

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

**Venue: Bailey House,
Rawmarsh Road,
Rotherham S60 1TD**

Date: Thursday, 11th March 2010

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. Apologies for Absence
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Questions from members of the public and the press
6. Communications

FOR PRESENTATION

7. Air Quality Management Areas (Pages 1 - 23)
8. 2010 Rotherham Ltd. Improvement Plan (Pages 24 - 49)
9. Under Occupation Policy (Pages 50 - 64)

FOR INFORMATION

10. Homes and Communities Agency Single Conversation and Revised Housing Strategy (Pages 65 - 71)
11. Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods (Pages 72 - 91)
- minutes of meetings held on 4th and 18th January and 1st and 15th February, 2010

MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

12. Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel (Pages 92 - 100)
- minutes of meeting held on 28th January, 2010
13. Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee (Pages 101 - 118)
- minutes of meeting held on 15th and 29th January and 19th February, 2010
14. Climate Change: Scrutiny Review (Pages 119 - 120)

**Date of Next Meeting:-
Thursday, 22 April 2010**

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor McNeely

Vice-Chairman – Councillor P. A. Russell

Councillors:-Atkin, Blair, Cutts, Gamble, Havenhand, Hodgkiss, 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)

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 15th February, 2010

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Goult and Kaye (Policy Advisors).

J132. NATIONAL AIR QUALITY AND M1 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 108 of 18th February, 2008, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services presented the above update.

Section 83 of the Environment Act required a local authority, for any area where air quality standards were not being met, to issue an Order designating it an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). It was proposed that the area covered by the existing M1 AQMA be extended to include areas of Blackburn that were in proximity to the M1.

Although air quality is cleaner than at any time since the industrial revolution, air pollution was not declining as quickly as previously expected. The proposed extension of the M1 will inevitably have a negative effect upon air quality in Rotherham.

The Council's Community Protection Unit had been consulted by the Highways Agency regarding the proposal to widen the M1 motorway between junction 35 and 32 through Rotherham. The proposal was to increase highway capacity as a managed motorway to 4 lanes at peak times with no extra land taken. This would result in vehicles being closer to the residential properties of Blackburn, Meadowbank and Brinsworth. Mitigation measures could include variable speed limits. The impact on air quality was being assessed by consultants on behalf of the Highways Agency as part of their Environmental Assessment.

A Detailed Assessment of the air quality in Blackburn close to the M1, adjacent to the M1 AQMA was submitted to DEFRA in July, 2009. It was unlikely that areas of Blackburn where residents were exposed to levels of Nitrogen Dioxide above the Air Quality Objective Levels would meet the Air Quality Objectives. Consequently, the Council was statutorily obliged to declare an AQMA.

It was proposed that the AQMA should be extended to include:-

"From the boundary of the existing Air Quality Management Area which follows the line of Droppingwell Road follow Baring Road to the junction with Barber Wood Road, due north from Barber Wood Road to the line of the dismantled railway line, follow the route of the dismantled railway line to the north west to the edge of the M1 motorway. From there, follow the edge of the M1 motorway due south east to New Droppingwell Road"

It was also noted that a Detailed Assessment of Air Quality for the Parkgate area near to the A633 had been completed in April, 2009, and accepted in full by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. A Detailed Assessment for the pollutant fine particulates (24- hour PM₁₀) in the area of St. Ann's alongside the A630 was due for submission to DEFRA in April, 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That the extension of the Rotherham M1 Air Quality Management Area (2001) be extended to include additional areas of Blackburn close to the M1 motorway.

(2) That Legal and Democratic Services amend the existing Air Quality Management Area Rotherham Borough Council Order 2001 (M1) in accordance with National Air Quality Strategy Guidance.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member For Housing & Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	18 January 2010
3.	Title:	National Air Quality Strategy and M1 Air Quality Management Area Update
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

5. Summary

This report further updates M1 Motorway Air Quality Management Areas update 3rd September 2007 Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods (59/2007); and National air quality strategy update 18th February 2008 Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods (108/2208), providing further information on the Local Air Quality Management work which has been carried out by the Community Protection Unit.

Section 83 of the Environment Act requires a local authority, for any area where air quality standards are not being met, to issue an order designating it an Air Quality Management Area. Accordingly this report seeks to extend the area covered by the M1 Air Quality Management Area to include areas of Blackburn that are in proximity to the M1.

6. Recommendations

- **That Cabinet Member recommends the extension of the Rotherham M1 Air Quality Management Area (2001) to include additional areas of Blackburn close to the M1 motorway**
- **That Cabinet Member recommends RMBC Legal & Democratic Services to amend the existing Air Quality Management Area the Rotherham Borough Council Order 2001 (M1) in accordance with National Air Quality Strategy Guidance.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

The Environment Act 1995 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to periodically assess air quality against health-based objectives. The Air Quality Regulations 1997 formalised the air quality objectives and were superseded by the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 and further amended through the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2007, laying out assessment processes and Air Quality Objective Levels for:

- Benzene
- 1,3 -Butadiene
- Carbon monoxide
- Lead
- Nitrogen dioxide
- PM10
- PM25
- Sulphur dioxide
- Ozone
- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons

(For the Objective Levels and health effects of these pollutants refer to Appendix 1: Rotherham MBC National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11)

The publication of the revised National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) in July 2007 encapsulates these mandatory air quality standards, objectives, reviews and assessments. Rotherham MBC have an obligation to meet the targets set down by the National Strategy, and have sought to achieve this through regional and local strategies and plans including RMBC's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11 (appendix 1 to this report) which sets out the local method of achieving the National Air Quality Strategy objectives through:

- Monitoring air quality in the borough.
- Developing and maintaining a computer-based air quality modelling system; in order;
- To achieve the air quality objectives contained in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2007.
- and reduce air pollution to the lowest levels that can be reasonably achieved, in accordance with the underlying principles of the European Directive.

The primary objective of this statutory review and assessment process is to identify those areas of the local authority where the air quality is unlikely to meet these objectives. Accordingly the Council undertakes continuous Air Quality review and assessment to identify any risks and to establish trends, which are then reported through to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in the

form of an annual Air Quality Action Plan progress report. (The process is laid out in the Council's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11)

If it appears that the objectives are unlikely to be met by the appropriate target dates, then the Local Authority is required to declare one or more Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in accordance with section 83 of the Environment Act 1995. The Local Authority must also produce an Air Quality Action Plan in relation to the AQMA, stating the actions the authority proposes that it intends to exercise in pursuit of the objectives. Provisions to effectively deal with these requirements are laid down in RMBC's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11.

Rotherham MBC have declared seven Air Quality Management Areas during the past eight years and revoked one in Brampton Bierlow (reported to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods 3rd September 2007 [60/2007]).

It is critical to note however that the Council is unable on its own to achieve the objectives laid down by the National Air Quality Strategy. Rotherham works closely with partners including South Yorkshire Transport Executive, Barnsley MBC, Sheffield MBC and Doncaster MBC, to provide a regional approach to achieve national air quality objectives. Rotherham's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11 is mirrored across South Yorkshire and encapsulated within the Local Transport Plan to deliver a partner based mechanism to achieve the national air quality goals.

7.2 Current Position

Air Quality Action Plan

The Council's Air Quality Action Plan progress report of 2008 - 09 elicited positive comments from DEFRA, including:

It is clear that RMBC have been investing substantial time and money into improving air quality in the area. Many of the actions cited in the Progress Report Table described as 'complete'. RMBC should be commended on their progress to date and encouraged to keep up the implementation of ongoing actions. The actions that are ongoing appear to be on target although RMBC may find it useful to include sub-actions and highlight quantified deadlines to enable the assessment of progress.

They continue:

RMBC have, in most cases, identified clear indicators and targets for each action against which progress can be assessed and reported in future progress reports. The identification of clear indicators and associated timescales for implementation/ completion of sub-actions assists the Council in measuring progress towards meeting its objectives.

They conclude that **'RMBC should be commended on the progress made with implementing the AQAP to date'**.

The Air Quality Action Plan has been reviewed and updated with the subsequent production of the Air Quality Service Plan for 2009 - 11 contained within the Council's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11.

Trends in Air Quality

Although air is cleaner than at any time since the industrial revolution, air pollution is not declining as quickly as previously expected. Some targets for nitrogen dioxide, ozone and particles will be missed in hot spots throughout England. For example, in Rotherham, it is predicted that some areas close to the M1 motorway and some other major routes will not meet the target for nitrogen dioxide by the end of 2010. In Rotherham we have currently seven Air Quality Management Areas covering identified hot spots where some of the National Air Quality Strategy objectives are currently exceeded.

Industrial Air Pollution

In addition the Council's Community Protection Unit monitors compliance and enforces legislation relating to the control of emissions of pollution to air from industry through its statutory duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Environmental Permitting Regulations 2007 as amended. All prescribed industrial processes in Rotherham are required to be permitted to operate. Each industrial process is inspected according to an annual risk based inspection regime to ensure compliance with legislation and national guidance. Any process that fails to comply is subject to potential legal action, and in the last reporting year one operator had their permit revoked which effectively stopped them operating. An annual performance report is presented to DEFRA to demonstrate that Rotherham is achieving its statutory obligations.

M1 managed motorway proposal

The proposed extension of the M1 will inevitably have a negative effect upon air quality in Rotherham, and consequently ensure that the drive to achieve targets is compromised.

RMBC's Community Protection Unit have been consulted by the Highways Agency regarding the proposal to widen the M1 motorway between junction 35 and 32 through Rotherham. The proposal is to increase highway capacity as a managed motorway to four lanes at peak times with no extra land taken. This will result in vehicles travelling on the motorway being closer to the residential properties of Blackburn, Meadowbank, and Brinsworth. Mitigation measures could include variable speed limits (for example limiting speed to 50mph at peak times). The impact on air quality is being assessed by consultants on behalf of the Highways Agency as part of their Environmental Assessment

7.3 Air Quality Assessment

Updating and Screening Assessment of Air Quality Report

As required by DEFRA, in May 2009, an Updating and Screening Assessment of Air Quality Report was submitted. All the findings of this report were accepted by DEFRA.

Air quality in Blackburn

A Detailed Assessment of the Air quality in Blackburn close to the M1 motorway, adjacent to the M1 Air Quality Management Area (declared in 2001), was submitted to DEFRA in July 2009.

It is unlikely that areas of Blackburn where residents are exposed to levels of Nitrogen Dioxide above the Air Quality Objective Levels will meet the Air Quality Objectives. Consequently the Council is statutorily obliged to declare an Air Quality Management Area.

The criterion for nitrogen dioxide is that the annual average objective of 40ug/m³ should not be exceeded. The conclusions of this detailed assessment are that the annual average objective is currently not being met and will not be achieved during the target year of 2010 at the following locations:

- Within 30m of the M1 in the Blackburn area to the north of J34 of the M1 and the M1 AQMA 2001.

There are a number of residential properties situated in this area.

The recommendation of this report is that the Rotherham M1 Air Quality Management Area Nitrogen Dioxide annual mean should be extended by the Council to include the following areas:

From the boundary of the existing Air Quality Management Area which follows the line of Droppingwell Road follow Baring Road to the junction with Barber Wood Road, due north from Barber Wood Road to the line of the dismantled railway line, follow the route of the dismantled railway line to the North west to the edge of the M1 motorway. From there, follow the edge of the M1 motorway due south east to New Droppingwell Road.

Interventions to effect pollution along the M1 corridor

Whilst the Council alone would find it difficult to have any significant impact on the air quality from traffic pollution, working with partners can produce significant impact. Similarly local policy has to be supported through national and regional policy to achieve effective means of addressing problems with air quality. It is critical that work at all levels is undertaken to combat the adverse effects of air pollution.

At a partner level measures are in place to address air quality along this corridor and are contained within the Local Transport Plan, Local Development Framework and Regional Spatial Policy. At a national level policy is in place to effect the source of emissions through:

- Regulatory measures and standards to reduce vehicle emissions and improve fuels
- Tax-based measures that encourage people to supply and use cleaner fuels and also encourage them to buy more environmentally-friendly vehicles
- The development of an integrated transport plan that supports sustainable development.
- National road pricing scheme
- Incentives to phase out the most polluting vehicles

In addition there are sympathetic regional and local initiatives to limit the effects of traffic pollution including:

- Improving public transport through a Quality Bus Corridor Programme
- Campaigns, including the nationally recognised South Yorkshire 'Care4air' Campaign
- Utilisation of Planning processes to develop sympathetic Travel Planning in accordance with Guidance
- Programme of incentives to increase the penetration of low emission vehicles

In order to mitigate at a local level the air quality effects of the M1 expansion on the residents of Blackburn, RMBC Community Protection will continue to work closely with partners, including the Highways Agency, Environment Agency and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive to effect change. A number of measures have been identified that will effect traffic flow along the M1 corridor that will reduce the negative effects of traffic pollution in Blackburn, including:

- Active traffic management at times of peak demand
- Speed limitation on the M1 where air quality is an issue to reduce NOx and particulate emissions
- Introduction of traffic lights on slip roads to control flow of traffic
- Introduce variable signage on the M1 and adjoining roads to smooth traffic flows and NOx and particulate emissions
- Use of planning conditions to access and condition any future developments so as not to further exasperate air quality in the area
- Challenge proposed developments that unsuitable on grounds of air quality

At a local level air quality will be effected from national drivers targeting vehicles as the source of pollution; regional level at planed approach and initiatives and local level through monitoring, traffic improvements and control of further developments. The mechanics of addressing pollution from traffic are long term and challenged by

ever increasing vehicle movements; nevertheless the national drive to improve the pollution from vehicles and local and regional initiatives and controls will in the long term serve to achieve the National Air Quality Objectives.

Air Quality in Parkgate

A Detailed Assessment of Air Quality for the Parkgate area near to the A633 was completed in April 2009. It was submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and accepted in full. The report set out a detailed assessment, which forms part of the review an assessment process required under the Environment Act 1995 and subsequent Regulations. It concludes that no Air Quality Management Area is currently required.

Nevertheless, levels of annual mean Nitrogen Dioxide remain very close to Air Quality Objective Levels and air pollution monitoring and modeling work will continue in the area.

Air Quality in St. Ann's

A Detailed Assessment of Air Quality is required for the pollutant fine particulates (24- hour PM₁₀) in the area of St Ann's alongside the A630 which was declared as an Air Quality Management Area in 2004. Improvements in levels of particulate pollution have been monitored and the reasons for the improvement may include the modernisation of the bus fleet which provides the X78 bus service, which runs through the area and the signalisation of the St Ann's roundabout junction. The Detailed Assessment of Air Quality is due to be submitted to the DEFRA in April 2010.

7.3 Future Proposals

The Council will continue to undertake all its statutory duties in relation to the National Air Quality Strategy through the means laid out in RMBC's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11 and its Air Quality Action Plan and Air Quality Service Plan for 2009 - 11.

The Council's Community Protection Unit will continue to work closely with partners both regionally and national to achieve the objectives laid down in the National Air Quality Strategy.

In addition the Council is required to:

- Include the indicated areas of Blackburn within the M1 Air Quality Management Area this will require RMBC's Legal & Democratic Services amending the existing Air Quality Management Area the Rotherham Borough

Council Order 2001 (M1) in accordance with National Air Quality Strategy Guidance.

- Prepare and submit a Detail Assessment of Air Quality for the St. Ann's area to DEFRA by April 2010
- Continue to undertake modelling and pollution monitoring in the Parkgate area in the knowledge that the area is close to exceeding acceptable levels.

8. Finance

Monitoring and modelling of air quality is supported through current revenue budgets and by DEFRA direct grants, which are bid for on an annual basis.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Budgetary pressures might have a negative impact on the Council's abilities to fulfil its statutory duties.

Failure to undertake statutory duties in relation to Air Quality presents the risk of legal challenge to the Council and fails to address duties.

Failure to achieve national objectives and targets will have a negative effect on the Council's ability to contribute to success against National Indicator 194 Local Air Quality.

The Council does not have sufficient powers to improve air quality along the M1 corridor through its actions alone, but has a key leadership role given in the Local Air Quality Management duties of the Environment Act 1995. A significant element of this is to build in partnership buy in and government and national role.

10. Policy & Performance Agenda Implications

The provisions laid out within Rotherham's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11 to achieve the requirements of the National Air Quality Strategy contribute to **NI 194 Level of air quality – reduction in NO_x and primary PM₁₀ emissions through local authority's estate and operations**. This is particularly so in relation to those provisions relating to Air Quality Management Areas.

The Council's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11 also contributes to the **Regional Spatial Strategy** that informs the Local Transport Plan.

In addition to contributing to the **Sustainable Development** cross cutting theme by protecting and enhancing the environment, the Council's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11 also contributes to **Rotherham Alive** by ensuring a place where people feel good, are healthy and active, **Rotherham Achieving** by helping to improve the quality of life in the most deprived communities

and **Rotherham Proud** by increasing the satisfaction in the local area as a place to live and putting pride in the hearts of our communities.

In addressing the **Rotherham Alive** priorities air quality contributes to delivering the following key Public Health strategic actions:

- Tackling Health Inequalities.
- Improving Mental Health and Well-being

Dealing with issues related to air quality has clear linkages to the seven outcomes of the Outcomes Framework for Social Care, and importantly includes:

- Improved Health and Emotional Well-being, by promoting and facilitating the health and emotional well-being of people who use the services.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- The (National) Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, 2007
- RMBC's National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11Environment Act 1995
- Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000
- Air Quality Standards Regulations 2007

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Appendix 1: Rotherham MBC National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11

Community Protection Unit, Neighbourhoods & Adult Services

Introduction

Our Plan is intended to emphasise the role of this local authority in working towards cleaner air for our local communities.

Air quality is an issue of public concern. Although air quality within the Borough of Rotherham is generally good, certain areas suffer elevated levels of pollution, principally as a result of traffic-generated sources.

Rotherham MBC has identified areas of poor air quality in the borough and has employed a network of monitoring equipment to investigate the problem areas. Rotherham MBC works in partnership with the other three South Yorkshire authorities and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority in many ways, including the Local Transport Planning process and Clean Air Partnerships e.g. The Clean Air Partnership.

A countywide social marketing campaign with the aim of improving awareness of air quality issues has been running continuously since 2004, the Care4air campaign: www.care4air.org.uk.

Aims of the Plan

1. To ensure that the air breathed by the residents of Rotherham is of the highest quality achievable.
2. To protect and enhance the environment of the Borough in order that the various eco-systems and the human population of the Borough are free from the adverse impacts of air pollution.

Objectives of the Plan

1. To work towards the air quality objectives contained in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2007.
2. To work towards reducing air pollution to the lowest levels that can be reasonably achieved, in accordance with the underlying principles of the European Directive.
3. To monitor air quality in the borough.
4. To develop and maintain a computer-based air quality modelling system.

Problems associated with Air Pollution

There are many well documented effects of air pollution, including:

- Climate change
- Acid rain

- Eutrophication
- Human health effects
- Crop and forest damage
- Damage to buildings

Health Effects

Benzene and 1, 3 - butadiene are recognised genotoxic human carcinogens.

Carbon monoxide combines with red blood cells to form carboxyhaemoglobin, which substantially reduces the capacity of the blood to carry oxygen to tissues. People who have an existing disease which affects the delivery of oxygen to the heart or brain (e.g. angina) are particularly susceptible to the effects of carbon monoxide.

Lead - Exposure to high levels of lead may result in toxic biochemical effects which can result in kidney, intestinal tract and nervous system damage. There is also a possible effect on brain development in children.

Particulate - Particulate air pollution is associated with a range of effects on health. PM₁₀ and other fine particles can penetrate deep into the lung tissue and as such can exacerbate asthma and other respiratory and cardiovascular conditions and also lead to increased mortality rates.

Sulphur dioxide causes constriction of the airways by stimulating nerves in the lining of the nose, throat and lung airways, exacerbating existing asthma and chronic lung conditions.

Nitrogen dioxide - At relatively high concentrations, nitrogen dioxide causes inflammation of the airways. There is evidence to show that long-term exposure to nitrogen dioxide may affect lung function and enhance the response to allergens in sensitised individuals. Nitrogen dioxide also reacts with other gases and pollutants to form ozone, which is the main component of summer smogs and can lead to irritation of the eyes and nose followed by inflammation and damage to the lining of the airways to the lungs if prolonged exposure is experienced.

Ozone is not included in the Plan as there are no measures that can be taken locally to deal with this pollutant. It may, at elevated concentrations, have an impact on health. Ozone can make the airways of the lungs inflamed and more responsive to factors causing them to constrict, and reduce breathing efficiency. There is no evidence of particular long-term effects.

Odours may be generated by industrial or commercial activities and can seriously interfere with the quality of life. Some odours can be harmful to health, although this is rare.

Air Quality Duties

Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 which requires local authorities to undertake review and assessments of the air quality in their area and to produce statutory reports as specified in national guidance. If it appears that the objectives specified in the National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) and the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2007 are unlikely to be met by the appropriate target dates, the local authority is required to declare one or more Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). The local authority must also produce an Air Quality Action Plan, stating the actions the authority proposes that it intends to exercise, in pursuit of the objectives.

