

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	29th November, 2010
3.	Title:	Housing and Neighbourhoods 2nd Quarter Performance Report 2010/11 All Wards Affected
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report outlines the performance of the 2010/11 key performance indicators for the Housing and Neighbourhoods element of the Directorate at the end of September 2010.

Indicators managed by Housing and Neighbourhoods, Independent Living and 2 managed by 2010 Rotherham Ltd identify a reduction in performance with 7 (78%) of the reportable 9 indicators currently in line to achieve their targets. This compares to 100% at the end of the 1st quarter.

The new suite for 2010/11 includes indicators relating to Housing in the public and private sector, Housing Market Renewal, Fuel Poverty, Aids and Adaptations and Business Regulation

6. Recommendations

Cabinet Member notes the 2nd quarter position and recognises the excellent progress in performance.

7. Proposals and Details

At the end of September, there are 9 indicators where performance information is available. Of these, 7 are in line to achieve their year end targets. There are 2 indicators where performance information will not be available until later in the year. The indicators currently on target are;

- NAS 22 Private sector homes demolished / made fit
- NAS 30 Percentage spend of the Housing Market Renewal pathfinder
- Number of 'Affordable' homes delivered
- Percentage of non decent council housing
- NI 184 Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law
- NAS 34 Average length of time waiting for major adaptations from assessment to work beginning
- NI 156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation

Off Target Indicators

- **NI 182 Satisfaction of business with local authority regulation services (Neighbourhoods)**

The level of satisfaction remains at 78% and is '**Off target**' against the monthly control and year end target of 85%. Discussions have taken place between the Business Regulation Manager, Service Performance Team and Service Quality to identify the issues relating to the reduction in performance.

There is evidence that due to the weighting formula for this indicator, performance has been affected by businesses responding where they 'Agree' as opposed to 'Strongly Agree'. An action plan has been developed to look at the processes making up this indicator and to identify the reasons why businesses respond more negatively.

- **NAS 17 Average re let time from termination to start of new tenancy (2010 Rotherham Ltd)**

At the end of the 2nd quarter, the number of days taken to re let empty properties is 28 and is '**Off target**' against the monthly control target of 27 days. At the end of 2009/10 the average number of days to re let properties was 18 days, however that figure did not include properties that had been taken out for Decent Homes modernisation works. The figure of 28 days reported at the end of September does now include those properties and as such it is not appropriate to make a direct comparison. 2010 Rotherham are rating this as an 'Amber' risk currently. .

