has very limited capacity to carry out EPCs. This service has been advertised to private sector landlords that are members of the Rotherham Quality Landlord Scheme, at £45 per assessment. (Typical advertised cost £78.)

There has been no take-up of this competitive rate to date. This may be because there has been no changes of tenancy, because EPCs are not being undertaken or because qualifying private sector landlords are using another EPC service.

If there is a significant uptake in the service over time the situation will be reviewed.

2010 Rotherham Ltd currently employs two Agency Surveyors at a cost of £10,000 per month including lodgement and mileage allowance. 2010 has explored other delivery options and intends to move to in-house surveyors in due course; reducing the cost to approximately £6,000 per month.

7. Risks and Uncertainties

Properties should not be let without an EPC. 2010 Rotherham Ltd has engaged agency surveyors; the move to in-house surveyors will further safeguard compliance with the legislation.

11. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

In line with the Outcomes Framework, the service provided has a linkage with the fourth key line of assessment theme (KLA4) "Exercise of Choice and Control" as it enables tenants to have an influence on their environment while promoting significant savings that could make a significant difference to a household experiencing fuel poverty.

The service provided also links into the second key line of assessment (KLA2) 'Improved Quality of Life' as the service allows people to have greater control over their income potentially as the report will better inform them of the energy use of the home they choose to buy or rent alleviating fuel poverty.

- Improving health and emotional well being [1]
- Improved quality of life [2]
- Increased choice and control [4]

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Trading Standards – Paul Fraser
2010 Rotherham Limited – Richard Lawson
Private Sector Housing – Paul Benson

Contact Name:

Tracie Seals – Interim Sustainable Communities Manager (Ext.4969)
Paul Maplethorpe - Ext 6568 paul.maplethorpe@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	15th June, 2009
3.	Title:	Longfellow Drive – New Housing Scheme Fencing Petition
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

Further to the report to the Cabinet Member on 2nd February 2009, Minute No: 147 (2), the following report details the outcome of investigations into the matters raised in the petition and the subsequent action taken to resolve them.

6. Recommendations

- 1. That the Cabinet Member notes the contents of the report.**
- 2. That the Cabinet Member notes the actions undertaken in response to the petition to resolve residents concerns.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

On 4th February 2009, the Democratic Services Manager reported receipt of a petition, containing 25 signatures, regarding the fencing that had been erected around the new bungalows at Longfellow Drive, Herringthorpe. The bungalows form part of the new extra care housing scheme developed in partnership with Chevin Housing Association.

The petition raised two key issues,

- That the new fencing made the existing tenant at 302 Longfellow Drive potentially vulnerable.
- That existing residents were unhappy with the style of fencing erected, a close board fence, as it presented a physical barrier preventing interaction between new and existing residents.

7.2 Actions Taken

Since receiving the petition, the Neighbourhood Investment Service has:-

- Investigated the matter by contacting the petitioners to clarify issues and discuss possible solutions.
- Entered into discussions with Chevin Housing Association to discuss the issues and agree the best course of action to resolve the concerns expressed in the petition.
- A joint assessment was carried out by the Neighbourhood Investment Service with Chevin and the local PCSO.
- Planning officers, Cllr Dodson and Chevin carried out a further assessment.
- Chevin and Neighbourhood Investment Service jointly carried out a community consultation drop-in event on 2nd April 2009.
- Chevin held discussions with the owners of the new bungalows, to determine their views and obtain consent to proposed changes to their boundary fencing.
- Redesign proposals for the fencing completed and details provided to all residents. (See Appendix 1)
- Installation of the new fencing commenced 1st June.

7.3 Outcome

Since the discussions held with residents and owners, a proposal has been agreed that satisfies both the residents and the owners concerns. Chevin have commenced works to replace the fencing with black metal railing around the sensory garden, thereby eliminating isolation to the residents in the corner, and with green stained, timber palisade fencing

with 2.5cm gaps, to the rear of the newly built bungalows, to improve visual and social connectivity between the new bungalows and the existing residents, without undermining householder privacy. A gate is also to be provided to number 302 Longfellow Drive to restrict access to the back of the property, to deal with concerns about vulnerability.

8. Finance

Chevin Housing Association has agreed to fund the additional costs associated with the fencing and gate.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The risk of not making changes to the fencing would result in loss of confidence in Chevin Housing Association and undermine what has generally been a significant success story, delivering a new high quality housing development.

The relatively small investment required to support the solution, in comparison to the overall cost of the scheme, would benefit both the residents, the Council and Chevin Housing Association.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The small investment would contribute towards the Corporate and cross cutting policy agenda related to regeneration and in particular the priority for improving and promoting the image of Rotherham through:

The proposed alternations would contribute 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:

Improved Quality of Life – opportunities for improved housing standards to meet household aspirations and an improved quality of life (Objective 6)

Exercise Choice and Control – enabling choice and control over housing options through a range of housing options being presented to households affected by regeneration programmes (Objective 6)

Personal Dignity and Respect – 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 – providing quality housing and independent living, targeted to meet specific need, to support improved health and well-being, facilitated by a transparent process agreed with the client from the outset (Objective 2)

Economic well-being – providing high quality housing, through high design standards and meeting identified needs in order to create sustainable neighbourhoods, offering high quality and extended choice of housing provision, to meet current and future aspirations.