The need for action on air quality is also reinforced by Government guidance on the preparation of Local Transport Plans (LTPs). This guidance states that air quality must be taken into account when formulating the LTP, particularly in the larger urban areas. Air quality is one of the shared priorities for the LTP.

A timetable for Rotherham's review and assessment duties is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Timetable for Review and Assessment of Air Quality 2000-2010

Local Authority Review and Assessment Report	Statutory Completion date	Which local authorities?	Date completed by Rotherham MBC
Round 1/Stage 2	December 2000	All	December 2000
Round 1/Stage 3	December 2000	All	December 2000
Round 1/Stage 4 (nitrogen dioxide)	12 months after declaration of AQMA	All with AQMAs	December 2002 On time
Round 1/Stage 4 (sulphur dioxide)	12 months after declaration of AQMA	All with AQMAs	July 2004 On time
Air Quality Action Plan (M1)	N/A	All with AQMAs	July 2003 To be revised periodically
Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) (2003)	May 2003	All	May 2003
Detailed Assessment (2004)	April 2004	All identifying a need for one in their USA	April 2004
Progress Report 2005	April 2005	All	April 2005
Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) (2006)	April 2006	All	April 2006
Detailed Assessment (2007)	April 2007	All identifying a need for one in their USA	April 2007
Progress Report 2008	April 2008	All	April 2008
Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) (2009)	April 2009	All	April 2009
Detailed Assessment (2010)	April 2010	All identifying a need for one in their USA	To be completed
Progress Report 2010	April 2010	Those authorities not carrying out Detailed Assessment	To be completed

Note -AQMA – Air Quality Management Area

National Air Quality Objectives

Table 2 Objectives included in the Air Quality Regulations 2000 and (Amendment) Regulations 2002 and 2007 for the purpose of Local Air Quality Management

Pollutant	Objective concentration	Measured as	Date to be achieved by
Benzene	16.25 ug/m ³	Running annual mean	31.12.2003
	5.00 ug/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2010
1,3-butadiene	2.25 ug/m ³	Running annual mean	31.12.2003
Carbon monoxide	10.0 mg/m ³	Maximum daily running 8 hour mean	31.12.2003
Lead	0.5 ug/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2004
	0.25 ug/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2008
Nitrogen dioxide	200 ug/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1 hour mean	01.01.2010
	40 ug/m ³	Annual mean	01.01.2010
Particles (PM ₁₀) (gravimetric)	50 ug/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	24 hour mean	31.12.2004
	40 ug/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2004
Particles (PM _{2.5}) (gravimetric)	25 ug/m ³	Annual mean	2020
	Target of 15% reductions at urban background	Annual mean	Between 2010 and 2020
Sulphur dioxide	350 ug/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1 hour mean	31.12.2004
	125 ug/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24 hour mean	31.12.2004
	266 ug/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15 minute mean	31.12.2005
Ozone	100 ug/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 10 times a year	8 hour mean	31.12.2005
Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons	0.25 ng/m ³ B[a]P	Annual average	31.12.2010

Rotherham Air Quality Management Areas

Rotherham has declared 7 Air Quality Management Areas, where it is predicted that the Government's air quality objectives will not be met by the target year:

1. M1 Motorway - Brinsworth, Catcliffe, Hill Top Meadowbank (nitrogen dioxide annual mean, road transport)
2. M1 Motorway – Wales (nitrogen dioxide annual mean, road transport)
3. Brampton Bierlow (sulphur dioxide (15 minute and 24-hour means), domestic solid fuel burning) (Now Revoked as air quality objectives are now met)
4. Wellgate (nitrogen dioxide annual mean, road transport)
5. Fitzwilliam Road (nitrogen dioxide annual mean, road transport)

6. Wortley Road (nitrogen dioxide annual mean, road transport)

7. Fitzwilliam Road (PM₁₀, 24 hour mean, road transport)

Six of the above AQMAs have been declared as a result of traffic emissions. One of the above (Brampton Bierlow) was declared because of high levels of sulphur dioxide, attributed to emissions from domestic solid fuel burning.

Revocation of AQMAs

The following AQMA has been revoked:

1. Brampton Bierlow (sulphur dioxide (15 minute and 24-hour means), domestic solid fuel burning) (24.09.07)

Air Quality Action Plans

The Council recognises that the statutory Action Plans to be produced under Air Quality management legislation are major tools in the improvement of air quality

The Council has produced an Air Quality Action Plan for the M1 AQMA. This is an important part of the implementation of the National Air Quality Strategy and our National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11.

Following declaration of Air Quality Management Areas in the town centre, an Action Plan for the town centre AQMA was produced. Many of the actions in this Action Plan will be implemented through the Local Transport Plan.

Domestic Emissions

The Council recognises that domestic smoke emissions can reduce air quality and despoil the environment.

The entire Borough has been declared a Smoke Control Area, which has been the major factor in reducing air pollution from domestic chimneys. The domestic provisions of the Clean Air Act 1993 continue to be enforced across the borough, in order to maintain the pollution reduction. The issues most commonly addressed are the use of unauthorised fuels, causing smoking domestic chimneys and the delivery of unauthorised fuel to householders by unscrupulous merchants. Enforcement is proactive and opportunities to educate householders are taken, such as radio interviews and press releases.

Actions undertaken in Brampton Bierlow since the declaration of the AQMA have led to a reduction in levels of sulphur dioxide and the revocation of the AQMA.

The Energy Team

The Council recognises that the improvement of energy efficiency will reduce pollution on a local and national scale.

The Council is actively working with households, business and the public sector in encouraging the more efficient use of energy within homes and small businesses, assisting and promoting the production, and use of renewable energy.

Energy efficiency, and the massive energy savings it affords, are crucial for the issues of climate change and security of supply. Reducing demand for energy must be a first principle in developing the UK's long-term sustainable energy needs.

To assist with the Plan and the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 Rotherham has its own dedicated Energy Team. The Act requires that all Local authorities to try to achieve a 30% Energy Saving by 2010. Consequently, the Affordable Warmth and Sustainable Energy Team's main function is to reduce CO₂ emissions and fuel poverty, to increase the energy efficiency and Affordable Warmth Indices of properties across the Borough, and to monitor progress towards such improvements. Such improvements are achieved primarily via provision of energy efficiency advice to householders within the Borough of Rotherham and, via the South Yorkshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre service <http://www.syec.co.uk> to householders across South Yorkshire.

Local Authority Housing

The Council recognises that its own housing stock may have an impact on local air quality

In an effort to improve Energy Efficiency within Council Housing and in line with the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 Neighbourhood Services also carries out an Insulation / Energy efficiency programme through Home Energy Advisors.

Management of the Council's housing stock has recently been vested in 2010 Rotherham Ltd., an "arms length management organisation". This body has been set up to manage the improvement of the stock to "decent homes" standard, which includes adequate thermal insulation, from both adequately glazed windows and doors and loft insulation.

Industrial Emissions

The Council recognises that industrial emissions to air can have an impact of local air quality

Industrial emissions from some (medium to large) installations in the Borough are proactively regulated under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations, which separate installations into "Part A" and "Part B". There are several Part A processes within the Borough, which are controlled by the Environment Agency (E.A.), and over 100 Part B processes are regulated by the Council.

Rotherham MBC is responsible for controlling the emissions to air of over 100 Part B processes. In order to minimise these processes impact on air quality a regime of inspection and monitoring is carried out together with prompt process authorisation updating. This was subject to a Best Value Indicator (BV217) until 31st March 2008, and will continue to be used as a local indicator.

Installations are required to exercise Best Available Technique in their emissions minimisation.

The Clean Air Act 1993 also contains controls on industrial emissions including cable burning, and the proactive application for approval of furnaces, boilers and chimney heights.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Part III) is also used to regulate emissions from industry, although this is a reactive mechanism and has some limitations.

Transport Emissions

The Council recognises that transport can be a major contributor to pollution levels

This is by far the most important area of the air quality Plan and the most difficult to effectively control. Current Government projections are that the objectives contained in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 will be met for carbon monoxide, lead, benzene and 1, 3 - butadiene; principally as a result of advances in vehicle engine technology and tailpipe emission reduction technology, together with their aspirations for a reduction in road traffic, principally private cars.

The Government consider it likely however that the objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) will be exceeded at busy roadside locations in many urbanised areas. In Rotherham MBC's case, the review and assessment of the air quality within the Borough has shown that the objective for nitrogen dioxide is likely to be exceeded in 5 areas in and around the town centre of Rotherham.

The focus of air quality improvement work has been the development of a Clean Air Partnership and the implementation of measures through the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan.

National Air Quality Strategy Implementation Plan 2009 - 11 Principles

The following principles underpin the development of Rotherham's current and future Air Quality Action Plans.

- The support of the general public, voluntary and special interest groups, industry and the business community is elicited in order that the wider community within the Borough can assist in working towards Air Quality objectives.
- The support of all Directorates and disciplines within the Authority are required in order for the Strategy to become a meaningful initiative.
- The authority aims to act as an example of good practice, for example by the use of such initiatives as Travel Plans and the use of low emission vehicles in its fleet.
- The local air quality strategy needs to be linked closely to the Local Transport Plan.
- Air quality is a material consideration with regards the authority's planning and development control decisions and should influence the council's comments and planning conditions imposed upon development applications.

Implementation Mechanisms

- Thorough investigation of air pollution in the borough including monitoring and modelling, undertaken as part of the review and assessment process.
- Rigorous policing of the Borough coupled with strict enforcement of the provisions of the Clean Air Act 1993.
- Publicity campaign aimed at householders and solid fuel merchants in order to educate them to the benefits of burning smokeless fuel and the penalties for non-compliance with the Clean Air Act provisions.
- Regular inspection of the Part B processes coupled with strict enforcement of the Authorisation conditions in order to ensure that the emission limits are complied with.
- Maintenance of a close working partnership with the Environment Agency in order to ensure that the emission limits of those Part A processes located within the Borough are complied with and reductions in emissions are achieved.
- Partnership working within the Local Transport Plan process to try to reduce the volume of car journeys within the Borough, with a particular emphasis on short trips, in view of the reduction in efficiency and effectiveness of catalysts under such conditions. These programmes will include such initiatives as Travel plans, car sharing schemes, safer routes to school, cycling and walking promotion and infrastructure establishment and improved public transport availability.
- Traffic management measures and the use of new technology to combat pollution "hot spots".
- Monitoring of site specific and area - wide traffic management schemes for their effect on air quality.
- The requirement for Air Quality Assessments in respect of those developments which could have a significant impact on air quality
- Use of air quality and health data to heighten the public's awareness of the air quality and health issues associated with traffic emissions.
- The implementation of measures to reduce the emission from the council's own fleet operations including the use of cars for official purposes.
- The promotion of Travel Awareness and air quality campaigns. These include the 'Smarter Choices' and 'Care4air' campaigns

Air Quality Service Plan 2009/2011

Key Objective *To work towards improving air quality and the understanding of air quality issues.*

Outcome Measures:

- To monitor air quality at known pollution "hot spots" and other relevant locations the Borough
- To deliver improvement of air quality in the Air Quality Management Areas

Action No.	Action	Target date	Task Manager	Measure/ Milestone	Resources
1	Continuation of monitoring and modelling air quality in accordance with the NAQS	Ongoing	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% data capture target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Technician
2	Completion of NAQS mandatory documents	30/04/2010	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission to DEFRA, on time, of all reports including updating screening assessment, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
3	Contribution to LTP2 (Air Quality Shared Priority)	31/03/2011	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending all group meetings • Contribution of documents according to schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
4	Implementation of LTP2 programme of measures	31/03/2011	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge of measures assigned to Rotherham MBC • Achievement of 10% reduction in air pollution levels 2006-2011 across 3 AQMAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LTP group budget
5	Review existing AQMA (M1) with view to extension to include Blackburn	28/02/2010	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of AQMA completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring data
6	Liaison with Highways Agency for monitoring as part of Strategic Road Network NO2 Diffusion Tube Survey	Ongoing	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of sites in accordance with scheme • Collation of results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Technician
7	Partnership working with South Yorkshire local authorities on Care4Air social marketing campaign	31/03/2011	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to working group • Support of local events and initiatives 	
8	Ensure all planning applications meet RMBC's Validation Policy requirements regarding the possibility of impact on air quality.	Ongoing	Julie Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation response on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development control staff

NAQS -National Air Quality Strategy

Contact us

email: aqm@rotherham.gov.uk

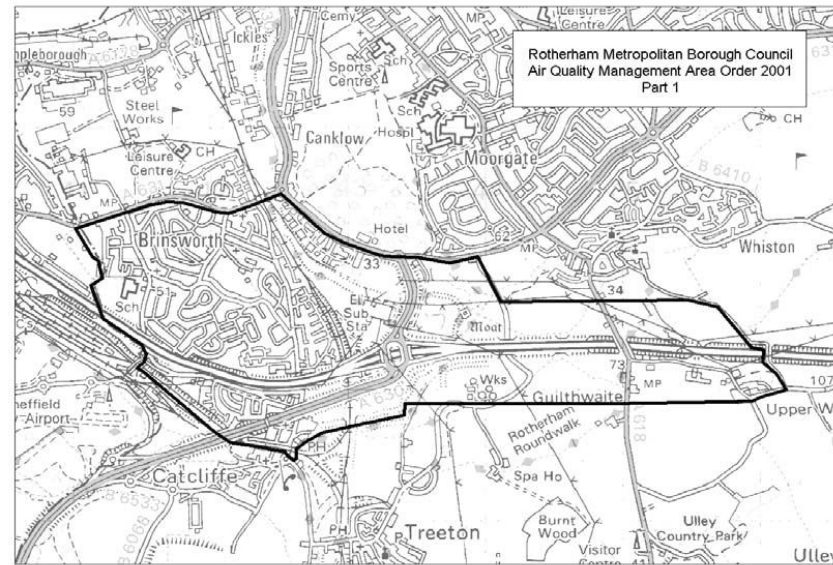
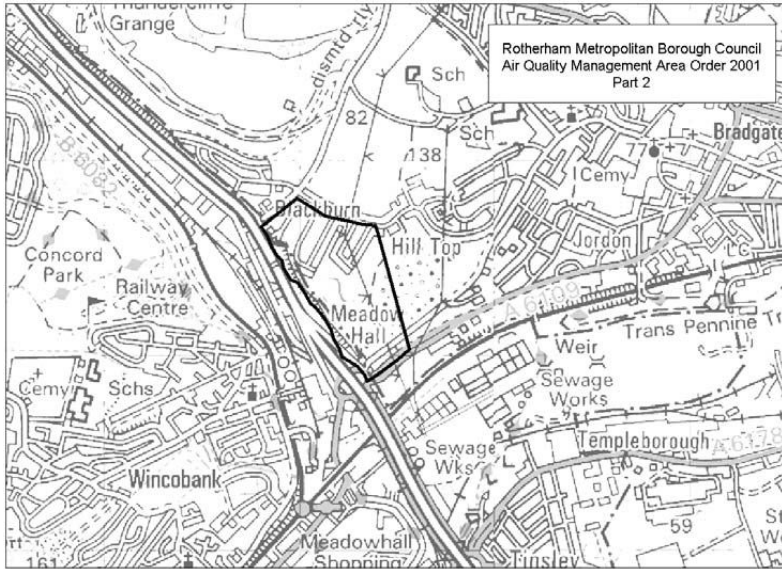
Telephone: 01709 823172. Fax: 01709 823154

Address: Neighbourhoods, Rotherham MBC, Reresby House, Bow Bridge Close, Bradmarsh Business Park, Rotherham, S65 1 AX.

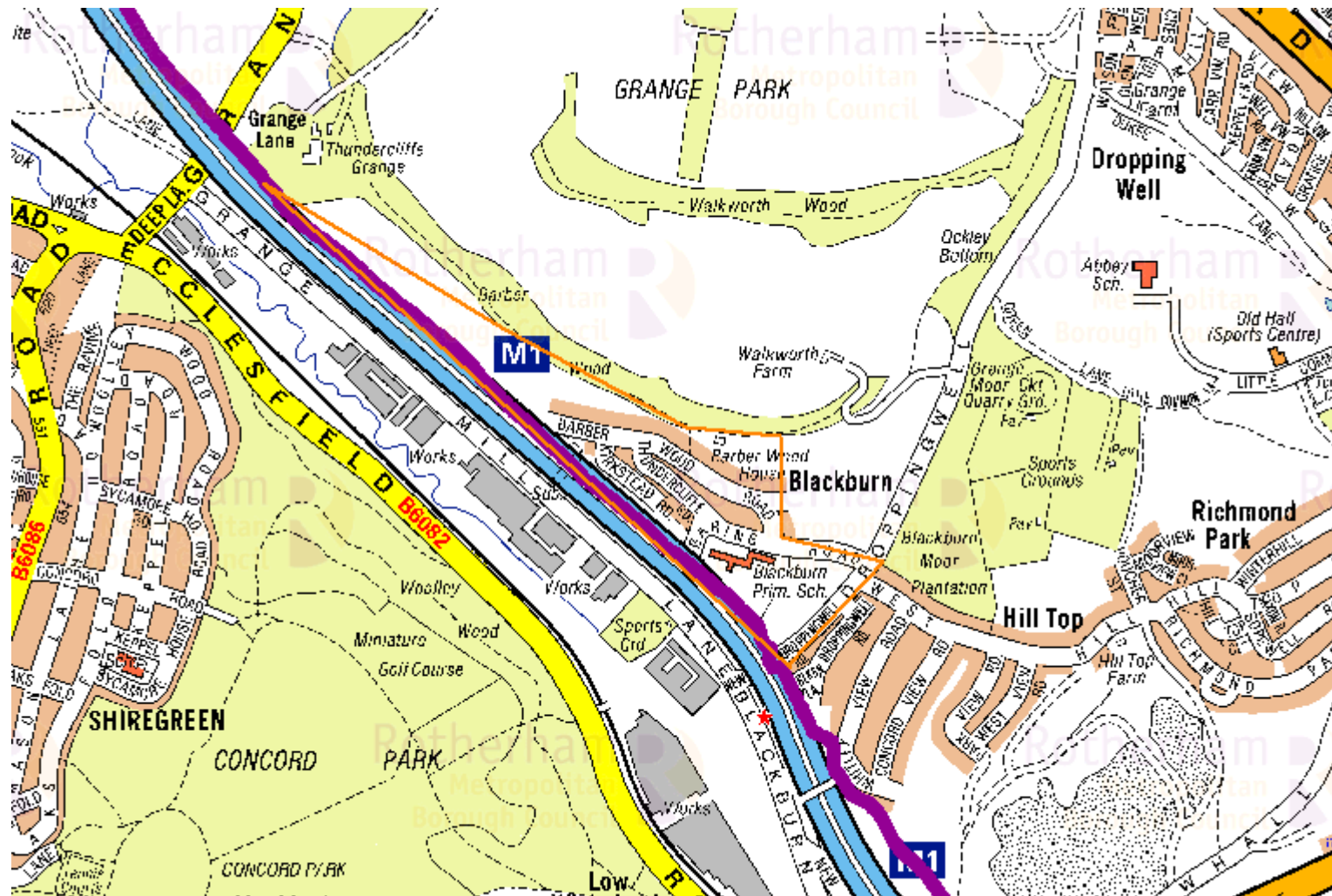
Reference Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland*, 2007

Appendix 2: M1 Corridor Air Quality Management Area

Existing M1 Corridor Air Quality Management Area



Proposed M1 Corridor Air Quality Management Area extension (in addition to existing AQMA Parts 1 & 2)



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CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 1st March, 2010

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

J144. 2010 ROTHERHAM LTD IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services presented the first quarterly monitoring report for the 2010 Rotherham Ltd. Improvement Plan which covered Quarter 3 (October-December, 2009).

Of the 62 actions within the Improvement Plan:-

- 12 actions had been completed in or ahead of time
- 33 actions were progressing in line with timescales
- 10 actions were progressing but with some concern for timescale
- 7 actions were behind schedule.

In general, the main reason for failure against the targets appeared to have been unrealistic dates set by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. All actions showing as red were expected to be reported as green (progressing in line with timescales) or complete by the end of March, 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That Appendix 2 be approved as the final version of the Improvement Plan.

(2) That the content of the Quarter 3 progress report (Appendix 1) and the remedial actions being taken by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. to complete the 7 'off target' indicators be noted.

(3) That evidence checks be made by RMBC officers during February and March, 2010.

