

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	21st February, 2008
3.	Title:	Neighbourhood Charters
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. SUMMARY

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

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

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to note progress.

7. PROPOSALS AND DETAILS

7.1 Following consideration of the area assemblies future role and functions in 2006 the Council made a decision to: ***“move away from being simple consultation and information sharing, towards area based co-ordination and delivery of service improvements and regeneration activities.*** Neighbourhood Charters are a key tool in this new way of working.

7.2 Key service providers – Rotherham MBC’s Streetpride, Neighbourhood Enforcement and the Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Unit, and South Yorkshire Police (SYP) – have a number of core service standards to ensure every neighbourhood receives excellent services e.g.

- Streetpride will repair street lighting faults within 3 days if the fault is not due to a supply failure
- Neighbourhood Enforcement will respond to all noise complaints within 4 working days
- The ASB Unit will log all case details and send complainants an acknowledgement letter within 2 working days including a unique reference number
- SYP will attend immediate incidents in 15 minutes.

7.3 The importance of these standards to the community may differ though from one area to another. As a result, each of the seven Area Assemblies was asked to consider which of the core service standards would be a priority for their Assembly, to be monitored and published in a local Neighbourhood Charter.

7.4 The Area Partnership Managers (APM) were provided with 61 core service standards - Rotherham MBC’s Streetpride, Neighbourhood Enforcement and the ASB Unit, and SYP - and tasked to ensure that 15 priority service standards were chosen by their Co-ordinating Group based on previous community consultation results e.g. Quality of Life surveys and area planning.

7.5 Neighbourhood Charters have now been draft printed tailored to meet individual Area Assemblies. The Charters are based on the priority service standards chosen by the Co-ordinating Groups.

7.6 Performance data has been obtained for a majority of the standards for the periods from April 2006 to March 2007 and April to September 2007. Area Assembly Co-ordinating Groups receive a report showing performance against their chosen priority service standards. Reports will also be submitted to public meetings of each Area Assembly.

7.7 In terms of developing Charters during 2008/09 and beyond, a Working Group has been established comprising local statutory and voluntary partners as well as ENCAMS, a national body responsible for running the ‘Keep Britain Tidy’ campaign and supporting pathfinders and local authorities to develop Neighbourhood Charters.

7.8 The Working Group will explore further the possibilities of:

- extending the number of partners involved in the process
- increasing community involvement in determining local service standards
- the role of the voluntary / community sector and
- piloting arrangements in a number of local neighbourhoods.

7.9 The first meeting of the Working Group was held on Monday 21 January 2008 and agreed that Charters needed to be developed at different levels:

- At the borough level in line with the Joint Customer Service Centres coming on stream - Maltby in July 2008, and Aston and Rawmarsh in 2009.
- In neighbourhoods where there is a community infrastructure and demand for this type of initiative e.g. Eastwood and Springwell Gardens Neighbourhood Governance pilot.

8. FINANCE

The cost of producing and disseminating the current Area Assembly Neighbourhood Charters will be met by the Community Involvement Unit.

9. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

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

10. POLICY AND PERFORMANCE AGENDA IMPLICATIONS

The development of Neighbourhood Charters contributes strongly to the delivery of the Rotherham 'Proud' theme.

Active citizenship and democracy will underpin how Rotherham works. It will be made up of strong, sustainable and cohesive communities, both of place and interest and there will be many opportunities for people to be involved in civic life and local decision making. The means to do this will be clear, well known and accessible.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS AND CONSULTATION

- Report to Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods – Delegated Powers – 20 March 2006
- Local Government White Paper

Consultation has taken place with the following:

- RMBC Streetpride, Neighbourhood Enforcement and ASB Unit

- RMBC's Transformation and Strategic Partnership Services
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd
- South Yorkshire Police
- Barnsley MBC
- South Tyneside MBC
- City of Wolverhampton
- ENCAMS

Contact Name: *Shaun Mirfield, Area Partnership Manager (Rotherham South)*
01709 336964
shaun.mirfield@rotherham.gov.uk