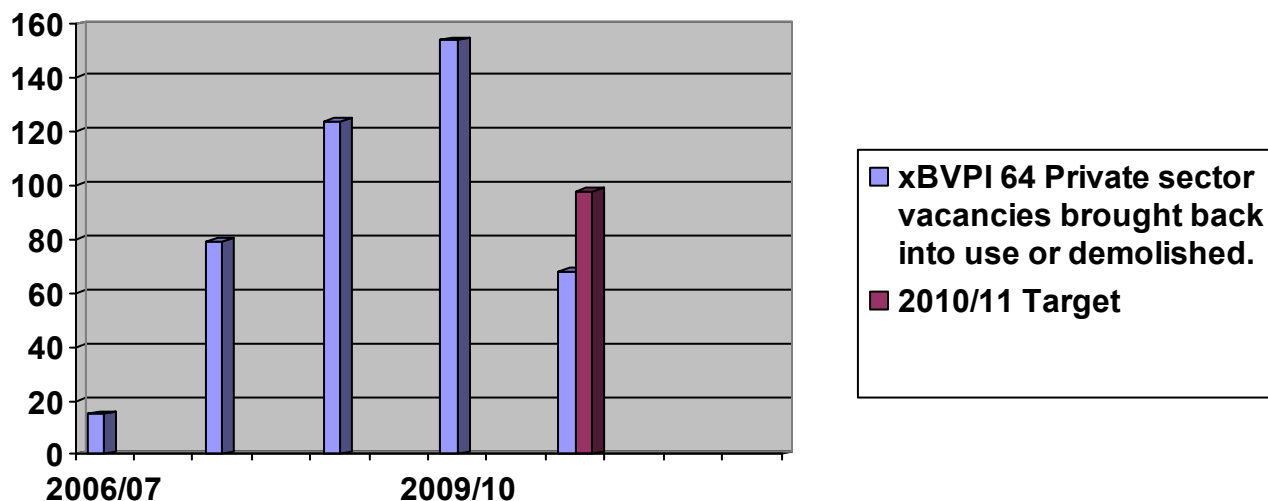
1st Quarter Performance Exceptions

NAS 22 - Private sector vacancies brought back into use or demolished (Neighbourhoods)

Performance at the end September was 68 and is almost 3 times the expected rate at the end of the 2nd quarter. The overall target for 2010/11 is 98.

Work is carried out by the Community Protection Unit, Key Choices Property Management, Registered Social Landlords, Anchor Housing Trust and Neighbourhood Investment Services to enable private sector vacant properties to be brought back into use or demolished. It is anticipated that the end of year predicted figure will be exceeded due to additional properties which have been demolished in Canklow ahead of programme.

The graph overleaf shows the number of private sector homes within the borough that have been brought back into use / demolished within the last four years;



NI 158 - % Non decent council housing (2010 Rotherham Ltd)

The percentage of non decent council owned housing in the borough at the end of September has reduced from 6.29% (1319 dwellings) at the end of 2009/10 down to 2.10% (440 dwellings).

The above figures include 'refusals' and 'no access' dwellings which are deemed to be classed as decent. These dwellings will remain classed as 'decent' until they become void following termination of the tenancy by the tenant at which point works will need to be carried out to bring them up to the Decent Homes standard. The current projected level of "Refusals/No access" at the end of the programme is 8.6% (Approx 1750 dwellings). The refurbishment programme is on target to be completed by December 2010.

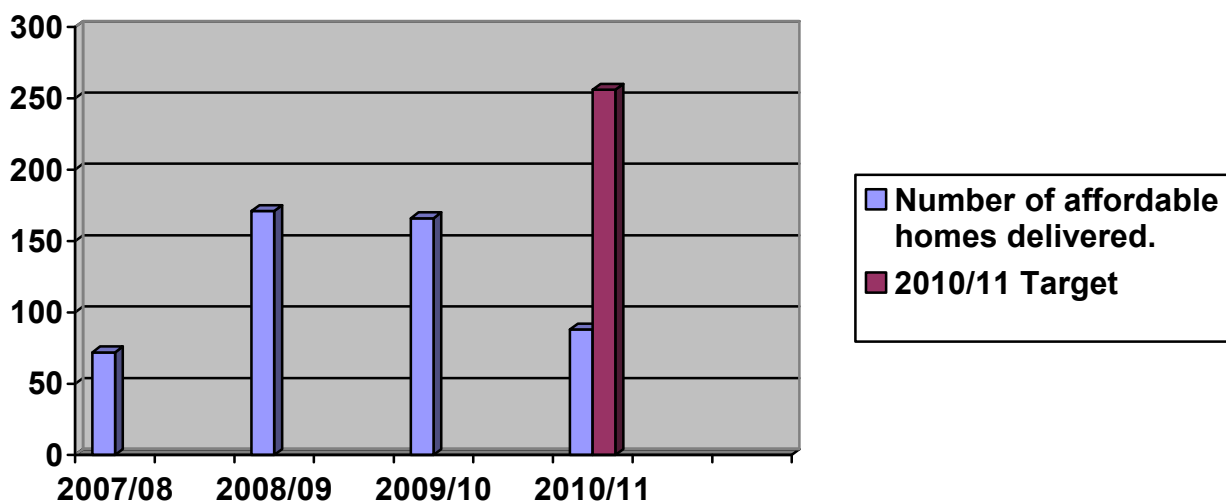
The 2010/11 budget for the Decent Homes mainstream programme is £21.340m and expenditure to 17th September 2010 was £13.491m. The refurbishment programme is on target to be completed by December 2010.