Outcomes Framework

- Improved Quality of Life
- Making a positive contribution

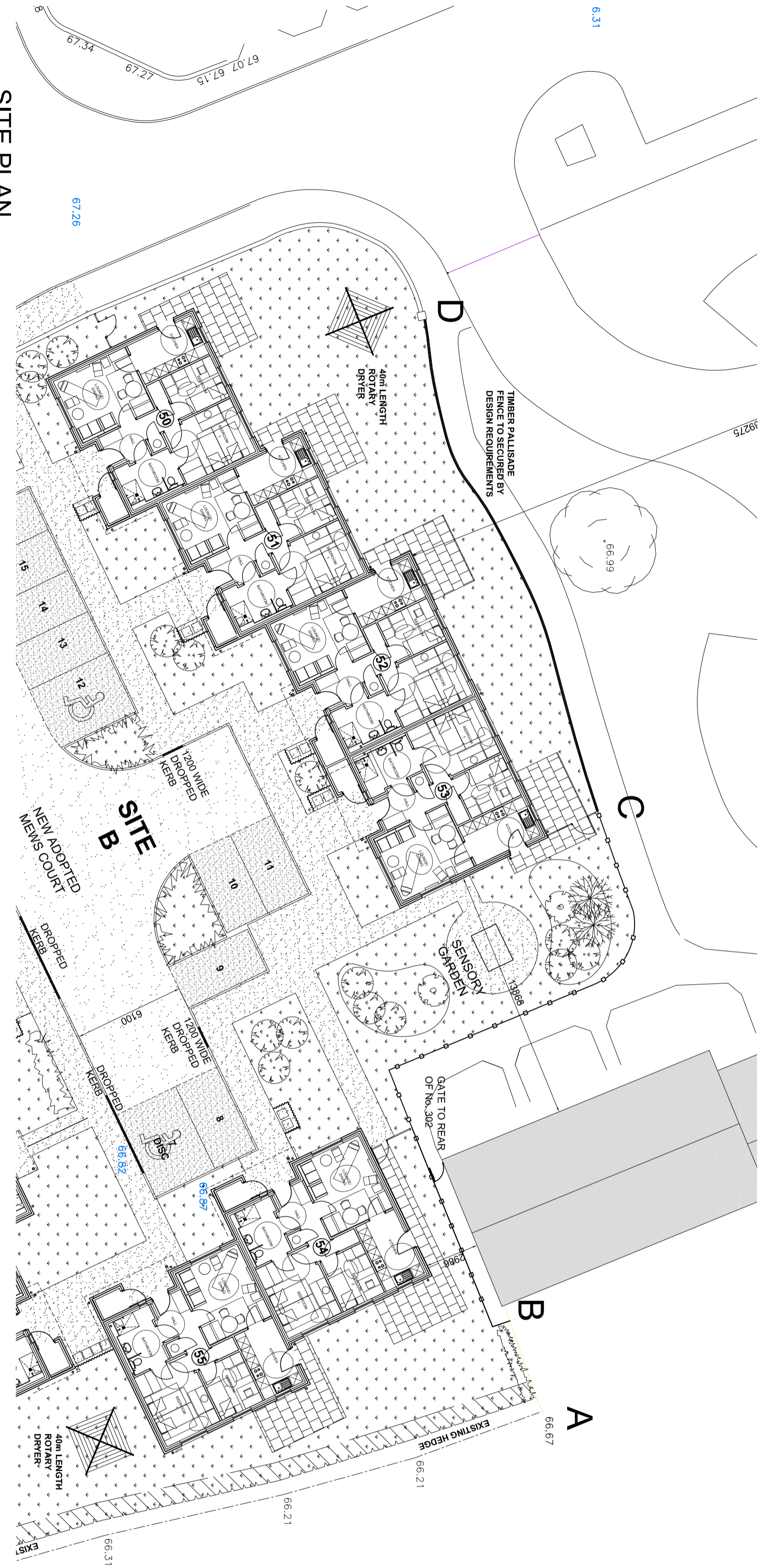
Directorate Strategic Objectives

- To reduce the problem of crime and anti-social behaviour and make Rotherham's neighbourhoods safer in a way which contributes to the reduction of the fear of crime by the year 2010.
- Strengthen neighbourhood management arrangements through improving partnership involvement in a way which contributes to improving satisfaction with people's neighbourhood as a place to live by 2009.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