1.	Meeting	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date	1st March 2010
3.	Title	2010 Rotherham Ltd Improvement Plan – Monitoring Report
4.	Directorate	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

2010 Rotherham Ltd's improvement plan was agreed by the ALMO Board and Cabinet Member in October 2009. This is the first quarterly monitoring report and covers quarter 3 (October–December 2009). Of the 62 actions within the Improvement Plan:

- 12 actions have been completed
- 33 actions are progressing in line with timescales
- 10 actions are progressing but with some concern for timescale
- 7 actions are behind schedule

This RMBC covering report describes the reporting methodology and provides an overview of performance. 2010 Rotherham Ltd's progress report is attached as appendix 1.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member:

- **Accepts appendix 2 as the final version of the improvement plan.**
- **Notes the content of the quarter 3 progress report (appendix 1), and the remedial actions being taken by 2010 Rotherham Ltd to complete the 7 'off target' indicators.**
- **Notes that evidence checks will be made by RMBC officers during February and March 2010.**

7. Proposal and details

7.1 Background

The improvement plan was agreed by Cabinet Member in October 2009. Minor amendments were proposed following discussion at Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel on 29th October 2009 to clarify and strengthen the wording of three indicators. The final version is attached as appendix 2 for Cabinet Member's endorsement.

Delivery of the improvement plan is a top priority for 2010 Rotherham Ltd, and there is an embedded understanding throughout the organisation that in order for RMBC to consider setting up a new management agreement with the ALMO after the current agreement ends, significant service improvements will be required.

7.2 Reporting methodology

It was determined at an early stage that all actions must be 'SMART' and that regular, quarterly progress reports must be provided. 2010 Rotherham Ltd will compile progress reports at the end of each quarter, to be reported initially to the ALMO Board and then immediately to Cabinet Member.

The report attached as appendix 1 is the first of five progress updates, and relates to quarter 3 (October-December 2009). 2010 Rotherham Ltd provided an identical appendix to the ALMO Board on 10th February 2010.

Within the six themes of the improvement plan are 62 individual actions each with a target outcome, a key date for completion and the criteria to determine successful completion. Every action has a lead Director responsible to ensure that the action is carried out and to provide quarterly progress reports.

The status indicators are colour coded as follows:

- Red – either the key date has passed or the outcome is known not to be achievable by key date
- Amber – the key date has not yet passed but timely completion is threatened
- Green – the key date has not yet passed but timely completion is expected
- Clear (to be shown as a blue 'C' if represented by a letter) – the outcome has been achieved / the task is complete

The ALMO's Performance and Service Improvement Team carries out sampling of evidence to ensure actions are complete. RMBC officers will provide further challenge by carrying out additional evidence checks. These will be carried out during February / March 2010, and if any actions reported by 2010 Rotherham Ltd as green or complete are found to be at risk or incomplete, this will be addressed via fortnightly liaison meetings between the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods and the ALMO's senior management team, and reported in the quarter 4 progress report.

The style and format of the progress report was agreed between 2010 Rotherham Ltd and RMBC. It is intended to provide an accessible, concise and accurate picture of progress against the actions, and is organised into three sections:

1. Actions which are known to be **off target**
2. Actions where **notable achievements** have been recorded
3. A view of **forthcoming actions** scheduled to be completed within the fourth quarter of the financial year.

Further detail can be provided on any other areas of the improvement plan if required.

7.3 Progress to 31 December 2009 (quarter 3)

- 12 actions have been completed in or ahead of time (BLUE status)
- 33 actions are progressing in line with timescales (GREEN status)
- 10 actions are progressing with some concern for timescale (AMBER status)
- 7 actions are behind schedule (RED status)

The detailed progress report which includes any remedial actions in place for actions at RED status is attached at Appendix 1.

Actions with 'red' status

In general, the main reason for failure against these targets appears to have been unrealistic dates set by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. In most cases, significant work has been carried out against the actions, but the RAG status has been applied very strictly, i.e. wherever the action has not been completed in full by the original specified date, it is classed as having failed. Where dates have been moved back, this has been approved by 2010 Rotherham Ltd's Director of Business Support and Interim Chief Executive.

All actions showing as red are expected to be reported as green or complete by the end of March 2010. A brief summary of the current position follows:

- 1.1 (revisit repairs service standards with tenants, publish and monitor) – this is mostly complete and will be fully signed off before the next report.
- 1.3a (review service standards in agreement with leaseholders) – this was completed during January 2010.
- 1.3b (undertake leaseholder satisfaction survey) – the survey was carried out in December, but the results have only been recently analysed. Early indications suggest 58% satisfaction, which 2010 Rotherham Ltd will adopt as a baseline position to improve upon.
- 1.4 (publicise the 0300-100-2010 number for all customer non-repairs calls) – although this was due for completion in October, the number was not launched until November and publicity has been ongoing since then.
- 6.1d (value for money training will be rolled out to staff) – although staff have informally been made aware of the importance of VFM via supervision etc, formal training will not be completed for all staff until April 2010. All managers will be briefed via 2010 Rotherham Ltd's managers' forum on 25th February 2010.

- 6.3b (develop a timetable for service reviews driven by cost and performance) – this will not be completed until June 2010 (original date December 2009).
- 6.4b (workforce strategy agreed to allocate appropriate staffing levels to operations) – 2010 Rotherham Ltd have moved the target date to April 2010. Work is well underway in respect of the in house service provider workforce, and progress with this is being reported to Cabinet Member separately.

Actions with 'amber' status

There are doubts regarding indicator 2.1 - the requirement to improve performance on 70% of benchmarked indicators by March 2010, compared with 2008/9. This is currently showing as amber and will be monitored regularly via formal RMBC / ALMO liaison arrangements.

It is expected that we will see a significant reduction in the number of 'amber' category actions, in the next monitoring report.

7.4 Future reports

The next report, which will describe progress between January and March 2010, will be reported to the ALMO Board during May 2010 and Cabinet Member on 7th June 2010. Subsequent reports will be provided in August 2010, November 2010 and February 2011.

8. Financial implications

Themes 5 and 6 of the improvement plan are intended to improve financial monitoring processes and value for money throughout the organisation.

The budget and management fee setting process for 2010/11 is now underway and will conclude once RMBC has received the final HRA subsidy determination from Central Government. 2010 Rotherham Ltd is in the process of revising its operating model to ensure delivery of the improvement plan.

The ALMO's overall financial position is intrinsically linked to the externalisation of the repairs and maintenance service, and this work has been reported separately to Cabinet Member on 1st February 2010 (a further report will be provided on 1st March 2010). Bi-monthly strategic finance meetings take place and the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods meets with the ALMO Interim Chief Executive and Directors on a fortnightly basis to closely monitor the ALMO's financial position.

9. Risks and uncertainties

Risks associated with achieving individual actions within the improvement plan are monitored via the progress reporting process.

Risks associated with the ALMO's financial position and the externalisation of the repairs and maintenance service are monitored via a project steering group, which

includes the RMBC Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods and the Director of Internal Audit and Governance.

The key uncertainty relates to the ALMO's ability to deliver the improvement plan, alongside other key pressures, for example the new regulatory framework for social housing that will be implemented from April 2010. This will be monitored via regular liaison meetings and quarterly progress reports to Cabinet Member.

10. Policy and performance agenda implications

2010 Rotherham Ltd's improvement plan sets out how the organisation will make a unique contribution to Rotherham's top-line priorities. 2010 Rotherham Ltd contributes to the following themes within the Local Area Agreement:

- Safer and stronger communities
- Increased service user engagement
- Citizen satisfaction rates increased
- Tackle equalities and cohesion objectives
- Improve quality of life for people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods - meet decent homes including environmental works

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

Appendices

Appendix 1: 2010 Rotherham Ltd Oct-Dec 09 progress report

Appendix 2: Final version of improvement plan

Background papers

Report to Cabinet 20th April 2009: Council Housing Directions project – final report

Report to Cabinet 20th April 2009: Test of opinion survey report

Reports to Cabinet Member on 15th June 2009, 27th July 2009 and 19th October 2009

Consultation

Consultation took place with tenants and leaseholders in spring 2009 to establish tenants' and leaseholders' priorities for improvement. 2010 Rotherham Ltd is engaging tenants in regular discussions to set local service standards as part of the new Tenant Services Authority framework.

12. Contact name

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Appendix 1

2010 Rotherham Ltd Improvement Plan: 2009/11 – Quarter 3 progress report

Background

The Improvement Plan contains 6 main outcomes and these are to be achieved through 62 individual actions. Each action has a lead Directorate. The plan has been updated to report progress by exception to the end of December 2009 (Quarter 3).

The status indicators are colour coded thus:

- Red:** The key date has passed or the outcome is known not to be achievable by key date
- Amber:** The key date has not yet passed but timely completion is threatened
- Green:** The key date has not yet passed but timely completion is expected
- Clear:** (to be shown as a blue 'C' if represented by a letter) The outcome has been achieved/the task is complete.

This report provides an update on those actions:

- which are known to be **behind schedule/off target** against key dates;
- those actions where there have been **notable achievements** recorded;
- and a view of **forthcoming actions** scheduled to be completed within the forth quarter of the financial year.

Section One - Exceptions report and remedial action:

There are 7 actions currently identified as being **behind schedule/off target** against key dates. Comments have been provided by lead Directorates to outline the remedial actions being undertaken to complete the task.

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
<p>Theme 1: Address tenants' and leaseholders' priorities for improvement</p> <p>Tenants' priorities have been identified through the STATUS and test of opinion surveys and feedback from tenant's events. The STATUS survey is biannual and was undertaken in October 2008 and therefore is not due to be repeated until October 2010 so we have requested it is done earlier. Leaseholders have monthly meetings at which their priorities and proposals to address them have been discussed.</p>					
<p>1.1 Tenants are highly satisfied with repairs and maintenance services</p>	<p>a) Publicise the repairs categories, cyclical and programmed works and revisit all service standards with tenants</p>	<p>Dec 09</p>	<p>Property Services</p>	<p>a) Clear service standards, cyclical and repairs programmes in place, available on website and published in leaflets and "Round Your Place" and monitored by the Service Improvement Group.</p>	<p>R</p>
<p>Comment</p> <p>(a) Three consultation events have been held with the Customers Service Improvement Group and the service standards, cyclical and repairs programmes in place were reviewed. An article was drafted and submitted to the Communication team for publication. An amended draft of the information for tenants to be publicised on the website was produced and issued to the Communication team in January 2010. Website is scheduled to be updated late January 2010.</p> <p>The repairs element of Empty Property service standard has been reviewed with new customers who have recently experienced the service offered by 2010 and is now available online and within Neighbourhood Offices</p>					

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
1.3 Leaseholders are satisfied with 2010 Rotherham Ltd's service delivery	a) Review and agree service standards with leaseholders	Nov 09	Operations	a) Service standards in place and published on website and monitored by Leaseholder Forum.	R
	b) Undertake baseline satisfaction survey; followed up 12 months later	Dec 09	Business Support	b) Satisfaction rate increased	R
	c) Work with RMBC to revise the lease agreements with all leaseholders	Oct 10	Operations	c) Revised lease developed	G
<p>Comment</p> <p>a) Review of service standards was discussed at Leasehold Forum in November 2009. A copy of draft proposals were sent to all leaseholders following this meeting, and the new standards are to be agreed at the next forum being held on 25th January 2010. Standards will be published on the website following this meeting. Results will be reported to the Leasehold Forum at the most appropriate time for the bi-monthly meetings.</p> <p>b) The Leaseholder Services Manager has sent out an initial survey of customer satisfaction. The response period is scheduled for mid January 2010 following which he will analyse the returned data.</p> <p>c) First draft of revised lease presented at Leasehold Forum November 2009. Comments have been sent to RMBC Legal Services for consideration before the forthcoming Forum of 25th January 2010. This is the first stage of the formal consultation process required for any variation of the lease.</p>					

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
1.4 Tenants and leaseholders know how to contact 2010 and find it easy to access services	a) Publicise the 0300-100-2010 number for all customer non-repairs calls	Oct 09 Feb 10	CEO	a) When asked, 80% of customers think contacting 2010 is easy (compared to 68% in the STATUS survey 2008)	R

Comment:

(a) The 0300 100 2010 number was launched in November 2009. The introduction of the number has been the subject of publicity in the local news media (Rother FM and Rotherham News [the Local Strategic Partnership newsletter]). It is displayed on a number of 2010 Rotherham's web pages. The new number is currently being advertised daily on Rother FM (on-going for the next two years).

A regular monthly advertisement is scheduled to be placed in Rotherham News. This will commence in February 2010.

The STATUS survey is scheduled to be undertaken in Autumn 2010. However the organisation currently monitors the success criteria upon closure of dealing with Anti Social Behaviour cases. The Q3 survey response found that 71.71% of customers think contacting 2010 is easy.

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
Theme 6: Deliver value for money, making excellent use of resources					
6.1 2010 has a robust understanding of the costs of service delivery and how costs link to performance, and uses this information to drive improvement and efficiency	d) Value for money training will be rolled out to staff.	Start Nov 09 April 10	Business Support	d) Managers and key staff trained	R Page 34
Comment (d) Personal Development Reviews being undertaken to identify training requirements. Departmental Learning and Development plans to be produced by managers, discussed with L&D Manager and company plan drawn up by end February 2010. The February 2010 Manager's Forum has the theme of value for money and training will be given by the Finance Director. The training will be rolled out to all staff by April 2010.					

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
6.3 2010 reviews the competitiveness of services, evaluates options for service delivery and achieves value for money	b) Develop a timetable for service reviews driven by cost and performance benchmarked with other providers	Dec 09 June 2010	Finance	b) 2010 is able to demonstrate service improvement and value for money efficiencies.	R
Comment (b) Not completed. This links to scheduled delivery of VFM training in Q4. Not anticipated as being undertaken until Q1 of 2010/11 year. The action target date has been revised accordingly.					
6.4 Workforce planning and development is effective and 2010 has a productive and skilled workforce	b) Workforce strategy agreed to allocate appropriate staffing levels to operations	Dec 09 April 2010	Business Support	b) 2010 has aligned the workforce to deliver the Business Plan	R
Comment (b) Skills audit being undertaken – IHSP the first area to be reviewed. By January 2010, 14 operatives had been identified as having no formal qualification. By April 2010 the HR Manager will conclude a resource level alignment project to identify needs for both immediate and					

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
future key business activities. The action target date has been revised accordingly.					
<p>Theme 2: Achieve the standards expected of top-performing organisations</p> <p>2010 Rotherham Ltd was inspected by the Audit Commission in 2006 and 2008 and therefore is not subject to further planned inspection so it is impossible to formally verify the organisation has achieved 3-star status. The actions and measures given in the table utilise external awards and benchmarking to assess the standards achieved. 2010 Rotherham Ltd is a member of the HouseMark benchmarking club which has agreed 22 core indicators, their definitions and reporting methodology, to compare performance more accurately. As this takes effect from the current financial year, 2009/10, it is difficult to compare indicators with previous years' performance where the definition and/or methodology has changed.</p>					
2.2 Improving levels of performance across all areas	a) Monitor performance against the suite of 22 core indicators agreed by HouseMark	Mar 10	Business Support	a) 70% of key benchmarked performance indicators show improvement on 2008/09	A
<p>Comment</p> <p>(a) Board members are requested to note this action (currently at AMBER status) has been reported to Board in the monthly performance reports provided by the Performance Manager to the effect that it will now be difficult to achieve.</p> <p>Of the 22 core indicators, 16 are reported monthly to the Board and there is previous years' data against 13 of them. Currently, it is predicted that 7 (54%) will improve and 4 (31%) will not, which is outside the 70% target. The remaining two (15%) are borderline but may be achieved.</p> <p>Details are shown in the table below.</p>					

HM Ref	Description	2008/09 Performance	Will improve/Will not improve on 2008/9
12	% of customers for whom the landlord has diversity information	76.80%	Will
13	% total repairs completed within target	97.71%	Will not
18	% response repairs where appointment was made and kept	98.37%	Will not
19	Tenants' satisfaction with repairs service	96.45%	Will not
21	% Repairs completed "Right First Time"	96.39%	Will
23	Gas safety certificates outstanding	0.50%	Will
26	% non-decent homes	18.60%	Will
28	Average SAP ratings	69.00%	Will
32	% satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint	N/A	N/A
33	% of ASB cases resolved	N/A	N/A
34	Average re-let time	39.45 days	Possibly (subject to investigation)
36	Rent collected as % of rent owed	99.85%	Borderline
38	Rent arrears of current social housing tenants at the financial year end as a percentage of rent debit	1.85%	Will
46	% new tenants satisfied with the allocation & letting process	N/A	N/A
55	% void rent loss	1.92%	Will
59	Number of working days lost due to sickness absence	10.75 days	Will not

Notes

Indicator HM36, rent collected as a percentage of rent owed, achieved an extremely high performance in 2008/9 of 99.85% which was aided by a high level of rent loss. The target for 2009/10 was set at 98.60%, which was below last year's out turn, as it was predicted that rent loss would be considerably reduced this year. However, rent loss has in fact been higher than expected and it is predicted that performance will be over 99.00% and there maybe a case to say that this is in fact an improvement. This however is counter balanced by the current investigation surrounding the calculation of HM34, average re-let time, which may yet see the indicator return a performance in excess of the

39.45 days reported for 2008/9.

Section Two – Notable achievements within Quarter 3

Within the quarter there have been many notable achievements recorded and there are several actions confirmed as completed. These include:

- The customer feedback process (which includes complaints handling) has been reviewed and key staff are currently receiving training. Complaints resolution times have reduced in the majority of service areas.
- The organisation achieved the Customer Service Excellence award
- The organisation regained full status recognition for the Investor in People award
- The Board approved the Business Plan in October 2009. The budget compilation process now includes a sensitivity analysis which allows the effects of changing priorities to be modelled and an embedded growth bid process..
- Appropriate forecasting is incorporated into the budget monitoring process. Flexible budget monitoring regimes now allow quarterly, monthly or weekly cost analysis and projections to identify cost over runs and monitor recovery strategies.
- A working group has been established to assess the impact of financial decisions on service delivery.
- All budget holders have received training from Finance team staff.
- Board Members and staff have been provided with comparative benchmarking information on the cost and the quality of services provided.
- Energy Performance Certificates are now produced for all new tenancies along with advice and energy bill usage estimates at the tenancy sign up stage.
- A three year Affordable Warmth plan has been produced which will contribute towards minimising the impact on the environment and maximising the energy efficiency of our homes.

Section Three - Forthcoming actions in Quarter 4

Within the next quarter there are several actions due to be completed. These include:

- The Annual Report (2008-09) will therefore be included in the winter edition of Round Your Place (on schedule to be published in early February).
- Quarterly reports will provide analyses of complaints handling satisfaction levels amongst complainants
- All senior managers will have competency based PDRs and clear development plans
- The organisation will have completed an Equal Pay Review

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26 January 2010

2010 Rotherham Ltd Improvement Plan: 2009/11 November 2009

Theme 1: Address tenants' and leaseholders' priorities for improvement

Tenants' priorities have been identified through the STATUS and test of opinion surveys and feedback from tenant's events. The STATUS survey is biannual and was undertaken in October 2008 and therefore is not due to be repeated until October 2010 so we have requested it is done earlier. Leaseholders have monthly meetings at which their priorities and proposals to address them have been discussed.

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
1.1 Tenants are highly satisfied with repairs and maintenance services	a) Publicise the repairs categories, cyclical and programmed works and revisit all service standards with tenants	Dec 09	Property Services	a) Clear service standards, cyclical and repairs programmes in place, available on website and published in leaflets and "Round Your Place" and monitored by the Service Improvement Group.	A
	b) Benchmark performance and learn from the good practice of high performing ALMOs	April 10 Ongoing	Business Support	b) Satisfaction levels maintained in top quartile of STATUS survey.	A
1.2 Tenants are satisfied that 2010 deals effectively with reports of antisocial neighbours	a) Publish information for residents on ASB and tenancy management, service standards etc	Quarterly	Operations	a) Clear information produced, agreed with colleagues in RMBC, and published on the website and in "Round Your Place".	A
	b) Assess services against the RESPECT Standard and ensure continuous improvement	Quarterly	Operations	b) Improved satisfaction levels for management and outcomes from 53% in 2008/09 to 78% in 2009/10	A
	c) Respond to and learn from complaints related to the handling of low level of ASB cases	Ongoing	Operations	c) Reduced complaints relating to 2010's handling of reported low level ASB	A
1.3 Leaseholders are satisfied with 2010 Rotherham Ltd's service delivery	a) Review and agree service standards with leaseholders	Nov 09	Operations	a) Service standards in place and published on website and monitored by Leaseholder Forum.	A
	b) Undertake baseline satisfaction survey; followed up 12 months later	Dec 09	Operations	b) Satisfaction rate increased	R
	c) Work with RMBC to revise the lease agreements with all leaseholders	Oct 10	Operations	c) Revised lease developed	A

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
1.4 Tenants and leaseholders know how to contact 2010 and find it easy to access services	a) Publicise the 0300-100-2010 number for all customer non-repairs calls	Oct 09 Oct 10 (STATUS)	CEO	a) When asked, 80% of customers think contacting 2010 is easy (compared to 68% in the STATUS survey 2008)	A
1.5 Customers are satisfied with the complaints process	a) Review complaints process to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stage 1 & 2 complaints are dealt within specified time scales ✓ Stage 3 Panels can be convened when required ✓ Responses to complainants are quality assured before issue ✓ Satisfaction survey undertaken following closure 	Dec 09 (review of process) April 2010 onwards (analysis)	Business Support	a) Quarterly analyses of complaints confirms improvement in resolution within time scales and increased satisfaction rates amongst complainants	A

Theme 2: Achieve the standards expected of top-performing organisations

2010 Rotherham Ltd was inspected by the Audit Commission in 2006 and 2008 and therefore is not subject to further planned inspection so it is impossible to formally verify the organisation has achieved 3-star status. The actions and measures given in the table utilise external awards and benchmarking to assess the standards achieved. 2010 Rotherham Ltd is a member of the HouseMark benchmarking club which has agreed 22 core indicators, their definitions and reporting methodology, to compare performance more accurately. As this takes effect from the current financial year, 2009/10, it is difficult to compare indicators with previous years' performance where the definition and/or methodology has changed.