NI 155 - Number of affordable homes delivered (Neighbourhoods)

At the end of the 2nd quarter there have been an additional 88 affordable homes delivered which was ahead of the 2nd quarter control target of 74 new affordable homes and is in line to achieve the LAA target for the year of 256 dwellings delivered. Performance is being achieved as a result of collaborative working with RSL and private sector developers. The partnership approach to securing additional Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 facilitates the making of agreements between developers (and others owning land) and the council as a Local Planning Authority (LPA). Rotherham MBC has sought out opportunities to enable affordable housing within the Borough without grant funding.

This is excellent progress against this indicator taking into account the current financial climate where the number of new homes built within the borough failed to achieve set targets last year. The last 4 years has seen a provision of an additional 497 units in the borough. The overall programme is also supplemented by 127 new council homes being built in the borough which commenced in March 2010.

The graph overleaf shows the increase in the number of 'Affordable Homes' in the borough in the last 4 years;



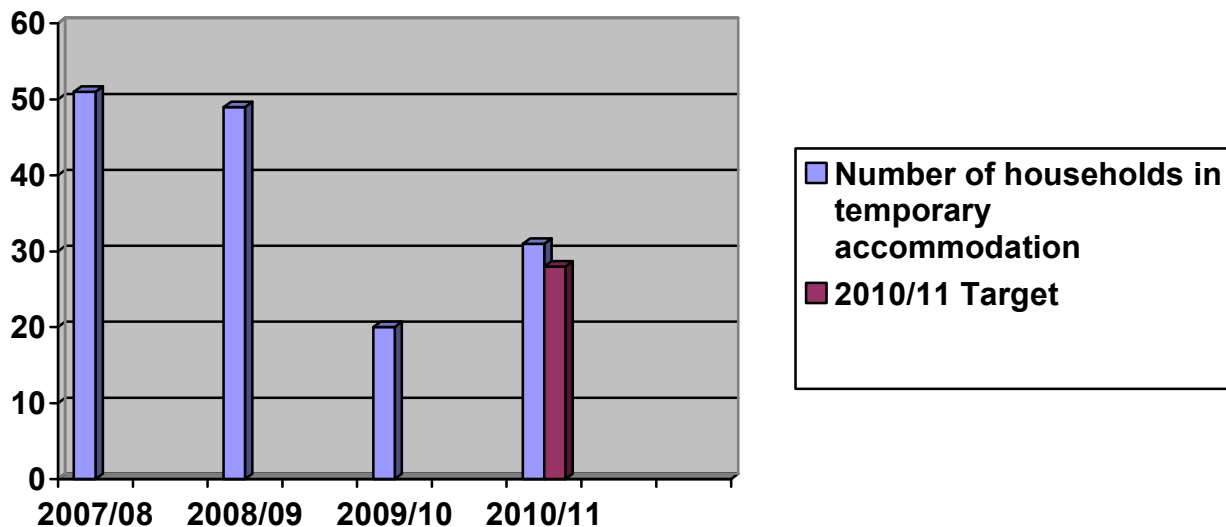
NI 156 - Number of households living in temporary accommodation (Neighbourhoods)

At the end of September there were 31 households in temporary accommodation which is in line with the monthly control target of 31 households and the indicator is in line to achieve the year end target of 28 households in temporary accommodation. This is against the governments set target for Rotherham of 31 households in temporary accommodation.

There are a number of external influences that impact on numbers in temporary accommodation, these are;

- Children and Young People Services (CYPS) joint protocol - CYPS use bed and breakfast - we are offering use of our temporary accommodation as alternative supported accommodation and will need to take a homeless case initially until we have determined if a child is in need. This is new case law for 16 to 17 year olds
- Case resolutions programme - last year people had moved out of the area when given the opportunity to remain (this reduced the use of temporary accommodation) but this had only been a temporary position i.e the family might have moved to Sheffield to live with family and now have been asked to leave. The family then presents to the local authority in the area but because their local connection is Rotherham they are referred back to Rotherham and we then have a duty to accommodate them.
- Mortgage protection Insurance runs out after a 12 month period, families facing repossession are still approaching the council. There is also the risk of cuts by Government in funding to support Mortgage Rescue.
- The potential increase in Domestic Abuse (DA) cases possibly due to economic downturn – there are approximately 15 cases of DA per month at MARAC

The graph below shows the number of households in temporary accommodation;



8. Finance

Improving performance is the key to demonstrating good use of resources and sustaining the Council's General Fund Account and Housing Revenue Account (for tenants and leaseholders).