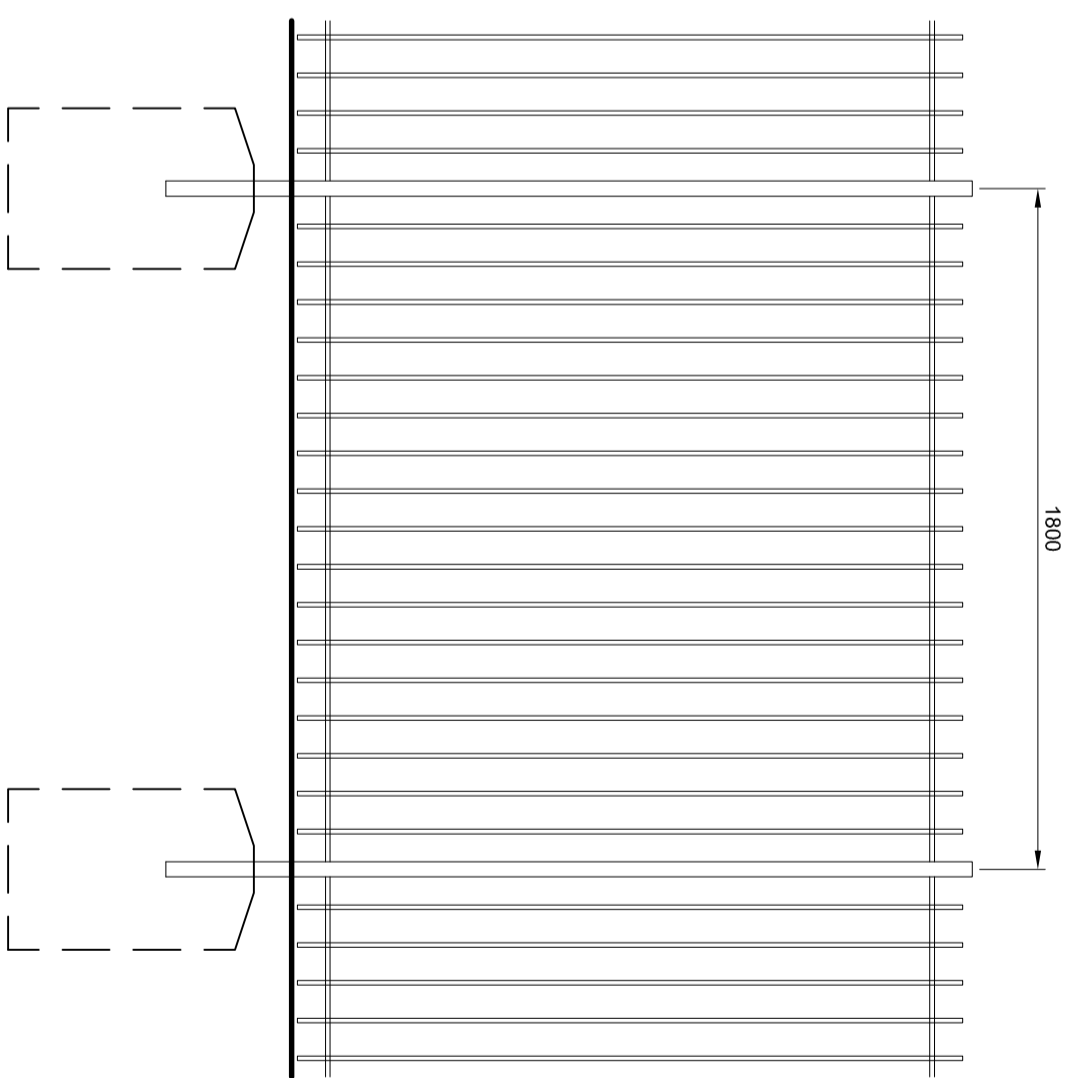
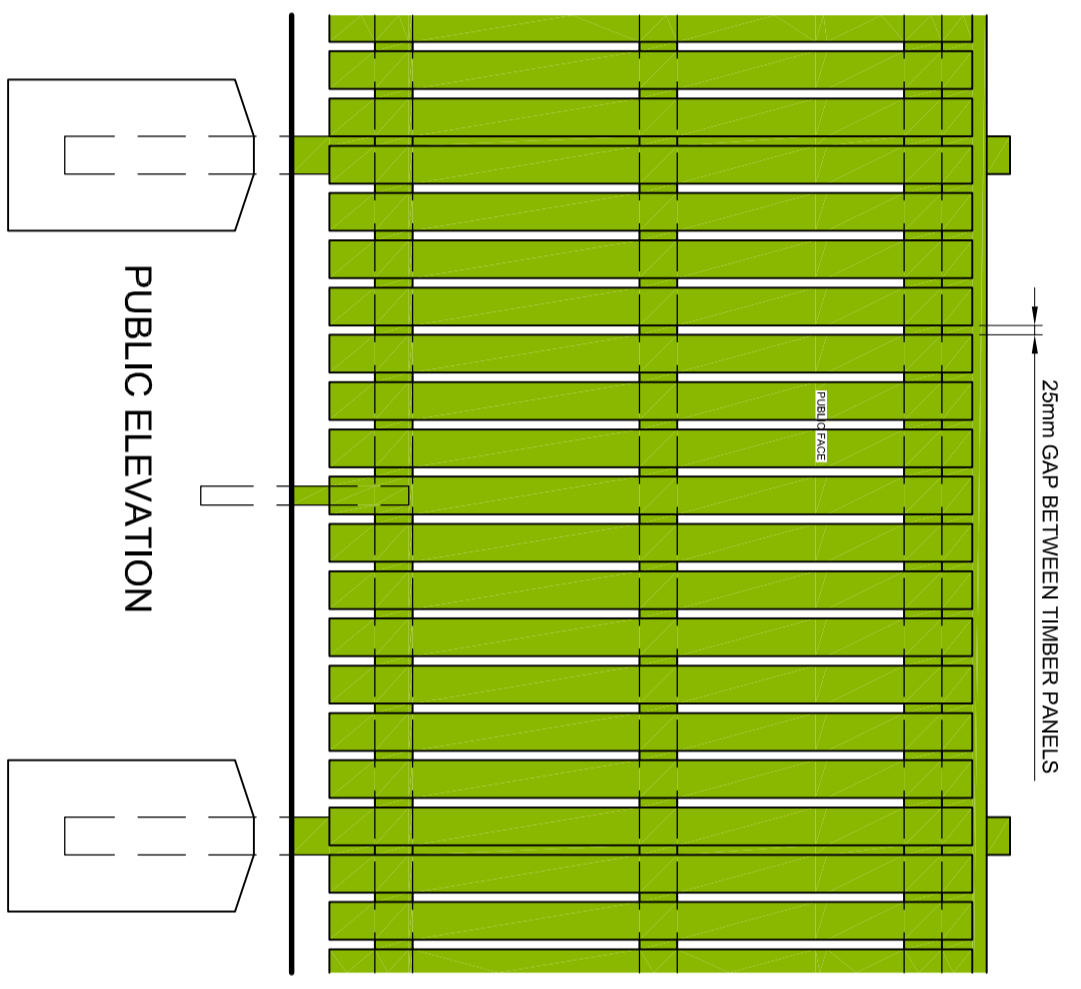
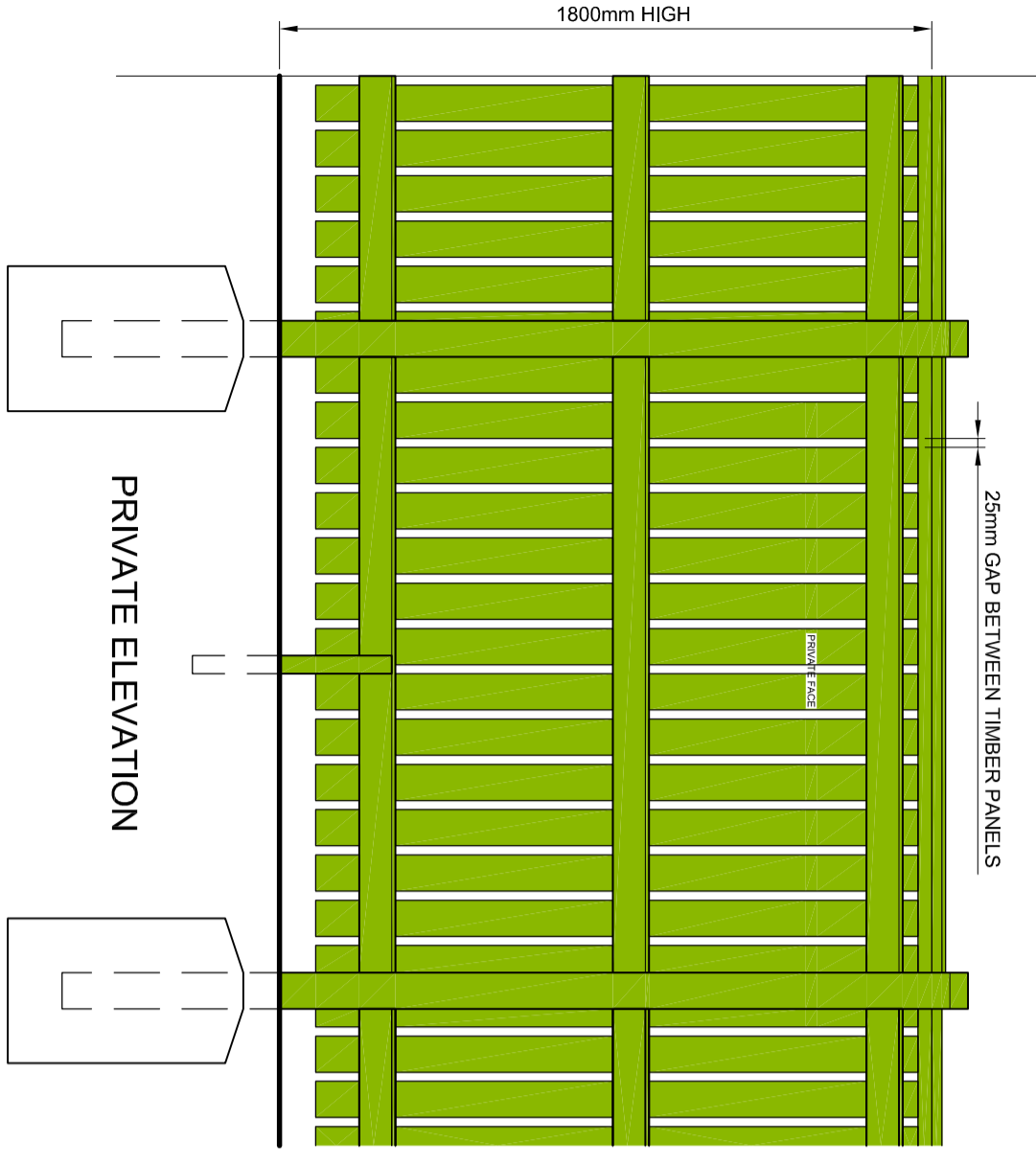
- Democratic Services Manager reported receipt of a petition Minute No 147 (2)
- Consultation undertaken for overall security scheme on the 4th February 2009.
- Local Ward Member, Councillor Dodson has been actively involved from the outset and contributed to decision making.
- A one to one visit carried out by the Neighbourhood Investment Service to petitioners on 3rd March 2009
- Drop in session at Bakersfield 2nd April
- Letters and plans detailing proposed revisions to fencing sent to all petitioners and Ward Members to inform them of revised fencing proposals.