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
2.1 2010 can demonstrate excellence against national standards	a) Develop and demonstrate strong customer focus throughout service delivery	June 09	Business Support	a) 2010 achieves Customer Service Excellence award	G
	b) Implement actions in plan agreed with Y&H Assessment Ltd	Dec 09	Business Support	b) 2010 regains full status recognition for Investor in People award	A
	c) Undertake periodic self assessment against Audit Commission/TSA standards for social housing management	Jan - Sep 10	Business Support	c) At least 2 of the 4 service areas judged by the Audit Commission inspection 2008 to have a balance of strengths and weaknesses to be assessed by external peers as having strengths outweigh weaknesses; and the number of service areas judged as "strengths significantly outweigh weaknesses" to be increased from 2 to 3, again assessed by external peers	R
	d) Complete actions to address previous Audit Commission Recommendations (2006)			d) Board agree completion	
2.2 Improving levels of performance across all areas	a) Monitor performance against the suite of 22 core indicators agreed by HouseMark	Mar 10	Business Support	a) 70% of key benchmarked performance indicators show improvement on 2008/09	A
	b) Put in place clear action plans to deal with poor performance and report these to Board and RMBC	Ongoing	Business Support	b) Narrative given in performance reports includes remedial action plans and progress is monitored closely	A

Theme 3: Make a unique contribution to Rotherham's priorities, particularly the Safe and Proud themes

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
3.1 2010 has a strong presence in the borough	a) 2010 is represented on the LSP Board, relevant Theme Boards and key meetings	Ongoing	CEO	a) 2010 Rotherham Ltd is represented at key meetings as follows: LSP Board – 100% Safe Theme Board – 75% Proud Theme Board – 75% Area Assemblies – 100% Area Housing Panels – 100% Strategic Housing Partnership – 75%	A
	b) Continue to play appropriate parts in safer estates work, domestic violence, ASB, safeguarding adults, Place-shaping etc	Ongoing	All	b) Evidence of 2010's contribution to priorities	A

Theme 4: Ensure all services are well-governed and well-managed

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
4.1 Strong governance arrangements are in place	a) Implement Board Development Plan	Ongoing	Business Support	a) Development plan embedded	A
	b) Annual review of governance included within Internal Audit Plan	Sep 10	Business Support	b) High standards of governance in place, demonstrated by governance audit report judgements.	R
4.2 2010 has a clear focus on its purpose and vision	a) Business plan has clear objectives and alignment of resources agreed by the Board	Feb 10	CEO	a) Agreed by Board	A
	b) Delivery of Business Plan objectives	As in Business Plan	All	b) Delivery of Business Plan objectives by due dates	
4.3 Risk management is effective and internal control systems are sound	a) Maintain risk registers and review on quarterly basis.	Oct 09 & ongoing	Finance	a) Risk registers reviewed quarterly and reported to Audit Committee	G
	b) All new initiatives are risk assessed prior to implementation.	As required	Finance	b) A risk assessment is completed on all new initiatives prior to implementation and included within board reports.	G
	c) Yearly audit plan reviewing key business areas to assess effectiveness of key systems and compliance with internal controls.	Annually in April	Finance	c) Control environment is considered adequate within yearly Audit Plan and the statement of Internal control.	G
	d) Annual audit of financial accounts by external auditors.	Annually in July	Finance	d) Financial controls are considered appropriate by external auditors and company accounts signed off	G
4.4 Managers are competent to discharge their responsibilities	a) Agree managerial competencies required at different levels of responsibility	April 10	Business Support	a) 95% senior managers have competency based PDRs and clear development plans	A
	b) Commission and deliver a management leadership development programme	Start Nov 09	Business Support	b) Bespoke accredited programme developed and delivered to 80% senior managers; improved performance when assessed against competencies	A
4.5 2010 communicates effectively with its customers and other key stakeholders	a) Round Your Place sent to all customers	Ongoing	CEO	a) Four issues per year	G
	b) Communications to Ward Councillors (either independently or using existing mechanisms of partners)	Ongoing	Operations	b) Bulletins are issued at least monthly to all ward councillors from October 09	A
	c) Website includes all relevant information for customers	Ongoing	CEO	c) Customer Monitoring Group confirms website meets customers' needs.	A

Theme 5: Ensure strong financial management processes are in place

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
5.1 2010 plans its finances effectively to deliver its priorities	a) Budgets are set to deliver the Business Plan	Mar 10	Finance	a) Able to demonstrate appropriate spend on service priorities	R
	b) Sensitivity analysis is built into business planning process allowing the effects of changing priorities to be modelled.	Oct 09	Finance		A
	c) Growth bid process embedded into budget setting and budget monitoring processes.	Nov 09	Finance		A
5.2 2010 manages relevant spend within resources available from the management and capital management fees	a) Robust monitoring is in place to ensure that high spending areas are identified at an early stage and effectively addressed.	Monthly	Finance	2010 manages relevant spend within resources available from the Management and Capital Management Fee together with the Repairs Managed Budget	G
	b) Appropriate forecasting is incorporated into the budget monitoring process to identify indicative under or over spend to facilitate redirection of resources and / or development and delivery of recovery strategy.	Oct 09	Finance		A
	c) Flexible monitoring regimes allow quarterly, monthly or weekly cost analysis and projections to identify cost over runs and monitor recovery strategies.	Dec 09	Finance		A
	d) Establishment of cross cutting company working group to assess impact of financial decisions on service delivery.	Oct 09	Finance		A
5.3 2010 values and develops financial skills at officer and Board levels	a) Financial training plan developed for Board Members.	Oct 09 & ongoing	Finance	a) All new Board members receive training in understanding financial reports; refreshed annually	A
	b) Training developed for budget holders.	Sep 09 & ongoing	Finance		b) All budget holders receive training

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
5.4 Financial reporting is timely and reliable and clear, and is used effectively to monitor and manage performance	a) Reports to each scheduled Board meeting identifying spend to date together with forecast to year end.	Aug 09 & ongoing	Finance	a) Report submitted to each scheduled Board Meeting identifying spend to date, together with forecast to year end. Forecasts result in remedial action leading to projected outturn and balanced management and capital management fee budgets	G
	b) Financial reports identify and monitor variances to budget with clear explanations and mitigation.	As above	Finance	b) Board informed of financial pressure points	G
	c) Recovery strategies are clear and identify any impact upon service delivery.	Nov 09	Finance	c) Board is better informed to make decisions regarding options for recovery strategies	A

Theme 6: Deliver value for money, making excellent use of resources

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
6.1 2010 has a robust understanding of the costs of service delivery and how costs link to performance, and uses this information to drive improvement and efficiency	a) Budget to be realigned to accurately reflect service delivery areas.	Mar 10	Finance	a) A wide range of clear and accurate information on overall service costs is available and is utilised to drive the value for money efficiency agenda.	R
	b) Devolved budgets to be rolled out across company; budget holders will be involved in budget setting and monitoring processes and will therefore be much clearer on service costs.	Mar 10	Finance	b) Budget holders understand the cost of delivering services	R
	c) Benchmarking information will be utilised to compare cost and performance with other providers.	Nov 09	Business Support	c) Board Members and staff all use clear and regular information on costs and the quality of services to challenge how they compare to other providers.	A
	d) Value for money training will be rolled out to staff.	Start Nov 09	Business Support	d) Managers and key staff trained	A
6.2 2010 involves local people, staff and partners in commissioning, procurement and service development	a) Develop timetable for key procurement and contract review.	Mar 10	Finance	a) Timetable in place	R
	b) Establish appropriate review groups to include local people, staff and partners as part of service reviews and procurement exercises.	Mar 10	Business Support	b) 2010 is able to demonstrate membership of local people, staff and partners on review and procurement assessment groups and can identify how these representatives have influenced decision making.	R
6.3 2010 reviews the competitiveness of services, evaluates options for service delivery and achieves value for money	a) Complete market testing of IHSP	Oct 10	Property Services	a) IHSP contracts determined and implemented from 01/04/2011	A
	b) Develop a timetable for service reviews driven by cost and performance benchmarked with other providers	Dec 09	Finance	b) 2010 is able to demonstrate service improvement and value for money efficiencies.	R
	c) Undertake priority service reviews	Sep 10	All	c) Service reviews demonstrate best value within resources and contextual environment	R

Outcome	Key actions to achieve outcome	Key dates	Lead Director	Success criteria	Status
	d) Engage with 3-star service providers with a view to incorporating best practice within resources available.	Ongoing	Business Support	d) Best practice adopted where possible.	A
6.4 Workforce planning and development is effective and 2010 has a productive and skilled workforce	a) Establishment lists reconciled with RBT and maintained to reflect changes	Oct 09 & ongoing	Business Support	a) Reliable workforce information readily available	A
	b) Workforce strategy agreed to allocate appropriate staffing levels to operations	Dec 09	Business Support	b) 2010 has aligned the workforce to deliver the Business Plan	R
6.5 Policies support diversity and good people management	a) Undertake an equal pay review	Mar 2010	Business Support	a) confirmation 2010 is meeting the gender equality duty	A
	b) Assess organisation against the Equality Framework and take actions to ensure compliance	Dec 2010	Business Support	b) 2010 satisfies requirements of "achieving" level of new Equality Framework	A
6.6 2010 makes effective use of natural resources and manages performance to minimise its impact on the environment	a) Raise tenants' awareness of energy performance issues relating to their homes	Mar 2010	Operations	a) 2010 will deliver Energy Performance Certificates to 100% of new tenancies	A
	b) Complete Decent Homes programme	Dec 2010	Operations	b) The average SAP rating will improve from 69 to 70	A
6.7 Tenants believe rent represents value for money	a) Provide reports to tenants with clear information about expenditure and performance	Annually	CEO	a) Tenants and leaseholders informed	G
	b) Retain question regarding whether tenants believe their rent represents value for money in next STATUS survey, due October 2010	Oct 10	Business Support	b) Top quartile response to VFM question in STATUS survey (next due in 2010)	R

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 1st March, 2010

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

J142. UNDER OCCUPATION POLICY

Further to Minute No. J88(3) of 30th November, 2009, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report proposing the introduction of Under Occupancy and Housing Assistance incentives to encourage tenants that were under occupying large Council houses to downsize.

Currently there were 142 households in Rotherham that were under occupying 4 bedroom houses and 5,025 under occupying 3 bedroom houses. Of those, 2,538 households had applied via the Housing Register for a transfer to a smaller home. Since December, 2008, only 18 under occupied households living in family houses had actually transferred to a flat or bungalow. This was because overall the demand for accommodation was extremely high and most certainly outweighed supply. In total there were 7,981 single applicants on the Housing Register wanting to move to smaller accommodation.

Currently, there were no financial incentives offered, however, the Allocation Policy did award Priority status to households who wished to downsize to a flat or bungalow. Since December, 2008, 120 households had been awarded Priority status to enable them to transfer.

Implementation of an enhanced Under Occupancy Policy to encourage downsizing could include:-

- Better provision of information to tenants about the availability of suitable housing and the process of securing it could help encourage people in under occupancy situations to secure smaller properties
- Amend the Allocation Policy to allow under occupiers of 4 bedroom houses to downsize to 2 bedroom houses and permit more than 2 refusals
- Suggestions from customers and Elected Members including:-
 - o Work with internal and partner agencies
 - o Undertake chain lettings
 - o In cases of secure tenants, when a successor was a family member other than a spouse, award of Priority Plus status to offer suitable alternative smaller accommodation
 - o 2 tenancies for 1
 - o Local Lettings Policy giving preference to Council tenants who were under occupiers, with a proven record of "Good Tenant", move to RSL and Council New Building
 - o Promote positive features of sheltered housing

The implementation of a cash incentive scheme to encourage downsizing, a Mutual Exchange incentive or direct payment of expenses and removal costs were not supported at the present time but may be reconsidered dependent upon the success of the other options.

Resolved:- (1) That the inclusion of an Under Occupation Policy, as identified in Section 7.5 of the report submitted, be approved.

(2) That the effectiveness of the Policy and the need to offer incentives be reviewed in 12 months.

(3) That the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services explore the possibility of nominating a dedicated officer to work on the issue of under occupancy.

DRAFT

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	1st March 2010
3.	Title:	Under-Occupation Policy
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

Under-occupation policies can help free up family housing and thereby reduce problems with over-crowding and homelessness by promoting a more efficient use of the Council's housing stock. This report seeks approval to introduce under occupancy and housing assistance incentives to encourage tenants that are under occupying large Council houses to downsize.

6. Recommendations

- **TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE OPTIONS TO INCLUDE IN AN UNDER-OCCUPATION POLICY AS IDENTIFIED IN SECTION 7.5**
- **REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS AND THE NEED TO OFFER INCENTIVES IN 12 MONTHS**

7. Background

7.1 The purpose of a policy on under-occupation would be to recognise and provide for those who already want to move to a smaller home, and to encourage others to consider such a move at an earlier stage than they might otherwise do.

7.2 Currently in Council accommodation in Rotherham there are 142 households that are under-occupying 4 bedroom houses and 5025 under occupying 3 bedroom houses. Of these 2538 households have applied via the housing register for a transfer to a smaller home. Since December 2008, only 18 under occupied households living in family houses have actually transferred to a flat or bungalow. This is because overall the demand for accommodation is extremely high and most certainly outweighs supply. In total there 7981 single applicants on the housing register wanting to move to smaller accommodation such as a flat.

7.3 National evidence has suggested that the majority of under-occupiers who would be willing, or are looking, to move from their existing home would only do so if they were offered a two-bedroom house or bungalow. This is backed up by a research project undertaken by the London Research Centre (now the Greater London Authority) and Heriot-Watt University. The research looked at the strategies which social landlords can adopt to manage under occupation in their stock and what works in assisting tenants to move to a smaller home if they want to.

7.4 **What incentives do we currently offer?** – No financial incentives are currently offered however the Allocation Policy does award Priority status to households who wish to downsize to a flat or bungalow. Since December 2008 there has been 120 households awarded Priority status to enable them to transfer to a flat or bungalow.

7.5 **Implementing an enhanced under occupancy policy to encourage downsizing – what could the policy could include?**

It is suggest that the policy would be implemented in a phased approach. This will enable us to monitor the effectiveness to see what this does and if the policy doesn't work we can reconsider, in 12 months the need to offer incentives or not.

7.5.1 **Better provision of information** - Providing good quality information to tenants about the availability of suitable housing and the process of securing it can help encourage people in under occupancy situations to secure smaller properties. The better understanding people have about the availability of properties and how the process of receiving offers, viewing and moving is likely to work, the better the chance that they will be able to make the right decisions for them and to make a successful move. Many landlords provide leaflets about downsizing. There is an example at Appendix 1. **This option is supported at this time.**

7.5.2 Amend the Allocation Policy to allow under occupiers of 4 bedroom houses to downsize to 2 bedroom houses and permit more than 2 refusals - In Rotherham more people might want to move from accommodation with four bedrooms into smaller two bedroom houses as often one-bedroom bungalows are largely not in high demand as they are too small. **This option is supported at this time.**

7.5.3 Offer a cash incentive scheme of either £1000 or £1500 per household to encourage tenants to downsize. Cash incentives, payment of expenses and help with removal arrangements are unlikely to generate interest from anyone who is not already thinking about moving, but they can play an essential role in helping to overcome practical and financial barriers. Leeds City Council offers under occupier's cash incentives of £1000 per bedroom they relinquish which has led to 80 households downsizing. However, it may seem wasteful to offer incentives to people who would have moved anyway, especially if they are going to a choice property. Nevertheless some people who would like to move are deterred by the practicalities, the upheaval, and by lack of money. The size of payments may be affected by whether the cash is intended as a gesture of goodwill, as compensation for trading down or as an incentive.

Small payments can create a lot of work and still leave tenants out of pocket: The practicalities of cash payments also need to be considered. For example: should receipts be required, should deduction in any rent arrears or Housing Benefit overpayments be made before releasing the cash. For some tenants, one of the motivations for trading down might be the desire to pay off arrears and they may still have some money left to help with moving expenses. **This option is not recommended at this time but may be reconsidered dependent upon the success of the other options.**

7.5.4 Offer a Mutual Exchange incentive of £1000 or £1500 to a tenant who is under occupying that results in a move that alleviates overcrowding – The mutual exchange service is in a transition of moving from the old Councils system to a new innovative mutual exchange system called HOMESWAPPER. There are 2,120 households registered on the old mutual exchange system to move and 61 tenants have moved over and registered with the new HOMESWAPPER service, of these 11 are under occupied and 4 households are overcrowded. HOMESWAPPER matches individual households to properties that meet their needs into the areas of their choices. Where a tenant secures a move to a smaller property (downsized) and the exchange assists a family who are locally or statutory overcrowded a proposed grant payment to be made to the under occupier. The added benefit of facilitating moves through mutual exchanges is the reduction in associated voids costs. **This option is not recommended at this time but may be reconsidered dependent upon the success of the other options.**

7.5.5 Direct payment of expenses and removal costs; This method is not as easy to administer and there is little control of spend as each move would incur a variance in moving costs. However the direct payment of expenses can help to persuade people to accept a property that they might otherwise have rejected as they know that they won't be out of pocket as all expenses will be met. Allowing

more time to move and making arrangements on their behalf, so help with the move can ease the pressure on someone who is uncertain whether to go ahead maybe more beneficial. The total estimated cost of moving can be as little as £500 but realistically can range between £1,500 and £3,200. Staffing resources to administer the direct payments also need to be considered. The cost of moving home can include some or all of the following:

- ❖ removal costs (either using a removal company or hiring a self drive vehicle) (estimated between £100 and £400 depending on distance, the size to the property and number of boxes required)
- ❖ packing (if required) (£500)
- ❖ disconnection and reconnection charges for gas, electricity, telephone, cooker, washing machine and other appliances (including TV and satellite aerials) or replacement (e.g. where someone has a gas cooker but is moving to a property with electricity only) (£300)
- ❖ alteration or purchase and fitting of carpets and curtains (£600 for carpets and £170) curtains supplied by Furniture Solutions ,
- ❖ charges for post redirection (£50)
- ❖ redecorations (it may be useful to identify this element of the payment separately and pay it only when appropriate).(£1500 supplied by Furniture Solutions)
- ❖ Offer 2 weeks rent free to allow more time to move in (£80)

This option is not recommended at this time but may be reconsidered dependent upon the success of the other options.

7.5.6 Suggestions from customers and elected members can also be embedded into the overall policy. These are:

- Work with internal and partner agencies such as Children and Young People Services, Adult Social Services and Age Concern to encourage full occupation and promote the advantages. **This option is supported at this time**
- Undertake chain lettings . **This option is supported at this time**
- Legal succession to a tenancy can result in under occupation. For secure tenants, when a successor is a family member other than a spouse, award Priority Plus status to the successor to offer suitable alternative smaller accommodation. . **This option is supported at this time**
- Two tenancies for one - some three bed properties are occupied by a parent with an adult son or daughter. If they are happy to split up, in may be worth offering two one bed/bedsit properties, rather than that just one two bedroom property. **This option is supported at this time**
- RSL and Council New Build accommodation catering specifically for under occupiers. This accommodation is likely to be one or two bed roomed (depending on the needs and requirements that have been identified). It may be built to a higher than usual specification and it may be located in areas that are particularly popular with under occupiers. Adopt a Local letting Policy giving preference to Council tenants who are under occupiers, who have a proven record of being a “Good Tenant” i.e. no tenancy breaches such as rent arrears of anti social behavior. **This option is supported at this time.**

- Promote positive features of sheltered housing. Some under occupiers are unlikely to ask for sheltered housing when discussing a transfer, however they maybe persuaded to consider it if the advantages are promoted. . **This option is supported at this time**

7.7 - The Advantages of introducing an under occupancy policy are:

(i) A personalised approach

- Tenants appreciate a single point of contact, someone who knows their case. Home visits are particularly useful for getting to know the tenant, discussing their requirements, providing information in person and assessing the current property. The visit is an opportunity to persuade people to broaden or narrow their requirements – they are more likely to do this if given a realistic idea of their chances. Specialist staff can be very effective in increasing the numbers of moves by discussing with tenants their requirements, explaining what help is available and finding suitable properties. Providing information about the under occupation scheme, the allocations system and the process of moving.

