

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Date and Time:- Wednesday 6 May 2026 at 10.00 a.m.

Venue:- Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH

Membership:- Councillors Steele (Chair), Bacon (Vice-Chair), Allen, Baggaley, Blackham, Brent, A. Carter, Keenan, McKiernan, Monk, Tinsley and Yasseen.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

8. Rotherham Markets and Libraries (Pages 3 - 71)

Report from the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the revised budget of £12.02m for the Wath Library scheme, including an increase of £2.04m to be funded from unallocated Local Regeneration Grant, as set out in Appendix 1.
2. Approves the revised budget for the Rotherham Markets & Library scheme, increasing the total project budget to £46.84m, representing an additional £5.95m, funded as set out in Appendix 5.
3. Notes that the revised budgets reflect the completion of the detailed design, resolution of construction stage risks and the establishment of a more robust and deliverable position for both projects.
4. Notes the intention of the Chief Executive to commission an investigation into the development and delivery of the Rotherham Markets & Library project which has resulted in the cost increase noted in Recommendation 2.

The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held on Wednesday 3 June 2026 commencing at 10.00 a.m. in Rotherham Town Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Edwards', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Edwards,
Chief Executive.

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 11 May 2026

Report Title

Rotherham Markets & Libraries

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Lorna Vertigan, Head of Regeneration
Lorna.vertigan@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle & Wath

Report Summary

The Wath Library and Rotherham Markets & Library schemes form part of the Council's long-standing programme of investment to regenerate town centres, increase footfall and modernise essential community infrastructure. Both schemes have progressed through design and into delivery but have encountered challenges during that process, resulting in increased costs and the need to revisit aspects of scope and delivery.

This report provides a summary of these challenges and seeks approval to increase the budget allocations for both projects, reflecting the outcome of detailed design development, construction stage risk resolution and updated cost forecasts.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the revised budget of £12.02m for the Wath Library scheme, including an increase of £2.04m to be funded from unallocated Local Regeneration Grant, as set out in Appendix 1.
2. Approves the revised budget for the Rotherham Markets & Library scheme, increasing the total project budget to £46.84m, representing an additional £5.95m, funded as set out in Appendix 5.

3. Notes that the revised budgets reflect the completion of the detailed design, resolution of construction stage risks and the establishment of a more robust and deliverable position for both projects.
4. Notes the intention of the Chief Executive to commission an investigation into the development and delivery of the Rotherham Markets & Library project which has resulted in the cost increase noted in Recommendation 2.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Wath Library Cost Plan & Budget Implications
- Appendix 2 Wath Library Equality Impact Assessment Part A
- Appendix 3 Wath Library Equality Impact Assessment Part B
- Appendix 4 Wath Library Carbon Impact Assessment
- Appendix 5 Markets & Library Cost Plan & Budget Implications
- Appendix 6 Markets & Library Equality Impact Assessment Part A
- Appendix 7 Markets & Library Equality Impact Assessment Part B
- Appendix 8 Markets & Library Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Wath Projects – report to Cabinet July 2023](#)

[Wath Project Update – report to Cabinet July 2024](#)

[Rotherham Markets & Library – report to Cabinet August 2023](#)

[Rotherham Markets & Library – report to Cabinet December 2023](#)

[Capital Projects Update – report to Cabinet March 2024](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Rotherham Markets & Libraries