Contact Name: Kalpana Desai, Programme Co-ordinator, Ex.4971, kalpana.desai@rotherham.gov.uk



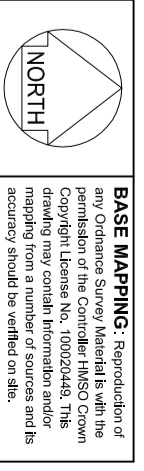
SITE PLAN
SCALE 1:200

- NOTES:**
BOUNDARY TREATMENTS:
 A - C 1800mm high metal railings, painted black
 C - D 1800mm high timber palisade fence with 25mm gaps between palisades, stained green



TIMBER PALISADE FENCING (STAINED GREEN)
SCALE 1:20

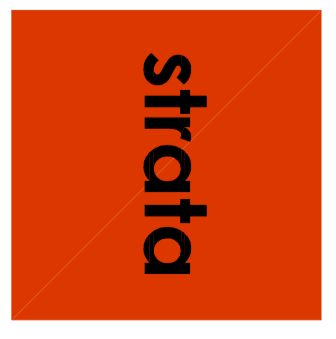
MILD STEEL RAILING (PAINTED BLACK)
SCALE 1:20



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REVISIONS

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**CHEVIN HOUSING
 EXTRA CARE SCHEME**
 LONGFELLOW DRIVE, ROTHERHAM

**PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT
 SITE B**

Drawn: RS
 Date: MAY 2009
 Scale: 1:200 @ A2
 Checked: [Signature]

brewsterbye architects
 5 NORTH HILL ROAD
 HEADINGLEY
 LEEDS
 LS9 2EN
 0113 278400
 0113 284250
 info@brewsterbye.co.uk

Dwg No: 260/01(09)015 #

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	15th June 2009
3.	Title:	Longfellow Drive – Petitions update
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

On 1st September 2008, Minute No: 65 refers, a report was presented to the Cabinet Member detailing receipt of a two petitions from residents at Longfellow Drive, Herringthorpe.

The following report provides an update on action taken to resolve the issues raised in the petitions.

6. Recommendations

- 1. That the Cabinet Member note the contents of the report.**
- 2. That the Cabinet Member note the actions undertaken in response to the petitioners concerns**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

A report was submitted on the 1st September 2008 in relation to the receipt of two petitions from residents at Longfellow Drive.

The petitions requested that the Council consider:

- Enabling wider access to the new and existing elderly persons communal facilities at Longfellow Drive to other households, particularly existing families living in the immediate area.
- That consideration be given to the provision of play facilities in the area.
- That road safety concerns be addressed with regard to Middle Lane South.
- That an unsafe boundary wall be repaired.

Four specific actions were agreed and to be the subject of a further update report to the Cabinet Member.