(ii) Reduces overcrowding and homelessness

- Under-occupation policies can help free up family housing and thereby reduce problems with over-crowding and homelessness by promoting a more efficient use of the Council's housing stock. Under' occupation can be measured by comparing the number of bedrooms currently rented by an existing tenant with the minimum number we would be prepared to offer if we were to let them another property.

(iii) Reduces the number of households on the housing register

- Where a tenant secures a mutual exchange with the added benefit of the reduction in associated voids costs.
- More family homes are made available to family households on the housing register

(iv) Reduces usage of temporary accommodation

- Meeting urgent housing need for larger homelessness families will reduce time periods spent living in temporary accommodation, whilst waiting for suitable housing.

(v) Savings for the customer

- Often tenants will pay a lower rent when they move to a smaller home
- Energy saving with reduced bills for gas and electric consumption
- Smaller space to maintain and clean

7.8 The implications of introducing an under occupancy policy are:

(i) Increased associated voids costs

- Encouraging more transfers will mean an increase in void repair costs and void rent loss.

(ii) Need for staffing resources to administer the policy - If we increase advice/guidance and change the Allocation Policy staffing resources would not be required at this time. The option to defer introducing additional staffing resources would be pending consideration of the affordability and an evaluation of the success in six months time. However if the under occupancy policy hasn't been successful then staffing resources who specialise in dealing with under occupiers would play a very important role in encouraging under occupiers to move. This would be by spelling out the options, encouraging more people to consider different areas or property types, giving confidence, overcoming all the obstacles to a move, and helping to find the right property. They can also take a pro-active role in identifying suitable voids for under occupiers and in approaching people who have not yet registered an interest in moving. Tenants may appreciate having a single point of contact, someone they can trust who understands their circumstances and aspirations. The job combines well with other responsibilities – e.g. advising older people or offering advice regarding mutual exchanges.

Some of the responsibilities of this role could also include:

- Notifying services such as gas, electricity, water, telephone, and council tax and Housing Benefit sections.
- Arranging for other services to be transferred (e.g. community alarm, meals on wheels etc).
- Ensuring that meters are read before the tenant moves out. Arranging for disconnection and reconnection of appliances (e.g. cookers, washing machines, TV aerials/dishes).
- Help to arrange the fitting carpets and curtains.
- Informing friends, family, doctor, dentist, bank, insurance companies etc of the new address.
- Arranging for redirection of mail.
- House clearance/disposal of furniture:
- Arranging for the collection of unwanted furniture or other items, or recommending a charity or commercial firms.
- Help with sorting what to take and what to have removed.
- Collection and disposal of rubbish.

Other possible responsibilities of a specialised officer could include:

- Identify and contact potential transfer applicants
- Carry out home visits to under occupiers who have already applied to move – discuss their preferences; advise on the chances of rehousing; provide information about the housing options, the under occupation scheme and the

process of moving, advise about the costs of the move, the help that is available, and how and when payments will be made.

- Keep in touch and check for changes in circumstances.
- Encourage and maintain contact with their families, where appropriate.
- Where necessary, liaise with social services and occupational therapists to establish any support needs.
- Assess the property being vacated – its suitability for meeting housing shortages, with or without extensive repairs/adaptation.
- Identify potential properties for under occupiers from present and forthcoming voids.
- Accompany tenants to view properties on offer
- Arrange practical assistance with the move
- Arrange and authorise payment of cash incentives/expenses.
- Liaise with maintenance staff about agreed improvements or decorations.
- Monitor progress and expenditure.
- Visit successions to assess whether it is appropriate to recommend a move.
- Maintain regular contact with 2010 Rotherham Neighbourhood staff, to ensure that they are well informed about the under occupation policy and in a position to offer initial advice before referring tenants to the scheme.
- Assist with marketing of the scheme and the development of new initiatives.

The appointment of an officer to undertake this role would not be required at this time if we are merely altering the policy and offering enhanced guidance.

8. Finance

8.1 By focusing on meeting urgent housing need for larger families will reduce time periods in the Priority and Priority Plus Group which in turn will reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation. This will enable a cost saving to the Council as it is likely to allow a reduction in the temporary units of accommodation currently needed for homelessness families.

8.2 Encouraging more transfers will mean an increase in void costs.

8.3 There are resource implications to fund the scheme the table below details estimated level of funding for each option for 100 properties. Other Local Authorities take different approaches such as some offer incentives and some rely on the provision of advice. Leeds cash incentive scheme is funded by having a separate Code in the HRA Supervision & Management with an annual budget of £100k. The ALMO pays the tenant and recharges the HRA through the liaison officer. Dewsbury have found that the provision of advice and support offered to customers through staffing resources has had more successes than cash incentives. The provision of 1 member of staff at a cost of £28K is a more cost effective option.

	Minimum £	Maximum £
Under Occupancy Grant £1000 each	100,000	100,000
Under Occupancy Grant £1500 each	150,000	150,000
*Direct payment of expenses and removal costs, plus staffing costs. *There is limited control of spend as each move would incur a variance in moving costs	50,000 19,621 Total £69,621 (minimum £500 per property)	320,000 19,621 Total 339.621 (maximum £3,200 per property)
Dedicated under occupancy housing options officer Band G	28,000	28,000
Mutual exchange grant resulting in downsizing	100.000	100,000

9. Risks and Uncertainties

9.1 The current demand for social rented housing is high which translates to pressures on the housing register. We have also seen an increase in households in urgent housing need who are affected financially by the economic downturn.

9.2 Increased void levels depending on the demand to downsize.

9.3 Direct payment of expenses and removal costs; has no control of spend as each move would incur a variance in moving costs.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

10.1 The Allocation Policy is delivered at a local level and via the Key Choices Property Shop and Neighbourhood Offices, which supports the Council's commitment to providing greater accessibility to services, meeting social needs by helping to ensure a better quality of life, improving fair access and choice, protecting, keeping safe vulnerable people and specifically addresses the diversity agenda, by tailoring services to the needs of hard to reach groups.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

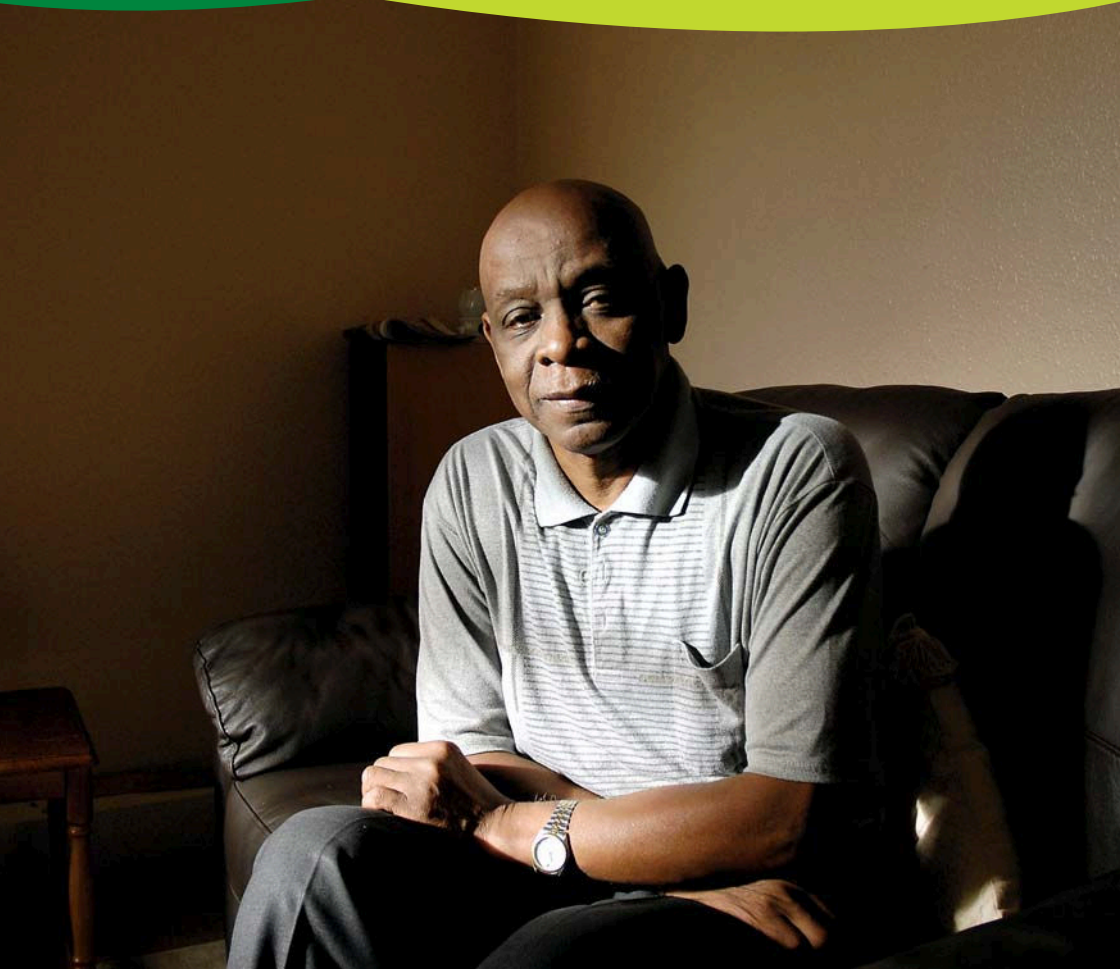
- The Allocation Policy (Revised July 2009)
- Local Lettings Policies (Revised July 2009)
- The Homelessness Act 2002.
- Housing Act 1996, Parts VI and VII
- The Code Of Guidance in Allocation [CLG 2009]
- The Homelessness Code of Guidance
- Managing under-occupation: A guide to good practice in social housing, DETR, April 2001

Contact Name:

Sandra Tolley, Housing Choices Manager, Neighbourhood and Adult Services, Tel: 01709 (33)6561, Email sandra.tolley@rotherham.gov.uk



Under Occupiers scheme



Under Occupiers scheme

Is your home too big? Are you living on your own after many years?

Whatever your change in circumstances, we can help you to find a home that better suits your needs.

A smaller home is easier to clean and manage. You could pay less rent, council tax and heating bills.

You may also be entitled to £500* for each spare room that you give up and up to £300 to assist you with your removals.

As an under occupier you will have a higher priority on the transfer list.

If you have a child 18 or over still living with you, we may consider offering them a home (find out more from the Rehousing Team).

“

I'm really happy in my new flat. I had to have an operation on my knee and needed to move to somewhere on the ground floor. I contacted the council and within a week of looking at this flat my wife and I had moved in.

-Joe Bramble

”



If you want to move we can provide you with practical advice and support throughout

- we will show you how to bid for a smaller property on the Home Connections site
- we can accompany you on viewings
- we can advise you on clearing your property of unwanted furniture and carpets

Did you know

- you can bid for both council and housing association properties in Islington and you can bid for up to three properties every week
- if you are 60 or over, you can be considered for sheltered accommodation
- you may also be able to keep one of your spare rooms if your current property has four or more bedrooms

How does it work?

All you need to do is register for a transfer. Forms are available at your local Area Housing Office, or by calling the Rehousing Team on **020 7527 4140**.



If you would like this document in large print or Braille, audiotape or in another language, please contact 020 7527 4140.

Bengali

যদি আপনি এই তথ্য গুলো আপনার নিজ ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে 020 7527 4140 নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese (Traditional)

如果你想要這資料的中文本, 請致電 020 7527 4140 聯繫。

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd macluumaadkan oo ku qoran luqadaada fadlan la xidhiidh 020 7527 4140

Turkish

Buradaki bilgilerin Türkçesini istiyorsanız, lütfen 020 7527 4140 numaraya telefon edin.

Rehousing Team

Housing Aid Centre, 38 Devonian Road, London N1 8UY

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Minicom 020 7527 1900 **W** www.islington.gov.uk



CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 1st March, 2010

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

J145. **UPDATE ON THE HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY SINGLE CONVERSATION AND REVISED HOUSING STRATEGY**

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted an update on the Homes and Communities Agency Single Conversation and Revised Housing Strategy.

The focus of the Single Conversation was around comprehensive place shaping, including the full range of housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community facilities. It was important that the process was not seen primarily as a housing issue but rather an issue of how improvements infrastructure and housing could contribute to and compliment aspirations to improve wider quality of life issues. Councils were required to develop a Local Investment Plan which would form the basis of a funding agreement between the HCA and the local authorities.

The report set out the rationale and progress on re-writing the Rotherham Housing Strategy which would enhance its status as a key component to the Single Conversation. Although the Strategy had been adopted in 2008, it was at a time of peak housing markets when the main concerns had been to close the widening affordability gap and make the most of allocations available from the funds now brought together under the HCA umbrella. A new Strategy needed to both reflect the new economic realities and to address the emerging challenge of climate change.

It had become clear that the HCA favoured a single lead officer and point of contact at each authority whom was able to articulate the Council's vision and to create a 'pen portrait' of the authority at the first workshop. To this end, the Sustainable Communities Manager in Neighbourhood Investment Services had been tasked with the role.

In collaboration with neighbouring authorities, a South Yorkshire Forward Strategy and Investment Plan 2010/14 was being developed by Transform South Yorkshire on behalf of the 4 authorities. This would serve as a sub-regional platform for supporting the local authorities in their respective Conversations. Rotherham's revised Housing Strategy was to be structured to align with the sub-regional statement emphasising Rotherham's unique attributes within the wider city region.

The report also set out the key milestones in the Single Conversation process including the revised Housing Strategy.

Resolved:- (1) That the key dates associated with the Single Conversation be noted.

(2) That the importance of revising the existing Housing Strategy to enhance its status as a key component of the Single Conversation be recognised.

(3) That the report be referred to the Cabinet and the Local Strategic Partnership Board to ensure that Members and Chief Officers comprehend the strategic and corporate significance of the Single Conversation.

(4) That the proposed officer lead and governance structures for the Single Conversation be supported.

DRAFT

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	1 March 2010
3.	Title:	Update on the Homes and Communities Agency Single Conversation and Revised Housing Strategy
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services.

5. Summary

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the national housing and regeneration agency for England. Its principal business process is the “Single Conversation” with Local Authorities, who are expected to put forward the shared ambitions and objectives on behalf of their Local Strategic Partnerships.

The focus of the Single Conversation is around comprehensive place-shaping, including the full range of housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community facilities. It is important that this process is not seen primarily as a housing issue, but rather an issue of how improvements in infrastructure and housing can contribute to and compliment aspirations to improve wider quality of life issues. Council’s are required to develop a Local Investment Plan, which will form the basis of a funding agreement between the HCA and the Local Authorities.

The report also sets out the rationale and progress on rewriting the Rotherham Housing Strategy, which will enhance its status as a key component to the Single Conversation.

6. Recommendation

That Cabinet Member:

- **Notes the Key Dates associated with the Single Conversation**
- **Recognises the importance of revising the existing Housing Strategy to enhance its status as a key component of the Single Conversation**
- **Refers the report to Full Cabinet and the Local Strategic Partnership Board to ensure that wider Members and Chief Officers comprehend the strategic and corporate significance of the Single Conversation**
- **Supports the proposed officer lead and governance structures for the Single Conversation**

7. Proposals and Details

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the national housing and regeneration agency for England. Its principal business process is the “Single Conversation” with Local Authorities, who are expected to put forward the shared ambitions and objectives on behalf of their Local Strategic Partnerships.

The focus of the Single Conversation is around comprehensive place-shaping, including the full range of housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community facilities. Councils are required to develop a Local Investment Plan, which will form the basis of a funding agreement between the HCA and the Local Authorities.

For a successful and coherent Single Conversation the Council must ensure that partner organisations seeking funding for the three year period 2011-2014 and beyond are understood and reflected in a coherent set of priorities to which all beneficiaries are fully signed up.

The first round of Yorkshire and Humber Region’s Single Conversations are now well advanced with the Leeds City Region, Hull and Sheffield. To maintain a coherent South Yorkshire regeneration investment programme it is important Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster’s first workshops with the HCA start soon.

Officers are closely monitoring the progress of both Sheffield and Hull and the HCA fed back to the Rotherham Core Group their experiences of the process to date at a meeting on 6th January 2010.

It emerged during that meeting that senior officer buy-in to the process is fundamental to demonstrating that this is corporately viewed as a strategic priority for the LA and the partners it represents. It is proposed that the Strategic Director for Neighbourhood and Adult Services will lead the main workshops with representation of key thematic leads from health, transport economy, children and young people adult services, safety, housing, finance and the Chief Executives department in attendance

Also it became clear that the HCA favours a single lead officer and point of contact at each authority who is able to articulate the Council’s vision and to create a ‘pen portrait’ of the authority at the first workshop. To this end the Sustainable Communities Manager in Neighbourhood Investment Services has been tasked with the role.

7.1 Housing Strategy Refresh

Aligned with the importance of engaging in the Single Conversation to unlock regeneration and growth funding is that of having a robust Housing Strategy. The existing strategy was adopted as recently as 2008. This was at a time of peak housing markets when the main concerns were to close the widening affordability gap and make the most of allocations available from the funds now brought together under the HCA umbrella; the strategy therefore preceded the dramatic economic downturn into recession.

A new Housing Strategy is needed to both reflect the new economic realities and to address the emerging challenge of climate change. It will address:

- **Sustainable Communities:** investing wisely in the physical infrastructure of our communities to achieve the highest standards of quality and design whilst supporting work to address other issues such as raising educational attainment and aspirations, tackling worklessness, health inequalities, and promoting safe and inclusive communities.
- **Growth:** how Rotherham will respond to its status within a New Growth Point.
- **Renewal:** how, where appropriate, we will complete existing projects and examine the case for new ones.
- **Affordable Housing:** how we intend to develop a programme of affordable house enablement through direct council house building, work with Housing Associations and by reacting to opportunities presented by the housing market., in response to the collapse in supply of open market housing through planning gain.
- **Climate Change:** how we will strive to tackle the greenhouse gas emissions arising from existing housing whilst ensuring that new development achieves the highest possible standards and promoting the Dearne Valley as a new form of Eco-Town.

Our Emerging new strategy will align with the HCAs Investment Plan, Audit Commission 'Building Better Lives' guidance document and the South Yorkshire Housing Strategy. In doing so it will respond to Rotherham's local priorities and ambitions.

The development of our new strategy will follow corporate guidance on consultation and community engagement and members are being engaged in the process from the outset. Cross directorate meetings have been taking place to ensure a corporate approach,.

In collaboration with neighbouring authorities, a South Yorkshire Forward Strategy and Investment Plan 2010-14 is being developed by Transform South Yorkshire on behalf of the four authorities. This will serve as a sub-regional platform for supporting the local authorities in their respective Conversations. Our revised Housing Strategy is to be structured to align with this sub-regional statement, emphasising Rotherham's unique attributes within the wider city region.

7.2 Key Milestones

The key milestones in the Single Conversation process including the revised Housing Strategy are outlined below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • 25 th , 26 th , 27 th January 10 | Housing Strategy consultation events |
| • January to end May 10 | Consultation Period |
| • 18th March 2010 | 1st 'Pen Portrait' Workshop with the HCA. |
| • July 2010 | Housing Strategy sign-off and launch. |
| • September 2010 | Local Investment Plan agreed |
| • October 2010 | Local Investment Agreement signed. |

8. Finance

The HCA commands funds formerly allocated by English Partnerships, The Housing Corporation, Regional Housing Boards, Communities and Local Government, and the Academy for Sustainable Communities. As a One Stop Shop for future funding, the HCA's support is critical to achieving Rotherham's ambitions across Housing and Growth and success will complement the advance of corporate priorities across Education, Health and Economic Development.

The HCA, within its current programme administers over £17billion nationally. Rotherham is drawing down a significant proportion of this money through programmes such as Decent Homes, Affordable Housing Projects, Council House Building, Kick Start initiatives, Housing Market Renewal, private sector housing support and funds to support regeneration officers in EDS and the Neighbourhood Investment Team.

The Single Conversation will reach agreement on a funding period that starts in March 2011 and runs for a 3 years. There is currently a great deal of uncertainty around the level of funding to be made available in this period due to a series of national financial pressures, Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and potential change in government.

There may be implications for the Council's commitment to engage in prudential borrowing and to make active use of its land and property assets arising from future allocations of funds to the Borough Council. Further reports will address these issues in detail.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There is considerable uncertainty about the future of the HCA in the event of a change in national administration. Whatever the outcome of the forthcoming general election the budgets allocated to the HCA will be re-assessed from the need to align public debts with future economic and monetary policies.

Whatever the outcome of the election it is unlikely that all funding will be withdrawn, as housing renewal and growth receives cross party support as does the pressing need to close the gap between housing supply and demand.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The HCA Guidance Framework stresses the holistic place-based approach that it wishes local authorities to adopt, stressing the links between housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community activity. It follows that a corporate approach to definition of the Local Investment Plan is a pre-requisite with particular emphasis on alignment with the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy and areas of significant budgetary investment such as Building Schools for the Future and Transport.

The same considerations apply in relation to other public priorities as identified through the Rotherham Partnership, including health and spatial health inequalities.