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1. Background

- 1.1 Successful town centres are those that offer diversity, combining reasons to visit with places where people want to spend time. Evidence consistently shows that vitality is driven by a mix of uses, including active public realm, food and beverage offers, cultural activity and a regular programme of events that encourage dwell time and repeat visits.
- 1.2 Markets play a central role within this ecosystem, acting as traditional anchors that support independent traders, foster entrepreneurship and provide accessible, affordable shopping rooted in local character. When combined with high-quality public spaces, a food and drink offer and flexible spaces for events and social activity, markets help generate footfall, animate surrounding streets and create inclusive, vibrant destinations. Together, these elements underpin a resilient town centre that supports local businesses, strengthens community life and contributes to economic vitality, civic pride and overall wellbeing.
- 1.3 At the same time, libraries are evolving to become an even more integral part of the town centre offer. No longer simply repositories for books, modern libraries provide trusted, accessible spaces where residents can engage with Council services, access digital support, and receive assistance with matters related to employment as well as health and wellbeing.
- 1.4 As neighbourhood hubs, libraries provide space for advice services, civic engagement and democratic activity, including access to partner organisations, council and public service drop-ins, and opportunities for residents to engage with local decision-making through surgeries, consultations and community meetings.
- 1.5 Libraries also support learning, creativity and making, providing shared spaces, equipment and digital tools that enable individuals, community groups and small businesses to develop practical skills, test ideas and undertake creative or enterprise activity.
- 1.6 As inclusive, non-commercial “third spaces”, libraries play a vital role in tackling loneliness, bridging generational divides and fostering a shared sense of ownership and belonging, offering places where residents of all ages and backgrounds can see themselves reflected and feel part of a common civic life.
- 1.7 Their town centre presence drives footfall, supports inclusive access to public services, and offers welcoming environments for study, community connection and cultural activity. Together, revitalised markets and reimagined libraries help create town centres that are economically

resilient, socially supportive and connected to the everyday needs of local residents.

- 1.8 The Council has made significant strides with investment in the Borough's town centres, with capital investment underway in Rotherham, Wath, Dinnington, Swinton and Maltby, supported by operational investment with the Street Safe team, a programme of Shopfront Grants delivered by a new team of High Street Business Advisors, and a programme of library improvements successfully delivered across the borough.
- 1.9 In July 2024 Cabinet approved the delivery of a new Wath Library to the following scope:
- Development of a state-of-the-art library building
 - Improved public realm
 - Redesign of the site to enhance connectivity and visibility of town centre offer, and address perceptions of security
 - Provision of a new commercial unit in prime location on the market square to attract new businesses
 - Improvements to facilities for learning, working, and making
 - Improvements to the car park
- 1.10 The scheme for Wath Library was developed with the aim of transforming this prominent site in one of the Borough's principal settlements, with high quality place making in order to restore the cultural heart of the town centre, increase footfall, boost the local economy, and restore a sense of pride within the community. The scheme includes demolition of the existing library and the creation of a brand-new library to deliver a modern, inviting, and inclusive community facility. The redevelopment is designed to enhance the visitor experience between Biscay Way and the High Street to encourage visitors into the town centre. The scheme was approved at Planning Board in October 2024 and demolition of the old library began in February 2026.
- 1.11 In 2017, Rotherham's Town Centre Masterplan identified seven major development opportunities, all aimed at creating a more diverse, vibrant and attractive town centre that drives increased footfall. Within this vision, which has now been substantially delivered, Forge Island and the Markets and Library were identified as the two catalytic major projects for Rotherham, anchoring the western and eastern approaches into the town centre respectively. Future plans are now being developed for Rotherham Gateway, which will improve the northern approach to the town centre via Effingham Street, and exciting plans for new housing will complete the southern approach to the town centre along Sheffield Road and Westgate.
- 1.12 The Markets complex was recognised as a key anchor in the town centre, both for its historic significance and the potential to be a modern, attractive destination to draw people back into the heart of the town. The Markets occupy one of the most prominent and strategic positions in

Rotherham town centre. The relocation of the library into this area, the creation of a health hub, the proximity to Rotherham College, the Interchange, and key pedestrian routes cements this part of the town centre as a community, enterprise and service hub, creating a unique opportunity to create a cohesive cluster of essential services, leisure, and social spaces.

- 1.13 Modern markets are evolving into vibrant, multifunctional destinations that offer far more than traditional retail. The new Market Hall and its surrounding outdoor spaces will create opportunities to use the markets in fresh and imaginative ways, building on the success of feature events like the Bazaar while also providing a welcoming location for a wider range of gatherings, activities, and a traditional food offer. At the same time, collaboration with the College opens the door for the new market and library spaces to support partnership and enterprise adding real value to this part of the town centre.
- 1.14 With Forge Island now complete, and momentum building to bring forward new town centre residential opportunities, Rotherham has made significant progress in strengthening the town's core.
- 1.15 Together, these investments will enable the Markets & Library to once again become the beating heart of Rotherham town centre supporting economic vitality, increasing footfall, and reinforcing the town's identity and sense of place.
- 1.16 The Council appointed Henry Boot Construction Ltd as contractor for this project and work began on site in September 2023. The latest contractor programme indicates completion as follows:
- New Market Hall: June 2026
 - Library: Autumn 2026
 - Public Realm: Spring 2027
 - Market Gardens: June 2026
 - Library: December 2026
 - Market Square: Spring 2027
 - Indoor Market: Autumn 2027