- 1. Provide update on actions in relation to play facilities – Herringthorpe Playing Field:*
- 2. Provide actions relating to road safety – Middle Lane South:*
- 3. Review actions and information on the use of the community centre by the wider community:*
- 4. Update action taken to address the health and safety issues relating to an unsafe wall.*

7.2 Action undertaken to date

Since the original report, Neighbourhood Investment Service has continued to address the issues, maintaining regular dialogue with the relevant sections of 2010 Ltd, the Council and Council partners, in order to ensure that the concerns raised by the petitioners are considered and to report any action taken in response to the petitions. With regards to the specific actions above, the following provides a position statement:-

7.2.1. Action Point 1.

In light of the demolition of the Herringthorpe Leisure Centre, future plans for a multi use games area are on hold, to ensure that maximum opportunity for leisure and amenity creation at the site is achieved, through a more comprehensive development plan. This matter will be reported to the Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport in due course. The local community will be consulted as part of the development process. Information leaflets will be produced and made available on progress of the development plans. At this stage, a timetable of activity is not available, but the Neighbourhood Investment Service will continue to maintain contact with the Council colleagues to keep petitioners informed.

7.2.2 Action Point 2.

Streetpride have received a request for the installation of a safe crossing near Longfellow Drive. They have carried out an assessment on Middle Lane South, and have reported that it is unlikely that a crossing will be installed at the present time. However, a draft road improvement scheme has been drawn up for Middle Lane around Clifton School and Clifton Park, where recorded number of accidents have occurred. This is within walking distance of Longfellow Drive. This is currently undergoing community consultation and will be reported to Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation in the near future.

7.2.3 Action Point 3

The Neighbourhood Centres review is currently being undertaken by the Neighbourhood Investment Service. The initial recommendation is to retain the neighbourhood centre, which forms part of the Longfellow Drive sheltered housing scheme. This will be included in a report which is due to be submitted in July. In tandem with this, further work is being undertaken on any future requirements for funding to sustain the existing facility. A protocol of hire and use of neighbourhood centres on sheltered schemes has also been approved, recommending that they should be opened up to the wider community and non-residents as a means of generating extra income; information on this decision has been distributed to the wider communities. Petitioners have been advised that the facility can be hired by the wider community for a small charge.

Additionally, Bakersfield, the new extra care housing development is now complete and in agreement with Chevin Housing Association, has opened the restaurant and hairdressing service to the wider community. This is available to everyone, the only criteria being that children and young people under the age of 18 will have to be accompanied by adults due to the nature of the development.

7.2.4 Action Point 4

Neighbourhood Investment Service has actively worked with 2010 Ltd and Area Assemblies to address the issue of the wall, health and safety and security issues. Security gates and fencing have now been installed to the area. Residents who live within the gated area have been provided with keys. This will restrict access to the wall thereby reducing the concerns raised.

The community has had the opportunity to discuss issues raised in the report and any other matters through a range of consultations which included door to door visits that has been carried out by the Neighbourhood Investment Service and 2010 Rotherham Ltd on Longfellow Drive. No further comments or concerns have been raised to date. The lead petitioner has been visited and has received an update. Further information as requested e.g contact details on the hire of the community room has also been sent by email to the lead petitioner. The Neighbourhood Investment Service will act as lead

contact on the issues raised by the petitioners and will report further progress to the lead petitioner as information is received.

8. Finance

Herringthorpe Playing Fields and Middle Lane are still subject to approval and relevant service area budgetary provision. The issue with the wall and the health and safety issue have been resolved through the gating and fencing scheme and joint funding of £8k from the Neighbourhood Investment Service and £500 from the 2010 Ltd – Area Housing Panel.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The costs and proposals for both Herringthorpe Playing Field and Middle Lane are not yet approved or agreed.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The provision of facilities to meet the needs of the community is a key component of creating sustainable and inclusive communities, which are safe, free from crime and places to be proud of.

Longfellow Drive focuses on Community Strategy key themes as follows:

- Rotherham Safe - by helping to create an environment where neighbourhoods are clean, green and free from crime.
- Rotherham Proud - by improving the image of the area in and outside the Borough to boost the housing market and stimulate the mix of tenure and housing choice.
- Rotherham Achieving- by helping to transform the Borough as a prosperous place, with a vibrant, mixed and diverse economy. By reducing the gap in inequalities between deprived communities and the wider borough by improving connectivity and access,

These key themes are reflected within the individual Well-being and Healthy Communities outcome framework

- Improved Quality of Life
- Making a positive contribution

Directorate Strategic Objectives:-

- To reduce the problem of crime and anti-social behaviour and make Rotherham's neighbourhoods safer in a way which contributes to the reduction of the fear of crime by the year 2010.
- Strengthen neighbourhood management arrangements through improving partnership involvement in a way which contributes to improving satisfaction with people's neighbourhood as a place to live by 2009.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The following background papers are held by the Neighbourhood Investment Service:-

- Petitions received from the residents on Longfellow Drive.
- Letters sent to all the petitioners by 2010 Neighbourhood Champion acknowledging receipt of the petition.
- Letter sent to the lead petitioner from Neighbourhood Investment Service.
- Consultation event held by Neighbourhood Investment Service and 2010 Ltd to find a solution to the reported risks associated with the wall.
- Councillor Dodson acting on behalf of the Rotherham East Ward Members has been leading the consultation on proposals for the gating and fencing project as agreed with the residents.
- Area Assembly consultation and agreement on the gating and fencing project.
- Door to door visits conducted to agree action for the gating and fencing scheme and consent sought for installation and delivery of keys.
- Ongoing consultation and dialogue maintained with 2010 Rotherham Ltd, Green Spaces Unit, Streetpride and Chevin Housing Association.
- Ward Members have been informed of the findings and actions as identified in this report. Councillor Dodson commented that he was satisfied with the findings and actions undertaken.
- Original report submitted on the 1st September 2008, Minute No: 65.

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kalpana.desai@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	15th June, 2009
3.	Title:	Decent Homes Enhanced Support for Vulnerable Customers
4.	Directorate:	2010 Rotherham Ltd

5. Summary

Whilst it is acknowledged that a considerable amount of disruption is caused during the Decent Homes work, it is perceived that this is having an adverse effect with regard to Customer satisfaction, complaints and the refusal rate, especially in cases of vulnerable customers, as defined in Appendix 1. This report aims to find solutions which will endeavour to minimise both anxiety and disruption throughout the process of Decent Homes by enhancing the customer care and support provided to vulnerable people while their homes are being refurbished through the Decent Homes programme.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member considers the proposals included within this report and approves the implementation of the enhancements to help improve the support we provide to vulnerable customers and the completion of the DH programme at a maximum 5% refusal rate.