This Single Conversation process can help us to make effective use of our assets and manage them to best effect. It contributes to the Sustainable Neighbourhood's agenda by addressing identified housing issues and will help deliver better choice and quality of affordable housing to the community.

The process therefore has the potential to contribute towards all our key corporate strategic themes of:-

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

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Transform South Yorkshire - Forward Strategy November 2009
Homes and Communities Single Conversation Guidance Framework
<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/singleconversation.htm>
Rotherham Housing Strategy 2008
Rotherham Community Strategy 2005-11(updated 2008)

Report: Gordon Smith & Tracie Seals – Neighbourhood Investment Services:
01709 334969

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 4th January, 2010

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Goulty and Kaye (Policy Advisors).

J111. CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

The Principal Community Involvement Officer reported on the launch of the Connecting Communities which had taken place on 14th October, 2009, a £12M plan to reinvigorate and connect with those communities that were feeling the pressure from recession most acutely and ensure that they were well placed to share fully in future prosperity and emerge stronger and more cohesive.

The programme had 3 key priorities:-

Leadership – investment in Councillors, other leaders and frontline staff to support their confidence and skills in addressing problems in communities, listening and addressing issues head on.

Giving people a voice – an honest and open debate about the challenges. People would be encouraged to act as community champions.

Increased opportunities – raising awareness of opportunities available to local people.

Rotherham had been identified by GOYH as an area in need of resources and support. The areas identified as priority areas for interventions were East Maltby and Dinnington as they were unlikely to benefit from related initiatives such as Neighbourhood Management Intensive Schemes.

Work had taken place with officers to identify interventions and what support was required from GOYH to ensure local needs were being met. The proposals had been approved by GOYH and were now awaiting approval from CLG.

Rotherham would begin their delivery of the project in the second wave from mid-November, 2009 up to March, 2010. It was envisaged that there would be a third wave to sustain the work.

The NI14 Target Support Fund application from Rotherham for £77,000 had also been approved by CLG which would complement the project.

Local Ward Councillors and Members of Parliament had been notified of the proposals.

Resolved:- (1) That the update on the Connecting Communities areas be noted.

(2) That regular update reports be submitted.

(3) That the report be referred to Cabinet following confirmation from CLG to ensure corporate and political buy-in to the scheme.

J112. EMPTY PROPERTY - UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 188 of April, 2009, an update was submitted on efforts made to bring both private and public sector empty properties back into use within the Borough during 2009/10.

In 2007/08 the number of empty dwellings in Rotherham was slightly lower than the national average. However, in January, 2009, the Empty Homes Agency announced that for the 2008/09 outturn there were 783,633 empty dwellings in England of which 4,273 (3.88%) were in Rotherham. This was a Borough increase from 3.1% in 2007/08.

The empty homes picture for the Borough was changing and the mid-year outturn for Rotherham demonstrated that the number of empties in the Borough had reduced to 3,881 (3.53%).

The cross-directorate Empty Property Working Group had provided a strategic approach towards delivering effective ways of reducing the number of empty properties in both the private and public sector.

Discussion ensued on the report. It was felt that the report gave an outline of the work taking place but did not provide much substance to what had been achieved together with supporting evidence.

Resolved:- That a comprehensive report be submitted, including information from the Community Protection Unit (outlining the activity and outcomes of the Pro-active Enforcement Team).

J113. ALLOCATION POLICY REVIEW

Resolved:- That the report be deferred for consultation with Elected Members and re-submitted to the 18th January meeting.

J114. WORKFORCE STRATEGY

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services reported on the Directorate's Workforce Strategy which set out 6 main objectives, informed nationally and regionally.

These would support the Directorate's Strategic and Year Ahead commitments along with the implementation of personalisation across Rotherham in preparation for the development and implementation of an Integrated Local Area Workforce Strategy.

The Strategy and Training Plan had a clear action plan detailing how key

milestones would be met as recommended by the recent Care Quality Inspection.

Resolved:- (1) That the Workforce Strategy and the Integrated Local Area Workforce Strategy approach be endorsed.

(2) That the Strategy be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care for endorsement.

(3) That the Strategy be submitted to the Adults Board for joint endorsement.

J115. 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 information relating to the financial/business affairs of any person (including the Council)).

J116. PETITION UPDATE - HOWARD ROAD, BRAMLEY

Further to Minute No. 33 of 13th July, 2009, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted a further update of actions undertaken in relation to the petition received alleging anti-social behaviour.

A number of actions had been taken against the perpetrators which had culminated in Court action. Since the Court appearance, there had been no further incidents of anti-social behaviour reported or identified.

South Yorkshire Police and Community Protection Officers continued to monitor the situation and engage with residents and the perpetrators.

Resolved:- (1) That the actions taken be welcomed and the partnership work that had taken place acknowledged.

(2) That the resolution of the long term anti-social behaviour associated with the allegations be noted.

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

J117. PREFERRED PARTNER CONTRACT FOR ADAPTATIONS

In accordance with Minute No. 56 of 9th September, 2009, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted a further update on the performance of the preferred partner contract.

The report also suggested proposals and updates on actions of 2010 Rotherham Ltd. which had offered new opportunities arising from the potential outsourcing of the Repairs and Maintenance function.

Action was being taken to identify the best way of jointly working with 2010 Rotherham Ltd. to ensure minimum disruption to the preferred partner contract agreement.

Resolved:- (1) That the preferred partners' performance to date be noted and the action taken to maximise the opportunity presented to strengthen the future structure of the contract be supported.

(2) That 'in principle' support be approved to include the Aids and Adaptations Service within the market testing process presently being undertaken by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. in respect of the Repairs and Maintenance Service subject to a further report identifying the full implications of this approach.

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

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
Monday, 18th January, 2010

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Goulty and Kaye (Policy Advisors).

J118. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS PARTNERING BOARD

Consideration was given to representation on the Environmental Works Partnering Board.

Resolved:- That Councillor McNeely be appointed as representative on the Environmental Works Partnering Board, and Councillor P Russell as substitute.

J119. AREA ASSEMBLIES DEVOLVED BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods presented an update on the proposals from the Rotherham South Area Assembly Co-ordinating Group for projects identified to be funded through Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) within the 2009/10 financial year.

The bid for £23,000 had been to fund Police Community Support Officers to maintain the number of PCSOs in the Area Assembly. However, as 2009 progressed it became clear that the proposed funding was not required in Rotherham South as no PCSO funding was or was to be reduced during the term the LABGI funding was available. The Co-ordinating Group therefore agreed to withdraw the PCSO funding and fund 4 additional projects.

The bids were the result of partnership working between the Area Assembly, Elected Members, South Yorkshire Police and Youth Services. Although the same eligibility criteria and application process had been applied, they were the result of direct bids to the Co-ordinating Group and, due to the timescales involved, had not been through any element of public voting.

The projects were:-

South Yorkshire Police PS3 Club Project
RMBC Youth Service – Operation Coverage
RMBC CCTV Maintenance
Whiston Cinema Club

Resolved:- (1) That the LABGI project proposals detailed above be approved.

(2) That the LABGI project proposals be submitted to the Cabinet for ratification.

J120. ALLOCATION POLICY REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report which detailed progress since the last review of the Allocation Policy on 27th July 2009 and recommendations for amendments to both the Allocation Policy and Local Lettings Policies following the publication of the Governments Fair and Flexible consultation document and subsequent statutory guidance published on the 4th December 2009.

The proposed amendments to the Allocation Policy were:-

- More priority to be given to households with waiting time by increasing the quota in the General band from 10% to 20% and reducing the General Plus band from 40% to 30%
- Amend occupancy levels in section 2.2 – On rare occasions three individual adults can make a joint housing application to move, the eligibility rules must ensure that they are eligible for family houses (section 2.2) Joint applications must comply with the rules for joint tenancies. The occupancy levels for couples and single people need amending so that they are also eligible for 3 bedroom upper floor flats.
- More information is included in section 2,4 regarding offering of properties to the advertised quotas.
- Clarification that Priority Plus awarded detailed in Section 2.5.7 of the Allocation Policy for households with multiple needs to only include those households assessed as having two reasonable preference grounds detailed in section 2.2.1 of the Allocation Policy procedures
- Include households under occupying without an assessed need willing to downsize in the Priority Plus group
- Increase housing options for disabled people to ensure the needs of disabled people are adequately met by offering all adapted properties in date turn order irrespective of age.

The proposed changes to the Local Lettings Policies were:-

- Set aside 50% of vacancies in rural areas detailed in appendix 2a for applicants with a local connection to that area
- That a local letting policy to help applicants into employment is adopted in specific areas of the borough
- Support for people in work or seeking work
- To include in the Local Lettings Policy in respect of Management Difficulties: “where a conviction for an offence of anti social behaviour or where of illegal drug use played a major part in their conviction in the last 12 months, i.e. stolen goods to pay for drug addiction was more than 12 months and they MUST have also demonstrated good behaviour in the community for the last 12 months.

Resolved:- That the amendments to the Allocation Policy as identified in Section 7.7 be agreed.

J121. HOUSING RENT INCREASE 2010/11

The Finance Manager presented a report setting out the proposed housing rent, garage rent and heating charge increases for 2010/11.

The national rent setting regime had been in place since 2002/03 which required all authorities to use a prescribed formula to calculate each tenant's rent and to apply annual increases to actual rents to achieve the Formula Rent. This formula for 2010/11 produced an average rent increase for Rotherham tenants of 2.91%, however, for 2010/11, the DCLG had set a national guideline rent increase of 3.1%.

The average rent for 2009/10 was £56.88 collected over 48 weeks: the proposed 2010/11 average weekly rent collected over 48 weeks would rise to £58.54, an increase of £1.66 per week.

The Garage Site Improvement Programme had received £100,000 investment in 2009/10 with substantial works having been carried out in 2008/09. It was proposed to increase the rents by 2.91% in line with the rent increase.

In accordance with a previous decision, the District Heating Strategy was a phased increase over 3 years to achieve full recovery of district heating costs thereby avoiding any shortfall being effectively funded by all Council house tenants.

It was proposed to increase the unit rate charged from 5.25 pence per kWh to 5.93 pence per kWh (an increase of 12.9%) in order to recover the costs of the District Heating Service.

It was also proposed to increase pre-payments in 2010/11 from between 5% for 3 bed properties to 15% for 2 bed properties. This was due to the unit rate increase of 12.95% and the increases having been adjusted depending on the levels of credits or debits residents had had in the previous year.

There were two district heating systems that were not part of the pooled, metered district heating schemes which were Beeverleigh and Tickhill Road. It was proposed that they were increased as per the 3 year plan previously agreed by Cabinet on 17th September 2007. The proposed charges were:-

Beverleigh	Proposed Charge	Increase
One bedroom flat	£15.36	31.06%
Two bedroom flat	£17.29	30.98%

Tickhill Road

One bedroom flat	£19.42	23.30%
Three bedroom (leasehold)	£28.16	0%
Three bedroom (tenanted)	£22.27	0%

There was a third category of district heating, which was charged by the installation of "switch 2" card meters. These were at St Ann's and Swinton. It was proposed that the charges were increased from 3.02 pence per kWh to 3.4 pence per kWh, which amounted to an increase of 12.58% and was roughly in line with the pooled increase.

The Wardens Service was currently subject to a full service review with any potential new charges likely to be implemented in or around June, 2010. Current rates would continue until the outcomes of the review were confirmed.

It was noted that the Cabinet would consider the report at its meeting on 20th January, 2010.

Resolved:- That the Cabinet be requested to recommend to Council:-

(1) An average rent increase of 2.91% based on the DCLG subsidy and rent proposals which result in an average increase of £1.66 to £58.54 per week when collected over 48 weeks.

(2) That garage rents be increased by 2.91% in 2010/11.

(3) That the unit rate for District Heating be increased from 5.25p per kWh to 5.93p per kWh (an increase of 12.95%) in order to recover the costs of the District Heating Service.

(4) That pre-payments in 2010/11 be increased from between 5% for 3 bed properties to 15% for 2 bed properties.

(5) That the proposed charges relating to the properties at Beeversleigh and Tickhill Road be not approved and a further report be submitted to the next meeting detailing the historical reasons for these large increases

(6) That the current rates for the Wardens Service continue, pending the outcome of the full service review.

J122. 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 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

J123. NEW COUNCIL HOUSES

Richard Waller, Team Manager of the Non-Contentious Team presented the submitted report in respect of New Council Houses.

The Homes and Communities Agency had awarded the Council a grant for the construction of 36 new council houses on council land at Wood Street/School Street. In order to achieve the very tight timetable set by the HCA, the Council had been working with its selected RSL partner for the delivery of affordable housing in the Borough, Chevin Housing Association, to prepare the grant submission and was now proposing to commission Chevin and its development arm, Synergy Housing Solutions Ltd., which was responsible for the delivery of affordable housing development programme of Chevin and its seven other RSL partners, to project manage the construction of the new houses.

The overall value of the services to be provided by Chevin and Synergy would be capped at £150,000, which was below the threshold for procurement under the EU rules. For a contract of this value, Standing Orders required invitations to tender to be issued to 3-6 contractors. The Cabinet Member was therefore requested to exempt the contract for the provision of project management services from the requirements of Standing Order 48.1, which required invitations to be issued to 3-6 tenderers for contracts with an estimated value of £50,000 or more.

The HCA had awarded the Council a further grant to build 29 new Council houses at Albert Street, West Melton, following the close of the second round of bidding for grant monies. The timetable for the construction of these houses was equally tight and, in view of its work in connection with the first round of bidding for HCA grant, Chevin and Synergy were best placed to deliver the required project management services for the best price. Accordingly, the Cabinet Member was also requested to exempt the contract for the provision of project management services from the requirements of Standing Order 48.1.

Resolved:- (1) That an exemption from Standing Order 48.1 be granted and the contracts for the provision of project management services, in connection with the construction of 36 Council houses at Wood Street/School Street, Dalton, and 29 council houses at Albert Street, West Melton, be awarded to Chevin Housing Association Limited and its construction arm, Synergy Housing Solutions Ltd.

(2) That the overall contract price in respect of each contract be capped at £150,000.

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

J124. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (HIP) 2009/10

Consideration was given to a report which set out details of the progress on the 2009/10 Housing Investment Programme (HIP) and Non HIP Capital Schemes for the period to 15th December 2009.

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

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

J125. HOUSING GENERAL FUND

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the income, expenditure and net position for the Neighbourhoods department within the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate compared to the profiled budgets for the period ending 30th November 2009. It also included the projected year end outturn position which currently showed a forecast overspend of £687k (16.21% by the end of March 2010, prior to any management actions which may be implemented following the current review of the Independent Support Service.

Resolved:- That the report be received and noted.

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

(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM TO ENABLE THE MATTER TO BE PROCESSED.)

J126. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING TO 31ST DECEMBER 2009

The Finance Manager presented the submitted report which detailed the projected outturn for the Housing Revenue Account by the end of March 2010.

Resolved:- That the report be noted and received.

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

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
1st February, 2010

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Goulty (Policy Advisor).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kaye.

J127. 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.

J128. REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services presented a report highlighting the key issues with regard to the proposed externalisation of the Repairs and Maintenance Service.

Attached, as appendices to the report, were documents produced by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. regarding the downsizing of the IHSP, externalising the Repairs and Maintenance Service, together with the financial implications, changes to the Operations directorate and minor changes to the Capital Programme.

Issues raised on the reports included:-

- Consultation with staff
- Publicity
- Discussions with Trade Unions
- Rationalisation of activity

The Interim Chief Executive, Operations Director and Finance Director of 2010 Rotherham Ltd. were in attendance to answer questions raised.

Resolved;- (1) That 2010 Rotherham Ltd.'s intention to 'downsize' staffing numbers be noted.

(2) That in principal approval be given to the inclusion of Capital Programme works in the Repairs and Maintenance contract in order to reduce the number of redundancies and reduce costs (subject to further discussion and agreement of terms).

(3) That 2010 Rotherham Ltd. produces, without delay, a clear timeline for all activities including the Council decisions required regarding externalisation and submit a report to the Cabinet before the Summer recess.

(4) That 2010 Rotherham Ltd. submit a further report setting out clear information about costs once key information has been received regarding voluntary redundancies and pension liabilities,

(5) That it be noted that 2010 Rotherham Ltd. intended to utilise the £976,000 'reserve fund' to meet the costs of re-aligning divisions within the organisation.

(6) That 2010 Rotherham Ltd.'s proposal to restructure the Operations directorate and intention to utilise savings from the 2009/10 Management Fee to fund the realignment of the Service be noted.

(7) That the proposal of 2010 Rotherham Ltd. to vire £200,000 from the Empty Homes budget to the existing Boiler Replacement budget be approved and the Housing Improvement Programme adjusted accordingly.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Act - information relating to the financial/business affairs of any person (including the Council)/consultations relating to labour relations)

J129. INTRODUCTORY TENANCY PANEL

It was noted that an Appeals Panel had been held on 15th January, 2010, comprising Councillors Atkin (in the Chair), McNeely and P. Russell, to review a decision to terminate an Introductory Tenancy.

The Panel had confirmed the decision made on 27th November, 2009.

Resolved:- That the Panel's decision be noted.

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

J130. NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ADULT SERVICES STAGE 3 COMPLAINT PANEL

It was noted that a meeting of a Complaints Panel held been held on 19th January, 2010, comprising Councillors Atkin (in the Chair), Jack and P. Russell. The Panel heard a complaint received from Mr. C. relating to the Council's Allocation Policy.

The Panel had not upheld the complaint.

Resolved:- That the Panels' findings be noted.

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

Monday, 15th February, 2010

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Goultly and Kaye (Policy Advisors).

J131. OAK TREES EXTRA CARE HOUSING - PETITION

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services reported that a petition had been received on 27th November, 2009, from tenants residing within the Oak Trees Extra Care Housing Scheme expressing their concern proposed removal of the Housing Support Officer.

The separation of Care and Housing Support was initiated in April, 2009 whereby the care enablers based at Potteries Court and Oak Trees were transferred to Health and Wellbeing and managed as part of the Council's registered domiciliary care service. The newly created Housing Support Team had been in operation since March, 2009 and had a presence in 2 aforementioned and Bakersfield Court.

The Team remained under the remit of Independent Living and was dedicated to providing a service to customers across the 3 schemes to ensure that their housing support related needs were met.

Since March, 2009, the Team had concentrated on making customers at Bakersfield Court feel welcome and settling them into their new home. The Team had organised and held "meet and greet" events together with several evening events. The completion of support plans with each customer had been an exercise which had been well received by all 52 customers and was now 100% complete. The Team had also started to introduce the plans to service users at Potteries and Oak Trees.

In June, 2009, a meet and greet event had been held at each one of the Extra Care Housing Schemes giving each tenant an opportunity to meet the individual team members. It was explained that the Housing Support Officers would be working flexibly across all 3 locations and would involve them rotating to become familiar with all schemes and tenants and to provide cover in periods of sickness and annual leave.

It was proposed that this method of working continues to give flexibility and that this be reiterated to tenants together with reassurance that they would not be losing an officer but would see the whole Team at different times.

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

(2) That the positive impact of the work of the Housing Support Team be noted.

J132. NATIONAL AIR QUALITY AND M1 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 108 of 18th February, 2008, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services presented the above update.

Section 83 of the Environment Act required a local authority, for any area where air quality standards were not being met, to issue an Order designating it an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). It was proposed that the area covered by the existing M1 AQMA be extended to include areas of Blackburn that were in proximity to the M1.

Although air quality is cleaner than at any time since the industrial revolution, air pollution was not declining as quickly as previously expected. The proposed extension of the M1 will inevitably have a negative effect upon air quality in Rotherham.

The Council's Community Protection Unit had been consulted by the Highways Agency regarding the proposal to widen the M1 motorway between junction 35 and 32 through Rotherham. The proposal was to increase highway capacity as a managed motorway to 4 lanes at peak times with no extra land taken. This would result in vehicles being closer to the residential properties of Blackburn, Meadowbank and Brinsworth. Mitigation measures could include variable speed limits. The impact on air quality was being assessed by consultants on behalf of the Highways Agency as part of their Environmental Assessment.

A Detailed Assessment of the air quality in Blackburn close to the M1, adjacent to the M1 AQMA was submitted to DEFRA in July, 2009. It was unlikely that areas of Blackburn where residents were exposed to levels of Nitrogen Dioxide above the Air Quality Objective Levels would meet the Air Quality Objectives. Consequently, the Council was statutorily obliged to declare an AQMA.

It was proposed that the AQMA should be extended to include:-

"From the boundary of the existing Air Quality Management Area which follows the line of Droppingwell Road follow Baring Road to the junction with Barber Wood Road, due north from Barber Wood Road to the line of the dismantled railway line, follow the route of the dismantled railway line to the north west to the edge of the M1 motorway. From there, follow the edge of the M1 motorway due south east to New Droppingwell Road"

It was also noted that a Detailed Assessment of Air Quality for the Parkgate area near to the A633 had been completed in April, 2009, and accepted in full by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. A Detailed Assessment for the pollutant fine particulates (24-hour PM₁₀) in the area of St. Ann's alongside the A630 was due for submission to DEFRA in April, 2010.