Empty property rent loss at the end of the 2nd quarter was £365k (1.19%) which is an improvement when compared to the same period last year where the rent loss stood at £524k (1.69%). The overall target for the year is a reduction to 1.20% of the collectable rent.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There are a number of potential risks / uncertainties currently for Housing and Neighbourhoods, these are;

The Government has stated that the Tenant Services Authority has now been abolished with statutory control being passed to Homes and Communities Agency. The Comprehensive Spending Review highlights proposed major reductions in funding for Housing, these include;

- A cut in the capital budget for affordable housing to £4.4bn over the next four years. (Down from £8.4bn over last three-year period). This is an effective grant rate of 29%
- Social rents to be allowed to rise to 80% of market rents. More details are awaited on how this will work: according to the Spending Review document: "Social landlords *will be able* to offer a *growing proportion* of new social tenants new intermediate rental contracts that are more flexible, at rent levels between current market and social rents." But George Osborne said in his speech: "New tenants *will be offered* intermediate rents at around 80% of the market rent."
- Housing minister Grant Shapes says the 'affordable rent' plans will see 155,000 new affordable homes built over the four-year Spending Review period
- A New Homes Bonus, matching the additional Council Tax from every new home for each of the following six years, giving local authorities incentives for housing growth
- Funding for the most vulnerable to be 'relatively protected' with more than £6bn for the Supporting People budget over the Spending Review period (an 11.5% cut) and Disabled Facilities Grant to rise with inflation
- Reform of the council housing finance system
- HRA reform to 'build in resources' for disabled housing adaptations
- Right to Buy receipts to continue to go to Treasury for Spending Review period, rather than be retained by councils under HRA reform
- Homelessness grant to remain at £100m a year.

Secondly the delivery of Decent Homes being a high level risk for the Council (Senior Leadership Team Risk Register Number 26/03), the Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Performance Team are continuing to monitor the programme closely to ensure that it is delivered by December 2010.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The coalition's programme sets out the Government's commitment to ending the era of top-down Government and giving new powers to local authorities to

work for their communities, accountable to local people rather than central Government. In support of this changes have been announced to local area agreements (LAA) reward grant and the national indicator set. These changes, alongside the previous decision to end the comprehensive area assessment, mark the end of the old, top-down local performance framework. This will introduce a less burdensome approach to the way local authorities provide data to central Government.

The Government are putting local areas fully in control of their local area agreements. This enables local authorities and their partners to amend or drop any of the current 4,700 LAA targets without needing ministerial agreement. Where the decision is to keep the targets, central Government will have no role in monitoring them and will not be requiring local authorities to prepare an LAA from April 2011, once the current agreements expire.

Further to this, there will not be any payments for performance reward grant for the current LAA targets.

It has also been announced that the national indicator set will be replaced with a single, comprehensive list of all the data that the government expect local government to provide to central Government.

Local authorities have been required to report against a headline figure of around 200 national indicators, although in reality the number of reporting requirements was far higher. The governments aim is to make the data requirements placed on local government transparent and to review and reduce this for April 2011. Local Government will assist in this review, to help to ensure the list contains only the minimum of central Government data needs. In future, the emphasis needs to be on local authorities being democratically accountable to local people rather than to central bureaucratic systems. Local Authorities will be encouraged wherever possible to make their performance data accessible to their citizens.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The 2010/11 Housing and Neighbourhoods 2nd quarter performance results are attached (Appendix A).

Contact Name: Robin Walker, Performance Management Officer, Extension 23788, robin.walker@rotherham.gov.uk or Dave Roddis, Service Quality Manager, Extension 23781, dave.roddis@rotherham.gov.uk