7. Proposals and Details

Given the scope and the geographical spread of the next two years' work packages, the construction partners' flexibility in delivering the works and the implementation of innovative working practices are paramount in keeping the overall cost of the works affordable and ensuring that at least 95% of the properties approved for investment will be brought to the Decent Homes standard.

Currently the Decent Homes programme is running at a rate of 8.87% for properties where Decent Homes works were fully refused.

To ensure that we manage the risks associated with the next two years programme accordingly the following enhancements in providing the service are proposed:

1) Mobilisation group

The mobilisation group was formed to provide an enhancement to the existing Decent Homes delivery consultation process and improve the communication process with our vulnerable tenants and tailor support requirements specifically to meet individual customer needs.

The Mobilisation Project Group aims to build on good customer care practice and ensure that the appropriate individual customer support packages are put in place in advance of the commencement of the refurbishment works.

Prior to the contractors initial induction communication process, customers will be visited to correlate a comprehensive tenant profile. The information collected within this profile will assist in determining the appropriate individual support/care requirements in advance of the commencement of the works.

The membership of the group consist of Representatives from:
Construction Partners, Social Services, RMBC- Adult Services, 2010 Decent Homes, 2010 OT's, 2010 Neighbourhood Management Directorate.

The cost of establishing the mobilisation group is contained within the current capital management fee.

2) Enhancing the decoration allowance

The current remuneration provided by 2010 is £25.00 per room which has sustained decoration damage. During a recent benchmarking exercise carried out by Efficiency 4 North it was identified that whilst this sum is generally in line with similar organisations carrying out Decent Homes works, it is approximately 75% less than that offered by A1 housing.

It should be noted that this sum has been constant for the last 15 years or more. A revised sum of around £40 per room would be obtained, just by applying an inflation element in the region of 3% over this period. However whilst this would align 2010 Rotherham Ltd with other similar organisations, this sum would probably still be well below the market rate of employing a decorator.

It should be noted that extensive disruption occurs during the Decent Homes works, especially in cases where electrical rewiring and heating installations are carried out. Upon completion of the works the customer is left with a property which may require extensive or full decoration. Whilst it is acknowledged that a decoration allowance is provided, it is suggested that this was initially aimed at rooms with minimum damage. This sum has been around for a number of years and as such does not take into account revisions to electrical regulations, central heating initiatives and H&S criteria, which over the years have resulted in increased requirements and subsequently increased disturbance. Although every effort is taken to minimise the decoration damage, a certain amount of damage is unavoidable.

It is recommended that in order to meet the needs of our vulnerable customers and to minimise the number of refusals, an enhanced decoration allowance should be offered to as follows:

- For all vulnerable tenants the decoration allowance to be raised at £40/room
- For vulnerable tenants living in properties where a rewire or electrical upgrade improvements are carried out and caused extensive damage, an alternative basic remedial decoration to the rooms affected to be offered at a maximum of £500 per dwelling. This service will be provided by local contractors or the IHSP subject to a soft market testing exercise being carried out
- Decoration allowance is raised to £40 per room for all other tenants living in properties where rewire or electrical upgrade improvements are carried out and caused extensive damage.

Based on 1973 sheltered and elderly people properties being included in the next two years programme and an estimation of 250 extra vulnerable customers who previously refused works and are living in other different types of properties and based on an assumption that 50% of the properties still to be worked on require rewire/ electrical upgrade works, the maximum extra cost above the existing provisional budget for decoration allowance is £592,740. The total budget for decoration allowances will be £1,192,870.

The current decoration allowance budget for the next two years is £600,130.

3) Strengthen and utilise Respite facilities

The process for refurbishing properties under the Decent Homes scheme is carried out whilst the customers are living in their homes in the majority of cases.

Due to customers personal special needs it may be necessary to move a customer to an alternative accommodation to ensure that the work can be carried out with no detriment to the health and safety of the customer.

The following procedure is followed:

- Prior to the commencement of the refurbishment taking place the Decent Homes Champion / Customer Liaison Officer for the area will have completed house visits to all of the customers to complete a Customer Profile which will identify the customers vulnerability; any special needs and support required for the individuals living in the property
- A more vulnerable person may require a higher level of support and be reasonably less able to cope with a lower level of disturbance than a more fit and able customer. This may require short term temporary decanting during the refurbishment period for part or the whole of the time. In this case alternative solutions such as temporary respite property will be investigated
- At the beginning of the consultation the customers will be issued the appropriate written information. i.e. information on the support that is available, types of respite etc
- Prior to decanting the customer/s the Decent Homes Champion / Customer Liaison Officer will arrange for customers to sign the appropriate forms and co-ordinate their move to ensure that the council's obligations are met
- The Customer Liaison Officer will act as the main point of contact for customers throughout the work with the Decent Homes Champion getting involved where the customer is identified as vulnerable or having special needs.
- On completion of the works the Decent Homes Champion will co-ordinate the return of the customers to their improved tenancy.

In the majority of cases decanting will be to a suitable Council owned property which has been purposely furnished to meet the needs of customers for a short period of time i.e. up to four weeks. There is no impact on the voids turn around or the rent roll by implementing this proposal.

In exceptional circumstances where the customer's needs cannot be met in the accommodation available and there is no other solution then Residential Care can be considered for a one to two week period depending on the amount of work which has been identified for their home and working closely with the Contractors to get the initial work completed within a shorter period of time.

Should this proposal be accepted, the maximum potential cost is of around £310,800 this is based on a 10% take up of Vulnerable Customers be either decanted to Residential Respite (at £350 /week for 4 weeks for 222 properties) or overnight respite in Council properties (based on average rental cost of £65/week for 4 weeks for 222 properties). Approximately 2% of customers stayed away from home while refurbishment work was carried out during the first two years of the programme although we have to consider that

the vulnerable customers group represented a lower percentage compared to the proposed 2009/11 programme.