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Resolved:- (1) That the extension of the Rotherham M1 Air Quality Management Area (2001) be extended to include additional areas of Blackburn close to the M1 motorway.

(2) That Legal and Democratic Services amend the existing Air Quality Management Area Rotherham Borough Council Order 2001 (M1) in accordance with National Air Quality Strategy Guidance.

J133. NEIGHBOURHOODS GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 31ST DECEMBER 2009

The Finance Manager (Neighbourhoods) submitted a report which detailed the income, expenditure and net position for the Neighbourhoods department within the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate compared to the profiled budgets for the period ending 31st December 2009.

The report also included the projected year end outturn position which currently showed a forecast overspend of £721,000 (17.%) by the end of March 2010.

The key pressures were as follows:-

- Independent Support Service (Wardens) (£617,000 overspend)
- Safer Neighbourhoods (£91,000 overspend)
- Business Regulation (£30,000 overspend)
- Neighbourhood Partnerships (£29,000 overspend)
- Housing /Access (£12,000 overspend)
- Housing Choices (£1,000 overspend)
- Neighbourhood Investments (£1,000 overspend)
- Agency and Consultancy - £36,000 incurred to date

The Finance Manager also gave a verbal report on the Key Choices Property Management Service and staffing. The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services reported that a review was to take place on staffing structures which would result in proposals being submitted for consideration.

Resolved:- That the report be received and noted.

J134. AREA ASSEMBLIES DEVOLVED BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods presented an update on the proposals from the Wentworth South Area Assembly Co-ordinating Group for projects identified to be funded through Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) within the 2009/10 financial year.

In 2009 the Co-ordinating Group had agreed several several projects but

which had either not been able to commence for various or had had to be reprofiled.

In order to ensure that the LABGI funding was spent within the timescales and had the desired impact on the local area, the Group had met to consider the following proposals:-

Oldfield Road/Laudsdale Road – security fencing
 Praise Pod – Dalton Foljambe Primary School
 Outdoor Furniture – Silverwood Children’s Home
 Refurbishment of Community Centre – Dukes Place Tenants Association
 Rawmarsh World War II Memorial
 Remedial Tree Works
 Redecoration of Kilnhurst Resource Centre
 Community Garden – Thrybergh Country Park Countryside Ranger
 High Greave Place Path Works
 Diversionary Activities – following installation of MUGA lighting at Herringthorpe Valley Park
 Community Arts Project – Bonded Warehouse, Thrybergh
 Installation of Wood Posts – Shelly Drive
 Wilson Avenue – removal of tree stump and tarmac area

Due to the timescales and the fact that the funding ceased in 2010, the proposals had not been through any element of public voting. The new projects would use all the underspend and ensure that all the LABGI funding for Wentworth South had been allocated.

Resolved:- (1) That the LABGI project proposals detailed above be approved.

(2) That the LABGI project proposals be submitted to the Cabinet for ratification.

J135. 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.

J136. ASSET EXCHANGE - NO. 1 CLEMENT MEWS, KIMBERWORTH

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted a proposal for an asset exchange to facilitate Phase One of the Canklow Regeneration Programme.

To facilitate negotiation with private sector landlords and owners, the Neighbourhood Investment Service and Valuation Service were working closely with individual households to understand their specific needs. The

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timely relocation of residents and acquisition of properties was critical to the completion of this phase of the regeneration programme and would determine how any future redevelopment of the area would be phased and delivered.

A private landlord had requested a property exchange instead of being paid for his current vacant property. The landlord was working closely with the Council to negotiate a solution which would enable his existing tenant to be re-housed and the Council to acquire the vacated property.

A vacant Council-owned property had been identified. The property was currently void awaiting improvement. It required major internal and external works. It was proposed that the exchange take place provided that the landlord agreed to bring the property up to a good letting standard, no further tenants were allocated to his property in Canklow and any shortfall in relative capital values between the 2 properties was bridged by the landlord.

Resolved:- (1) That the asset exchange be supported.

(2) That an approach be made to other landlords in Canklow should negotiations fail with the landlord stated in the report.

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

J137. AIREY PROPERTIES - LEICESTER ROAD, DINNINGTON

Further to Minute No. 94 of 30th November, 2009, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services reported on the 4 Airey properties on Leicester Road, Dinnington, providing the strategic regeneration context within which future investment proposals for the properties had been considered.

The report proposed that the properties be decommissioned and demolished to support wider regeneration aims and objectives in the Leicester Road area of Dinnington particularly the delivery of new high quality homes on cleared sites.

In addition to the 4 Council-owned Airey properties, there were a further 2 remaining on Leicester Road which were in private ownership. The report also provided a rationale for the strategic acquisition and demolition of those properties to facilitate new housing development.

The report also detailed regeneration proposals for Leicester Road and outlined details of the proposed redevelopment of the cleared site and other cleared sites within the locality.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposal to disinvest in the Council-owned Airey

properties at Nos. 9, 11, 15 and 17 Leicester Road, Dinnington, be approved.

(2) That the relocation of Council tenants from Nos. 9, 11, 15 and 17 Leicester Road, Dinnington, and the demolition of said properties be approved.

(3) That the strategic acquisition of Nos. 7 and 13 Leicester Road, Dinnington, the relocation of the households and the demolition of the properties be approved.

(4) That priority rehousing status to the displaced be approved together with the payment of Homeless and Disturbance payments as appropriate.

(5) That the strategic acquisition of land in private ownership in Site C be approved subject to its affordability and finance being available within the Housing Market Renewal Programme.

(6) That a further report be submitted detailing proposals of the release of the cleared sites for redevelopment.

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

J138. PROPERTIES EXCEEDING THE INVESTMENT THRESHOLD

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the investment threshold on individual properties.

On 20th May, 2007 (Minute No. 304), the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods an investment threshold of £20,000 had been approved. The report revisited the decision having regard to recent investment decisions and following benchmarking with the other local authorities in South Yorkshire. It also detailed the number of empty homes where the required investment value exceeded the investment threshold.

Benchmarking and value for money comparisons had been undertaken and demonstrated that the investment threshold level was appropriate and very few properties exceeded the level. Those that did exceed the threshold would continue to be subject to an investment appraisal by the Neighbourhood Investment Service prior to referral to the Cabinet Member for consideration. This would ensure that investment decisions were sustainable and supported by robust evidence and analysis as well the Council responding to changing housing market and economic conditions, particularly the increasing demand for affordable Council homes.

2 properties had been referred to the Council by 2010 Rotherham Ltd. for an investment decision as the costs exceeded the existing investment threshold. Set out in the report were full details of each property together

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with the rationale for investment.

Ward Members were in support of the recommendations contained within the report.

Resolved:- (1) That the investment threshold of £20,000 be reaffirmed for the reasons stated in the report.

(2) That No. 3 Elliott Close, West Melton, be retained with the structural defects addressed to facilities re-letting subject to confirmation of resources.

(3) That No. 28 Nelson Street, Clifton, be sold due to the substantial cost of investment required.

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

J139. LAND AT STONE PARK CLOSE MALTBY

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services reported that the Cabinet (Minute No. 131 of 4th November, 2009, refers) approved the release of Council-owned sites to support funding bids to the Homes and Communities Agency to build new Council homes.

The outcome of funding bids was announced on 11th January, 2010 with the development proposal at Stone Park Close, Maltby, being 1 of the Rotherham bids supported by the HCA.

The report proposed the acquisition of identified land at Stone Park Close from South Yorkshire Housing Association to enable comprehensive land assembly to support the construction of 4 Council houses. Whilst not essential to the viability of the development, the additional land would provide an opportunity for enhanced design quality which would support sustainable development.

Grant funding to support the housing development had been confirmed by the HCA. Funding to support the acquisition had been identified within the approved 2009/10 Housing Investment Programme.

South Yorkshire Housing Association had agreed to the disposal of the land to the Council for this purpose.

Resolved:- That the acquisition of the land at Stone Park Close, Maltby, for the purpose stated above be approved.

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

J140. REQUEST TO WAIVER OF RIGHT TO BUY DISCOUNT REPAYMENT

The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services reported receipt of a request from a former Council tenant asking the Council to waive the repayment of the Right to Buy discount that was repayable upon resale within a 5 year period of purchase.

The former tenant was applying for the Mortgage Rescue Scheme due to financial difficulties. The Council was in the process of applying the MRS to an appointed Registered Social Landlord. If the client had to pay back the Right to Buy discount, it would be classed as an additional charge on the property and may compromise the Mortgage Rescue proposal.

Resolved:- That, in light of the circumstances outlined in the report submitted, repayment of £9,600 be waived.

(Exempt under Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Act - information relating to the financial/business affairs of any person (including the Council)/consultations relating to labour relations)

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday, 28th January, 2010

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cutts, Gamble, Hodgkiss and Nightingale.

64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

65. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

66. COMMUNICATIONS

Resolved:- That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (substitute) represent the Scrutiny Panel on 2010's Environmental Works Partnering Board.

67. TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY

Paul Woocock, Director of Planning and Regeneration, gave the following powerpoint presentation:-

Overview

- NI186 per capita reduction in CO₂ emissions in the Local Authority area
- Location action
- Sub-regional working:
 - Climate Change Leadership Programme
 - Engaging the Third Sector
 - Carbon Calculator
 - Activity in schools

What is NI186?

- Percentage reduction of the per capita CO₂ emissions in the Local Authority area
- Annual amount of end user CO₂ emissions across an agreed set of sectors:-
 - Housing
 - Road transport
 - Business

Wider Linkages

- NI167 Congestion – average journey time per mile during the morning peak
- NI185 CO₂ reduction from local authority operations
- NI187 Tackling fuel poverty - % of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a
- NI194 Air quality – percentage reduction in NO_x and primary PM
- NI198 Children travelling to school – mode of transport usually used
- Environment and Climate Change Strategy (Draft)

NI186 Reduction in CO₂ Emissions Calculation (DECC 09)

- Total CO₂ emissions per capita

Rotherham

2005 8.2

2006 6.9

2007 6.6

Current baseline 6.6

Reduction from 2005 1.54

Percentage change -18.88% (U.K. -2.3%)

NI186 Reduction in CO₂ Emissions 2005-2007

- '5th in U.K. and leading the region?'

2006 (6.9)

2007 (6.6)

The Local Picture

- Domestic
 - 2005 648
 - 2006 644
 - 2007 613
- Roads
 - 2005 366
 - 2006 353
 - 2007 358
- Industry and Commercial
 - 2005 1,049
 - 2006 760
 - 2007 706

Querying the DECC dataset

- In 2005
DECC's methodology of the treatment of large energy users changed between 2005 and 2006-07. When looking at NUTS4 locations: Rotherham's gas consumption figure does not exclude a power station or a large industrial consumer
However, in 2006 and 2007
Rotherham's gas consumption figure excludes the gas consumption of one large industrial consumer

This change is mainly due to a large industrial user being included in the 2005 figure and not included in 2006 onwards

Actions split into 3 groups:

- Purely national actions but still influencing community emissions
- National actions but can be improved in performance with influence by local authorities
- Purely local actions implemented by local authorities or other organisations

Local Action

- Although data reported nationally, a local evidence base is required for both NI186 and CAA
- 4 key areas:
 - Reducing domestic emissions
 - Reducing transport emissions
 - Reducing non-domestic emissions
 - Reducing emissions across the community

Example Activities

- Insulating entire housing stock
- Lifestyle changes of households
- Efficient heating in residential buildings
- Lights and appliances in residential buildings
- Increasing travel by public transport
- Building energy efficiency and management in non-residential buildings
- All industry: energy and resource efficiency
- Biomass heating for all types of buildings
- On-shore wind generation

South Yorkshire Climate Change Network Aims

To assist South Yorkshire in becoming 1 of the best performing sub-regions in the country in respect of climate change by:

- Working together to meet the requirements of the Nis
- Providing a focus for co-ordinated dialogue and decision making
- Ensuring South Yorkshire contributes effectively to regional and national strategy and action planning
- Collecting and disseminating key information and best practice
- Working together to raise awareness and gain commitment within the 4 Councils and the wider community

South Yorkshire Climate Change Leadership Programme

- Series of sub-regional workshops aimed at key decision makers
- Council operations – 25th January
- Adaptation – tbc March 2010
- Community emissions – tbc June 2010
- Specific event for Members

Engaging the Third Sector

- 6 month project
- Develop a toolkit which includes hard copy/web-based guidelines on:
 - improving resource/energy efficiency
 - reduce/reuse/recycling waste
 - sustainable transport
 - sustainable procurement
 - domestic housing improvements
 - adaptation
- Signposting to available help and information within the VCFS
- Identification and communication of best practice from the VCFS
- Training workshops as required
- Champions network

South Yorkshire Schools Climate Change Project

- Project website
- Display
- Eco-Schools data search
- Database of specialist support and contacts

Future Items?

- Fuel poverty/energy efficiency in the home
- Local attitudes and behaviours to climate change
- Recycling issues
- Green business

Discussion ensued on the presentation with the following issues raised/highlighted;-

- Migrating pollution was a problem particularly in terms of transport. Motorways were not included in National Indicators. The Government was starting to recognise that there were certain issues that local authorities had difficulty in addressing
- The Climate Change Network had been established to enable working together
- There were some good example of projects in the town
- Although the national data for 2007 stated that Rotherham was the 5th best in the country, the 2007 figure did not include a large business whose emissions had been measured previously. Once the anomaly stated was taken out, Rotherham's performance was comparable to a large number of authorities
- There were now national targets as well as the Authority's own. Performance was also measured through the CAA
- The Council's Sustainable Development Officers Group were developing a Climate Change Strategy including cross-cutting Council targets
- To take account of those towns that had power stations, large plants, airport etc. the Government had decided to look at end user and not producer targets

- Difficulties experienced by some schools in their efforts to recycle
- It was felt that the reduction in emissions in 2006/07 was possibly due to a shift from traditional industries to more office type environs
- There was currently a planning application being considered for the installation of a weir at Aldwarke. Private industries were looking at how they could generate energy from other sources

The Chair thanked Paul and Emma for their presentation.

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

(2) That a half day Scrutiny Review take place on Climate Change and include Air Quality Management Areas.

(3) That a report on Air Quality Management Areas be submitted to a future meeting of the panel.

(4) That the issue of recycling in schools be referred to the Regeneration and Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panels for consideration.

68. HRA MONITORING STATEMENT

The Finance Manager (Neighbourhoods) reported that, based on performance to the end of December, 2009, the HRA was projected to outturn with a surplus of £2.083M (3% variance from gross budget) by the end of March, 2010.

The report set out a number of variances:-

- Supervision and Management Costs – Overspend forecast of £500,000. This principally related to the expansion of the Rotherham Furnished Scheme and was mainly offset by increased income in non-dwelling rents (£474,000). The balance was related to difficulties in meeting the vacancy factor in Area Assemblies.
- Negative Subsidy to Government – Original budget was based on the draft determination issued in November, 2008. Subsequent changes to the guidance were issued as a result of the prevailing economic conditions which allowed Rotherham to take advantage of increased subsidy in return for a reduction in the proposed rent increase. This had altered Rotherham's position by £2.350M to become a receiver of positive subsidy.
- Depreciation of Fixed Assets – Forecast to be £529,000 less than the budget of £19.800M.
- Repairs and Maintenance – 2010 Ltd. currently projecting a balanced budget with robust management actions in place.
- Income – Dwelling rent income forecast to be below budget by

£1.188M, partially offset by the forecast rent loss due to voids and other losses and refunds being less than budget by £0.444M, leaving a net position of £0.744M – mainly due to the original budget being set with an assumed rent increase of 6.9%. The Government subsequently allowed the Council to reduce this to increase to 3.6% due to the prevailing economic conditions in return for additional subsidy benefit which would offset the loss.

The position had improved from the previous forecast as the reduction in weekly rent charges for the second half of 2010/11 was less than anticipated due to more robust information held in the ledgers and the removal of the Private Landlord Schemes from Council Rent Income forecasts.

It was stressed that that there was a risk of the HRA receiving charges of up to £1.008M of procurement and set up costs relating to the externalisation of the Repairs and Maintenance Service which was not included in the forecast outturn. The financial projections also assumed that there would be no significant change in the consolidated rate of interest for capital borrowing.

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

69. HOUSING RENTS 2010/11

The Finance Manager (Neighbourhoods) presented a report setting out the proposed housing rent, garage rent and heating charge increases for 2010/11.

The national rent setting regime had been in place since 2002/03 which required all authorities to use a prescribed formula to calculate each tenant's rent and to apply annual increases to actual rents to achieve the Formula Rent. This formula for 2010/11 produced an average rent increase for Rotherham tenants of 2.91%, however, for 2010/11, the DCLG had set a national guideline rent increase of 3.1%.

The average rent for 2009/10 was £56.88 collected over 48 weeks: the proposed 2010/11 average weekly rent collected over 48 weeks would rise to £58.54, an increase of £1.66 per week.

The Garage Site Improvement Programme had received £100,000 investment in 2009/10 with substantial works having been carried out in 2008/09. It was proposed to increase the rents by 2.91% in line with the rent increase.

In accordance with a previous decision, the District Heating Strategy was a phased increase over three years to achieve full recovery of district heating costs thereby avoiding any shortfall being effectively funded by all Council house tenants. It was proposed to increase payments in 2010/11 from between 5% for three bed properties to 15% for two bed properties.

The Wardens Service was currently subject to a full service review with any potential new charges likely to be implemented in or around June, 2010. Current rates would continue until the outcomes of the review were confirmed.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following issues raised/highlighted:-

- HRA reserves
- Externalisation of IHSP
- Income received from garages
- Level of investment spent on garages
- The garage rent increase applied to both garages and garage plots
- District Heating Scheme – collection of payment

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

(2) That an update on the Garage Investment Plan be submitted to the Panel in the new Municipal Year.

70. CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Panel noted the decisions made under delegated powers by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods held on 30th November, 14th and 21st December, 2009.

71. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th December, 2009, were agreed.

72. PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 20th November and 4th December, 2009, were noted.

73. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

74. BUDGET UPDATE

Pete Hudson, Director of Service Finance, gave a powerpoint presentation on the budget 20/11 and beyond.

The presentation drew attention to savings and investments proposals developed having regard to:-

- The Budget Gap
- Current spend in Service areas compared to similar Councils
- Service performance compared to similar Councils
- Current Service spending pressures
- Proposals to bridge the budget gap
- Directorate specific saving proposals.

It was noted that detailed proposals would be considered by the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee at its meeting on 12th February, 2010.

Discussion ensued on the information presented and queries raised and answered relating to the provision of services in localities. It was noted that a Value for Money Review was underway on this issue looking at how each of the Area Assemblies utilised services and resources, not just those of the Council but also partners', and ensure they worked in the most efficient manner possible.

Resolved:- (1) That Pete Hudson be thanked for his informative presentation.

(2) That the information presented be noted.

75. SHELTERED HOUSING WARDEN SERVICE – SHORT TERM OVERSPEND REDUCTION PROPOSALS

The Older Peoples Housing Services Manager presented a report setting out short term/interim solutions to reduce the projected overspend of the Sheltered Housing Warden Scheme.

Proposals for the merger of the In House Sheltered Housing Warden and Care Enablement Service had been supported by both Cabinet Members for Adults Social Care and Health and Housing and Neighbourhoods in March, 2009. The merged service would allow a more efficient and streamlined preventative service maximising the existing staff skill set, reduce duplication and support an increased range of customers offering broader support activities.

A Project Board established to ensure the success of the project had proposed that a feasibility study should commence at York Gardens, Wath upon Dearne, for 3 months with Care Enablers based in the area taking over the role of the Sheltered Housing Wardens. The Board was considering a range of options including historical issues such as laundry collection, TV licences, cleaning etc. A further report was to be submitted

to the Cabinet Member shortly.

The report also highlighted the financial situation of both the Wardens and Care Enabler Services and the charges incurred for provision of such.

It was noted that since the report had been considered by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods on 30th November, 2009 (Minute No. 97 refers), further work had taken place. Consideration was being given to a possible increase in charges and discussions had taken place with HR and the Unions about the possible change in contracts for Care Enablers.

Discussion ensued on the report with attention drawn to:-

- The effect, if any, on self-payers on an increase in charges
- Wardens promoted the Service
- Care Enablers' contracts
- Majority of Service users did not pay for the Service

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

(2) That the evaluation of the pilot at York Gardens, Wath upon Dearne, be submitted to this Scrutiny Panel.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
15th January, 2010

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Boyes, Gilding, Jack, License, McNeely, G. A. Russell, P. A. Russell and Swift.