4) Additional assistance

Floor coverings

In conjunction with the proposed decoration criteria, it is also proposed that a similar view is extended to floor coverings. This would necessitate the availability of professional services which would include both carpet and laminate floor specialist. These services would be available in instances where the Decent Homes works results in damage to floor coverings. Estimated extra cost for this proposal is £44,400 (Based on £200 x 222 properties).

Rent Allowance

In cases where a customer's personal circumstances prevent them from residing in their homes, whilst the works is in progress and choose to stay with friends or relatives, it is recommended that a rent allowance be allocated. Estimated extra cost is £14,300 (average weekly rent £65 x 220 = **£14,300**).

Support in preparation for the works

- A wrap and pack service
- Storage and removal service.

The additional cost for these enhancements is £11,100 (contingency based on 2 hours labour for 222 properties x £50).

5) Showers over bath

A decision was made after the first phase of Decent Homes activity by the ALMO's Board and the Council to replace the full bathroom suites for the remainder of the properties in the programme and also the specification has changed in order to meet tenants' aspirations. A decision was made for Step In showers to be offered as an alternative option to a bath to the people living in sheltered and elderly people properties. The current cost included within the affordability model in order to deliver this enhancement for the remainder of the programme is £1,547,527. However the take up for this option was very low over the last two years and this facility could not be installed for customers who failed their OT assessment and were refused the installation of walk in showers. Taking into account the feedback received from our customers and the OTs advice with regard to improvements to vulnerable tenants' properties, it is proposed that the step in shower option is replaced with the shower over bath and this improvement to be offered to the tenants living in sheltered and elderly people properties over the next two years.

This would have the following advantages:

- Showers are no longer considered a luxury. They are regarded as a minimum requirement
- Reduce appeals
- Reduce adaptations works, which would have a cost saving and would help ensure that Rotherham is left with a better balance of suitable social housing accommodation on the completion of the Decent Homes programme
- This will enhance both customer satisfaction and value for money, based on long term investment
- Contribute towards meeting 2010 Rotherham's, RMBC's and tenants' aspirations with regard to providing Homes for Life and contribute towards protecting the Environment.

The cost of this improvement is estimated to be approximately £900,000. This cost is lower than the cost of the step in showers currently approved.

Impact on the affordability of the Decent Homes programme

The following provisions were included in the affordability model for 1st April 2009 as Decent Homes costs:

Respite facilities:	£455,916
Step in showers:	£1,547,527
Total :	£2,003,443

The total extra cost for all improvements proposed by this report is £1,873,340.

The affordability model illustrates that by taking into account a refusal rate of just 5% the surplus of resources as at 1st April 2009 could be £5,427,162. If a decision is made for all the pending investment priorities to be addressed and a 5% refusals rate assumption is applied there is still a surplus in resources of £460,058.

If we complete the Decent Homes programme at a refusal rate of 8% then the surplus in resources will be £6,971,051. If a decision is made for all the pending investment priorities to be addressed and an 8% refusals rate assumption is applied there is still a surplus in resources of £2,003,947.

8. Finance

A summary of the potential additional costing of the improvements/enhancements offered to vulnerable customers is estimated to be £1,873,340.

£2,003,443 was included in the affordability model as at 1st April 2009 in order to pay for the proposals outlined below.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

This report proposes that extra care and support be provided to our vulnerable customers to help reduce customer distress, anxiety and minimise the risk of claims based on medical grounds and the refusals associated with the Decent Homes programme. There may be a risk of challenge by previous customers who did not receive the individual enhancements.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Possible legal claim in the event of an incident relating to stress and anxiety caused to a customer whilst carrying out Decent Homes works.

The Decent Homes programme will contribute towards meeting the “Green agenda’s” aims and objectives.

Providing individual support packages tailored to individual need and assistance for vulnerable customers to ensure that they are offered the opportunity to have their home modernised and securing a better environment for them to live in.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation was carried out with our Decent Homes partners, tenant’s part of the Decent Homes focus group and other teams within 2010 Rotherham (Neighbourhoods).

Contact Name : *Ramona Youhill, Assistant Director of Investment, 01709 (82) 2220, ramona.youhill@2010rotherham.org*

Exception criteria for enhanced support

- The person is over 65 years old, or
- The person is registered disabled or in receipt of Mobility Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Disabled Persons Tax Credit or Severe Disablement Allowance and lives alone, or
- The person is in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (accidents or disease) or Reduced Earnings Allowance and lives alone, or
- The person lives with someone with similar difficulties to their own, or
- The person is dependent on a care package for personal care, or receives day care or respite care
- The person is wheelchair dependent either permanently or for medium to long distances
- The person is able-bodied but is a carer (in receipt of Carer's Allowance) for a disabled child or adult, including people with dementia, severe physical disability or a learning disability requiring high levels of support and assistance
- The person is diagnosed as suffering from limiting long term or terminal illness

1.	Meeting	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date	15th June 2009
3.	Title	Development of 2010 Rotherham Ltd Improvement Plan
4.	Directorate	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

On 29th April 2009, Cabinet agreed that a 2010 Rotherham Ltd improvement plan must be established, and in order to secure a future management agreement beyond March 2011, the ALMO must deliver these improvements over the following 18 months.

The ALMO will need to address the aspirations of the Council and the needs / expectations of our tenants and leaseholders. Work is now underway to develop the improvement plan, and this report sets out the broad areas to be covered, and explains the process that will be followed to agree the final version.

6. Recommendations

- **NOTE THE KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT SET OUT IN SECTION 7.2**
- **AGREE TO RECEIVE A FURTHER REPORT IN JULY 2009, SETTING OUT THE FINAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND DETAILED MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**
- **NOTE THE TIMETABLE AT APPENDIX 1**

7. Proposals and details

7.1 Background

On 29th April 2009, two reports were presented to Cabinet:

- Conclusions from the Council Housing Directions project, and
- Outcomes of consultation with tenants and leaseholders

The recommendations were approved for each report and it was agreed that a 2010 Rotherham Ltd improvement plan would be developed over the next 18 months. The current management agreement will be extended to the end of March 2011, and in order for Members to be confident about agreeing to a new contract beyond this date, 2010 Rotherham Ltd must deliver significant improvements.