Also in attendance for item 121 below (Local Government Reform – The Local Democracy and Economic Development and Construction Act) was Councillor Hussain (Cabinet Member for Community Development and Engagement)

116. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

117. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

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

118. YEAR AHEAD - MID YEAR UPDATE

Julie Slatter, Head of Policy and Performance, presented the submitted report which provided a mid year update on the 62 commitments outlined in the 2009/10 year ahead statement "Shaping the Future". The report focused on the progress of each individual commitment and also offered an overview of how many commitments had been achieved, how many were on target to be completed by the year end, how many were at risk of not being achieved by the year end and finally how many would not be achieved by the year end.

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

- LDF Core Strategy (Commitment 52) : timescale extension, further consultation and budget implications of increased costs
- Raising profile and level of intervention in addressing child poverty in Rotherham (Commitment 42) : need to see the links between CO₂ emissions, insulating houses, fuel poverty and child poverty
- involvement of scrutiny panels in helping to push amber rated commitments to green

Resolved:- (1) That the progress of the year ahead commitments (2009/10) to date be noted.

(2) That scrutiny panel chairs liaise with scrutiny officers to identify specific issues for consideration at relevant scrutiny panels

119. JULY TO SEPTEMBER, 2009 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORT ON MAJOR EXTERNAL FUNDING PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

The Chairman welcomed Barbara Moulson, Strategic Funding Manager, External Funding Team and Michael Holmes, Strategic Funding Officer. Barbara presented the submitted report which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 16th December, 2009.

The report provided an overview of the performance and achievements of the Council's major external funding programmes and projects for the period July to September, 2009.

The priorities for each regime, together with the context of each project/programme's contribution to addressing those priorities, had previously been provided as an appendix to the Cabinet report in December, 2007.

The main risk associated with this report was that external funds allocated to the Council and its partners were not used fully and therefore ultimately lost to the Borough. It was the purpose of this report to assist in alleviating this issue through monitoring the major externally funded schemes and bringing to attention potential areas of underspend and under performance.

No projects/programmes were reporting concerns regarding the achievement of both spend and performance targets.

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

- PFI and Future Jobs Fund to be included in future reports
- Play Pathfinder : need to look at critically in terms of value for money considerations
- funding of a brokerage manager
- implications of underspend on European Social Fund projects
- ERDF funding clarification

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

(2) That the progress and actions underway to address areas where the expected outcomes for the major external funding programmes and

projects were not in line with the targets set be noted.

(3) That Andrew Bedford, Barbara Moulson and Cath Saltis liaise to bring back further information, particularly with regard to value for money/performance issues in respect of play areas/Play Pathfinder.

120. SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO THE USE OF CONSULTANTS

Further to Minute No. 64 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 17th June, 2009, Andrew Bedford, Strategic Director of Finance, presented the submitted report which provided an update on progress made in respect of implementing the approved recommendations. Also submitted was the proforma template in use within directorates to gain approval for engaging consultants. The proforma would facilitate the future reporting of spend on consultants in budget monitoring reports.

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

- budget savings targets on agency and consultancy services
- concerns regarding skills of consultants
- definition of a consultant
- establishment of an in-house consultancy service
- opportunities to develop the 'non-specialist' skills some consultants were engaged to provide
- capturing in service plans the proposed use of consultants
- expected outcomes

Resolved:- (1) That the information and progress made to date be noted.

(2) That a further report be submitted on expected outcomes from the use of consultants.

121. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM - THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION ACT 2009

Steve Eling, Principal Officer (Parliamentary Analysis), presented the submitted report which detailed how the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (c. 20) received Royal Assent on 12th November, 2009. Parts one to seven took forward the remaining legislative requirements from the White Paper "Strong and Prosperous

Communities; and some of the legislative requirements from the White Paper "Communities in Control". The Act also included some provisions that arose in the "Strengthening Local Democracy" consultation paper.

Part eight of the Act provided for amendments to the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

The report related to the local government reform aspects contained in parts one to seven of the Act, together with actions on commencement to be taken forward through the workstreams of the Council's Local Government Reform Implementation Plan.

The report provided more in-depth information on:-

- Part 1 Duties relating to Promotion of Democracy – Sections 1 – 30.
 - Democratic Arrangements.
 - Petitions.
 - Involvement in Functions of Public Authorities.
 - Housing.
 - Local Freedoms and Honorary Titles.
 - Membership of Local Authorities.
- Part 2 Local Authorities Governance and Audit – Sections 31 – 54.
 - Scrutiny.
 - Mutual Insurance.
 - Audit of Entities connected with Local Authorities.
- Part 3 Local Government Boundary and Electoral Change – Sections 55 – 68.
- Part 4 Local Authority Economic Assessments – Section 69.
- Part 5 Regional Strategy – Sections 70 – 87.
- Part 6 Economic Prosperity Boards and Combined Authorities – Sections 88 – 120.
- Part 7 Multi Area Agreements – Sections 121 – 137.
- Part 8 Construction Contracts – Sections 138 – 145.
- Part 9 Final – Sections 146 – 150.

It was not possible at this stage to identify what resource implications may arise for the Council when all the provisions of the Act came into effect.

The financial effects assessed to arise at the time that the Bill was introduced to Parliament suggested that the costs associated with its

implementation would be approximately £35 million per year in England starting in 2010/11.

Two Regulatory Impact Assessments were produced:-

- Duty to Promote Democracy Impact Assessment: and
- Local Authority Economic Assessment Duty Impact Assessment.

However, further functions had been introduced during the passage of the Bill. Additionally, the "Strengthening Local Democracy" consultation paper introduced proposals that related to the provisions in the Act. A separate Impact Assessment was produced for the consultation proposals.

Further work would need to be undertaken to identify the resource implications as part of developing the implementation of the new duties. Many of the proposed changes were expected to commence in 2010 and the Government was already implementing transitional arrangements in relation to regional working and strategies. However, most of the provisions commenced on dates to be appointed by the Secretary of State.

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

- extension of duty to involve and impact on partnership and leadership role
- duty to promote democracy and concerns that this may be deferred during current parliament
- duty for councils to respond to petitions : issues concerning extent of feedback from consideration of petitions, e-petitions and scrutiny involvement arising from dissatisfied petitioners. Detailed report to be submitted
- partial amendment to the Widdicombe rules to change arrangements in relation to politically restricted posts : removal of salary cap
- higher visibility of overview and scrutiny including establishment of a statutory post of 'Scrutiny Officer'
- scrutiny of public officials
- provision about the procedures of local authorities and the audit of local authorities and the audit of entities connected with them
- local freedoms and honorary titles
- regional and sub-regional issues

- provisions to establish mutual insurance arrangements

Resolved:- (1) That the policy and constitution issues set out in the report and appendix be noted.

(2) That it be noted that a number of the workstreams had direct implications for the future role of scrutiny.

(3) That further reports be submitted on the implementation of the workstreams.

(4) That Cabinet be advised that, as far as this Committee is concerned, if the implementation date for the duty to promote democracy is not determined during this Parliament, then the Council should continue with initiatives to revive trust in, and involvement with, democratic structures within the borough.

(5) That a further report be submitted on the duty for Councils to respond to petitions.

122. DEVOLVED BUDGET REVIEW - INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Austen presented briefly the submitted report indicating that the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel was conducting a review into devolved budgets considering the effects these have had on the borough as a source of funding for neighbourhood projects and the effects that would be felt if they were to cease.

The interim report contained the initial recommendations of the review group, following extensive interviews with Cabinet Members and directors so that they could be incorporated into budgetary considerations.

Resolved:- (1) That the interim report be endorsed.

(2) That Cabinet be requested to consider seriously the funding to devolved budget during the current budget process.

123. MINUTES

Resolved:- (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th December, 2009 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

(2) That, further to Minute No. 105 (Localised Flooding in June, 2009), a report be submitted to a future meeting regarding the response to the recent adverse weather conditions.

124. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor Whelbourn reported :

- latest correspondence from the Post Office regarding the issuing of fifty pound notes as part of benefit/pension payments
- concerns regarding the level of school closures during the recent adverse weather

Resolved:- That the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel consider the consistency aspect of school closures at a future meeting.

(b) Councillor Austen reported :

- the review of devolved budgets was ongoing
- the Looked After Children Sub-Committee review on corporate parenting was ongoing and a further meeting had been arranged

(c) Councillor Jack reported that the meeting of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had been rearranged to 21st January, 2010 and would be considering dementia and local authority working with partners.

(d) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that the meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had been rearranged to 22nd January, 2010.

(e) Councillor Boyes reported that the latest meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel had considered:-

- effects of extreme weather
- CO2 emissions
- new cultural centre

125. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

126. 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 issues)

(Note: the following item was originally in the open part of the agenda but moved to the exempt section due to the confidential nature of the matters for discussion)

127. BUDGET UPDATE

Andrew Bedford, Strategic Director of Finance, gave a presentation in respect of the above.

The presentation covered:-

- Revenue Budget 2010/11
- Original Gap
- Revised Gap
- To be Bridged by:
 - o Cross Cutting Savings Proposals
 - o Directorate Specific Savings Proposals

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

- budget timetable
- pay and inflation
- breakdown of savings proposals
- feedback from base budget reviews
- Council Tax
- results of management reviews
- use of consultants
- Icelandic banks
- workforce reprofile

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
29th January, 2010

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

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

128. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

129. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

130. ICT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Further to Minute No. C170(2) of the meeting of Cabinet held on 20th January, 2010, Mark Gannon, Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Manager, presented the submitted report detailing how, in September, 2008, the Council updated its ICT Strategy to cover the period 2008-2011. The report set out the progress currently being made against the implementation plan.

Also included was a RAG (red, amber and green) status against each action and a commentary outlining progress to date. Ongoing progress against the implementation plan was monitored through the e-Government Board and reported to the Strategic Leadership Team, Cabinet and Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee as appropriate.

The Capital Programme to support the ICT Strategy was approved by Cabinet at the same time as the Strategy in June, 2008. The total approved budget to support the ICT Strategy over the period 2006-2011 was £18,717,631. At the mid-point of the 2008 to 2011 Strategy it was estimated that there would be a net underspend of £21,754 by 31st March, 2011.

Delivery of the ICT Strategy was a critical element in ensuring the Council transformed its services for the benefit of customers, businesses, Members and staff in order to improve information management, business continuity and the customer experience.

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

- how aspirations were evidenced
- Electronic Social Care Records (ESCR) and mobile social work :

social workers use of technology

- integrated services and the rolling out of the ability to mobile work : potential scrutiny review
- SWIFT
- teething issues regarding the website redesign including :
 - presentation
 - new navigation
 - ensuring the complaint form was in plain English
 - alphabetical search system top be more intuitive
 - suggestion regarding on-line electoral registration form
 - lack of response to feedback
 - postcode search not working for the Aston area
- customer panel
- customer profiling and availability of the Acorn online application
- development of SMS (text messaging) platform
- customer/joint service centres ICT
- use of mystery shoppers
- computers for Members in libraries
- reliability of VOIP
- 'Modern Member' eLearning package
- PDR's and reluctance/lack of confidence to use new technologies

Resolved:- (1) That the progress on implementation of the ICT Strategy be noted.

(2) That the Chairs of the Adult Services and Health and Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panels liaise with scrutiny officers regarding a potential joint review into the use of technology.

131. LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 2009/10

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny, presented the submitted report detailing how the Government's legislative programme for the 2009/10 parliamentary session was announced as part of the Queen's Speech on the State Opening of Parliament on Wednesday, 18th November, 2009.

The report gave an overview of the proposed legislative measures that would impact on, or were relevant to, the Council.

Bills that had a direct relevance to the Council were summarised as part of the report and included:-

- Child Poverty Bill.
- Children, Schools and Families Bill.
- Equality Bill.
- Flood and Water Management Bill.
- Personal Care at Home Bill.

It was not possible at this stage to identify what resource implications may arise for the Council should the provisions of the legislative process come into effect.

The proposals that would have the most significant revenue financial implications were those set out in the Personal Care at Home Bill. These would affect both the Council's Adult Social Care budgets and the relationship with partner organisations involved in health and social care. Concerns had been raised by the Local Government Association and others following the publication on the Green Paper "Shaping the Future of Care Together". The debate on this was continuing and was likely to be taken forward with the promise of a White Paper to be published in the near future.

There could be no certainty that all Bills in the 2009/10 session would be enacted. Those Bills that had not been enacted when Parliament was dissolved for the general election would fall.

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

- Flood and Water Management Bill
- Personal Care at Home Bill and Equality Bill now in the House of Lords
- implications for the Council, scrutiny and the scrutiny work programme
- potential for scrutiny panel reviews
- cross cutting nature of the issues and need for this Committee to retain a strategic overview.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposed legislative measures that would impact on, or be relevant to, the Council be noted.

(2) That further reports on specific legislative measures be submitted as

appropriate.

(3) That the draft report on the Equality Bill be submitted to the next meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel.

(4) That the potential for scrutiny reviews be considered as issues emerge from the legislative programme.

132. COOPTION ONTO SCRUTINY PANELS

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented the submitted report relating to scrutiny panel co-option arrangements.

The report covered:-

- background to the current co-option arrangements
- term of office
- legislative changes and developing partnership arrangements
- development of a co-optee role description and simple application form to express interest in becoming a co-optee
- full list of current co-optee organisations

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

- current arrangements panel by panel
- need to provide/consider attendance details and involvement levels of anyone seeking re-election
- encouraging use of the website to see what co-optee representatives are involved in
- statutory co-optees
- partnership co-optees
- establishment of a 'talent pool'
- numbers of co-optees on scrutiny panels

Resolved:- (1) That the principle of recruiting co-optees onto scrutiny panels for 2010-2012 be approved.

(2) That the existing co-option arrangements be continued ensuring

flexibility to take on new initiatives.

(3) That an article be placed in Rotherham News publicising the role of scrutiny panels and co-optees, a press release and the website also be utilised. In addition, presentations should be given to each area assembly or co-ordinating group.

(4) That additional expressions of interest be sought from community groups and individuals for recruitment onto individual scrutiny panels or as part of future reviews.

(5) That a working group, comprising the five scrutiny panel chairs (or vice-chairs as substitutes), be established to consider the nominations for co-option and make recommendations to this Committee prior to the start of the 2010/11 municipal year.

133. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

134. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor McNeely reported that yesterday's meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel received a presentation on climate change and how the council co-ordinated activity. A half day scrutiny review was to take place on climate change and include air quality management areas.

(b) Councillor Austen reported that yesterday's meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel had:-

- received a presentation on alcohol and substance abuse
- considered a paper on the vision of neighbourhood management
- received volunteers for the scrutiny review of perception

(c) Councillor Jack reported that last week's meeting of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had received a presentation on dementia.

There were concerns about delays in completing the breastfeeding review. It was hoped that the diabetes review would begin shortly.

(d) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that last week's meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered the Rotherham Parenting Strategy

(e) Councillor Boyes highlighted Police Authority issues relating to:-

- priorities, use of the budget and governance arrangements
- Police establishment, recruitment level and budget savings
- 101 number pilot scheme and the totally inadequate one day consultation response timeframe for continued provision of the facility albeit not as trialled in Sheffield

The importance of the overview and scrutiny role was emphasised. It was noted that, whilst overview and scrutiny committees could deal with crime and disorder, discussions were still ongoing as to who would hold police authorities to account.

Resolved:- That Chief Superintendent Richard Tweed be invited to a future meeting of this Committee.

135. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
19th February, 2010

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

Also in attendance for item 144 below (Budget Update) were Councillors Akhtar, Doyle, R. S. Russell, Smith and Stone.

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

136. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

137. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

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

138. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM - CONSULTATION ON DRAFT STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON THE DUTY TO RESPOND TO PETITIONS

Further to Minute No. 121(5) of the meeting of this Committee held on 15th January, 2010, Steve Eling, Principal Policy Officer, (Parliamentary Analysis), presented the submitted report which stated Sections 10 to 22 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (c. 20) provided a statutory duty for principal local authorities to handle and respond to petitions. This included making provision for the submission of e-petitions and adopting a "scheme for handling petitions". The Act provided that the Secretary of State may issue statutory guidance; provide a model scheme and make an Order setting out requirements and exclusions.

Ahead of commencing the new duty, the Government was now consulting on a draft guidance paper including a model scheme and draft Order. The report gave an overview of the consultation and provided for the Council to make a response.

There were currently no commencement dates for the duty, with the Government stating that this would be addressed following the consultation.

The key risk was the unknown additional demand that may be brought about by the duty. Implications were likely to include:

- Administration of the e-petitions facility;
- Time spent responding to an increased number of petitions;
- Facilitating the work of scrutiny in dealing with referrals; taking

evidence from senior officers and making reports.

The report covered:-

- E-petitions
- responding to petitions
- petition debates
- petitions calling officers to account
- petition reviews

Suggested responses to the petition questions were also submitted.

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

- need for consistent policy and procedures
- need to inform Council Meeting of action
- need for clear links with Planning and Licensing
- need for a tracking system once petition received
- need for an appeals process
- need for clarification of partner issues and responsibilities
- need for elected member involvement in agreeing a scheme (our own scheme)
- vexatious petitions
- monitoring of e-petitions
- verification of signatories and timeframes
- who could raise a petition
- next steps
- consultation process including partners

Resolved:- (1) That, subject to the inclusion of reference to the need for an appeal process/right to question after consideration at a meeting, the draft response be forwarded to Cabinet for approval.

(2) That Cabinet be requested to approve that the Council and local partners should now consider how the requirements of the duty could be incorporated into the CCI framework and align with "Calls for Action".

(3) That a further report be submitted when final details of the "Model Petition Scheme" were available and commencement dates known.

139. BREASTFEEDING SCRUTINY REVIEW - TIMETABLE FOR COMPLETION

Councillor Jack introduced the submitted report which outlined a timetable for completion of the Scrutiny review into the barriers to

breastfeeding. Completion was expected in the next few weeks.

Given the slippage of the original review timescales, some of the likely recommendations may have already been implemented. Where this was the case, the report would make only brief reference to them. The main emphasis would be on recommendations that would lead to tangible new improvements which would enable and encourage women to breastfeed their babies.

Resolved:- That the timetable be noted.

140. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th January, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

141. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that the latest meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered:-

- European Structural Funds (ESF) 2007 to 2013 – 16 to 19 NEETs Response Fund
- Secondary School Lifestyle Survey 2009 (Borough Wide)
- Children and Young People's Services Improvement Plan Update
- Budget update

(b) Councillor Austen updated briefly on the ongoing reviews into devolved budgets and corporate parenting.

(c) Councillor Jack reported :

- on the assisted technology review
- on world class communications (PCT)
- the latest meeting of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had considered the budget update

(d) Councillor Swift reported that the latest meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel had considered the budget update.

(e) Cath Saltis reported

- Child Poverty Conference taking place on 1st March, 2010

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commencing at 9.30 a.m. to which all members of the Council were invited

- a press release was being prepared regarding invitations to be co-opted members on scrutiny panels. Any comments to Cath Saltis

142. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call in requests.

143. 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 issues)

144. BUDGET UPDATE

The Chief Executive gave a presentation setting out officer recommendations on the Budget for 2010/11 which were to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 24th February, 2010.

Discussion ensued and Cabinet Members answered questions on the budgets relating to their areas.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	11 March 2010
3.	Title:	Climate Change: Scrutiny Review
4.	Directorate:	Chief Executive's All Wards

5. Summary

Members are asked to confirm that they wish to undertake a scrutiny review into the Local Authority's response to climate change.

6. Recommendations

That Members:

- a. agree to undertake a half day review into the Local Authority's response to climate change ;**
- b. nominate members to be part of a small steering group to scope the review and determine who the panel wish to interview;**
- c. agree that the meeting scheduled for April 22nd, 2010 be used for evidence gathering.**

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 As part of its terms of reference, the Panel has responsibility for scrutiny of sustainable development and strategy. During this municipal year, the panel has received two presentations on tackling climate change. The first focused on Rotherham Environment and Climate Change Strategy and at its last meeting on January 28, 2010, the Panel examined "Tackling climate change in the community".
- 7.2 As part of these discussions, the Panel asked questions about how action is co-ordinated within the Local Authority and the wider strategic partnership. As a starting point, the Panel requested that a half day review be undertaken, perhaps focussing at Council-wide activity in the first instance.
- 7.3 The panel is asked if it still wishes to undertake this review. If so, it is suggested that a small steering group is set up to determine the scope of the review, identify witnesses and undertake background research. The scheduled panel meeting in April would be used as a 'select committee' to gather the evidence.

8. Finance

- The cost attached to the review will be met through existing resources.
- The financial implications of any recommendations emerging from the review will require further exploration by the Strategic Leadership Team on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Climate change and sustainable development has been identified as a key concern for members. The main risk and uncertainty is ensuring that Rotherham Council and Rotherham Partnership work jointly to continue to improve environmental performance and meet increasingly strict government targets.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implication,

It is clear that the Government sees local authorities as a key partner in tackling climate change. Through policy statements such as the Local Government Act 2000 and Climate Change Act 2008, Central Government is encouraging councils such as Rotherham to work with partners in addressing climate change. This issue is likely to remain a top priority for local authorities for the foreseeable future.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Minute 45; 29, October 2009, Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
- Minute 67; 28, January 2010, Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel

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