7.2 Developing an Improvement Plan

A number of key areas for improvement have been identified by the Council. These include issues identified by feedback from tenants and leaseholders obtained from both the STATUS tenant satisfaction survey, and the recent test of opinion survey. Performance issues and Audit Commission feedback have also been taken into account.

A list of broad outcomes has been produced, and this has been provided to 2010 Rotherham Ltd to develop a detailed improvement plan. The key areas are set out below.

2010 Rotherham Ltd must:

1. Address tenants' and leaseholders' priorities for improvement
2. Achieve the standards expected of a three-star, top-performing organisation
3. Make a unique contribution to Rotherham's top priorities
4. Ensure all services are well-organised, well-managed and well-governed
5. Ensure strong financial management processes are in place
6. Deliver value for money, making excellent use of resources

2010 Rotherham Ltd will produce a plan that will achieve the required outcomes to ensure excellent and continuously improving services are provided to the tenants and leaseholders of Rotherham. Targets will need to be SMART, and clear monitoring mechanisms must be established (see below). A series of meetings has been arranged between senior managers in RMBC and 2010 Rotherham Ltd to ensure that a draft document is agreed by the middle of June.

7.3 Consultation on the improvement plan

On 24th June 2009, a stakeholder seminar will be held to discuss the plan and confirm arrangements for ongoing consultation. Tenants and leaseholders will be consulted on the improvement plan in late June and early July, via a series of focus groups. Membership for these targeted discussions will be drawn from the following sources:

- Tenants and leaseholders who have indicated that they would like to be involved in further discussions following the 'Council Housing Directions – Have Your Say' consultation

- RotherFed's Tenant Reference Group (which was established as part of the Council Housing Directions Project)

The improvement plan will be revised to take account of feedback from customers, and once agreed, will be reported to Cabinet Member at the end of July 2009. A timetable has been produced, this is attached as appendix 1.

7.4 Monitoring arrangements

Progress against the plan will be monitored via monthly RMBC / 2010 Rotherham Ltd liaison meetings. Additionally, arrangements will be put in place to enable tenants and leaseholders to provide us with high quality information through a variety of mechanisms to ensure the plan continues to meet customer aspirations.

Quarterly reports will be provided to Cabinet Member as follows:

- July 2009 – confirmation of final improvement plan and monitoring arrangements
- October 2009 – first progress report
- January 2010 – progress report
- April 2010 – review of 2009/10 delivery and confirmation of final decision-making process
- July 2010 – progress report
- October 2010 – final report

8. Financial implications

As agreed by Cabinet on 29/04/09, a detailed financial appraisal of housing options will be completed that will take account of Government's review of the housing subsidy system. This will be reported separately to Cabinet Member.

9. Risks and uncertainties

It is essential that a clear and SMART improvement plan is agreed between the Council and 2010 Rotherham Ltd, and approved by tenants and leaseholders, as soon as possible. The key risk of not completing this piece of work in a timely manner is that 2010 Rotherham Ltd's opportunity to deliver the required improvements will be limited, and there will be continuing uncertainty regarding the future management of housing management services.

Risks associated with 2010 Rotherham Ltd's failure to deliver against the improvement plan will be identified once the plan has been finalised. A separate risk register will be produced and included in the next report to Cabinet Member. Each quarterly progress report will include a detailed risk analysis section.

10. Policy and performance agenda implications

2010 Rotherham Ltd's improvement plan is required to set out how the organisation will make a unique contribution to Rotherham's top-line priorities.

2010 Rotherham Ltd is responsible for NI 158 relating to delivery of the Government's Decent homes target, which contributes to Rotherham's overall Comprehensive Area Assessment.

11. Background papers and consultation

- Report to Cabinet 29/04/09: Council Housing Directions project – final report
- Report to Cabinet 29/04/09: Tenant and leaseholder consultation on the future options for managing Council housing

Comprehensive consultation on the improvement plan will be carried out with tenants and leaseholders, staff in RMBC and 2010 Rotherham Ltd, and RotherFed.

Contact name

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2010 Rotherham Ltd Improvement Plan: Timetable for development and delivery

Action	Milestones	Lead	Deadline
Agree content of improvement plan	Review themes from customer feedback and other sources to produce headlines for plan	Jane Davies-Haire & Dave Roddis	May 09
	Agree key areas of focus with 2010 Rotherham	RMBC / Kevin Lowry	May 09
	Report key areas of focus to Cabinet Member	Jane Davies-Haire	June 09
	Develop an improvement plan	2010 Rotherham Ltd	June 09
	Present this to stakeholder seminar	Jane Davies-Haire	June 09
	Consult tenants and leaseholders	Jane Davies-Haire	July 09
	Amend as required to take account of feedback	2010 Rotherham Ltd	July 09
	Report agreed improvement plan to Cabinet Member	Jane Davies-Haire	July 09
Deed of Variation to existing Management Agreement to extend to 31/03/2011	Establish process for agreeing Deed of Variation	Jane Davies-Haire	July 09
	Consider whether any other amendments are to be made at same time	RMBC / Kevin Lowry	Aug 09
	Report to 2010 Rotherham Ltd Board	Kevin Lowry	Sep 09
	Report to Cabinet Member	Jane Davies-Haire	Sep 09
	Ensure Variation completed	RMBC	Oct 09
Monitor progress against improvement plan	Establish appropriate monitoring mechanisms and produce formal report on quarterly basis	Jane Davies-Haire	June 09 / Quarterly
Completion of actions arising from Council Housing Directions project	Carry out detailed appraisal of options	Mike Shaw & Jane Davies-Haire	TBC
	Report on new build options	Tom Bell	June 09
	Report on tenant empowerment opportunities	Jane Davies-Haire	June 09
Review progress and confirm next stages	Produce final report on 2010's progress against improvement plan	Jane Davies-Haire	Oct 2010
	Confirm final stages, including tenant and leaseholder consultation process		Oct 2010
Consult tenants and leaseholders	TBC		Nov 2010
Confirmation of RMBC's final decision	TBC		Dec 2010
Implement new arrangements	TBC		31/03/2011

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