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 For Wath Library, detailed contractor pricing and refinement of the scheme following appointment have identified cost pressures that cannot be accommodated within existing contingencies.
- 2.2 In March 2024 Cabinet was advised that the forecast cost of the Rotherham Markets & Library project was £40.9m. As the project has progressed from tender stage into construction, further design development, compliance requirements and risk resolution have resulted in an increase in forecast costs.

2.3 The cost increases now presented are the result of design completion, the resolution of risks that could not reasonably be identified at earlier stages, and the need to ensure that both schemes remain compliant, operationally viable and deliverable. This report therefore seeks Cabinet approval for revised budgets and funding arrangements.

2.4 **Wath Library**

2.5 In July 2024 it was reported to Cabinet that the total scheme cost was £9.9m. In July 2025 the Council appointed Tilbury Douglas as the preferred contractor to undertake Stage 4 designs. Having now refined the scheme costs, a cost increase of £2.04m has been identified.

2.6 Cost increases are largely due to:

- Increase in demolition costs of around £800k, largely due to the presence of previously unidentified and significant levels of asbestos.
- Percentage fee increases as related to increase in construction costs.
- Inflationary increases aligned with an extended delivery window due to delays in tendering, contractual negotiations, design and cost assessments
- Additional design fees to reflect the requirement for more extensive design work.

2.7 Prior to approaching Cabinet an extensive analysis of potential value engineering options has been carried out, including considering the Library Service's brief to identify opportunities to reduce operational and construction costs. The outcome of this work was a potential option for a smaller building footprint and changes to the external design. However, these alterations would require a full redesign and new Planning approval, causing significant delays to the project. In addition, an increased level of design costs means that the alternative would not deliver value for money due to the significant reduction in amenity space.

2.8 A summary of the resultant cost and budget implications are provided in Appendix 1.

2.9 **Rotherham Markets & Library**

2.10 The scope and costs for the project have been reported to Cabinet throughout the development of the scheme. The last reported cost in March 2024 was £40.89m.

2.11 The scope as reported previously includes:

- A refurbished and modernised Indoor Market that maintains the traditional market atmosphere and current trading space.

- A new centrally located food hub to accommodate independent food retailers with a shared seating area.
- Demolition of the Outdoor Covered Market canopy and substantial refurbishment works including the provision of a new roof, delivering an enclosed flexible space as a new Market Hall.
- Delivery of a new central library for Rotherham including a café, meeting rooms, flexible gallery space, and a makers' space.
- Extensive improvements to all public realm surrounding the complex, including the delivery of a new tiered landscaped area opposite Rotherham College and a focal meeting point in the town centre at Market Square.
- Provision of office and meeting space for potential use by the third sector and voluntary organisations.
- Works to all public entrances enhancing accessibility and movement through the complex.

2.12 The Council entered into an enabling contract in September 2023 and the full construction contract in April 2024.

2.13 Over the course of the project's development, a number of challenges have arisen which has rendered the achievement of this scope undeliverable for the current agreed budget. Further, the delivery of the Outdoor Covered Market and Library has continued, in line with the agreed contract, resulting in insufficient budget to complete the project to the agreed scope.

2.14 While the challenges encountered are summarised below, the Chief Executive of the Council will commission an investigation into how these challenges have arisen and what lessons can be learnt.

2.15 **Delivery Challenges**

2.16 The Council tendered and entered into a contract, before key assumptions had been confirmed, resulting in an overestimation of project readiness. At contract award, the design and specification were insufficiently developed to be construction-ready, with undue reliance on value engineering assumptions and provisional sums. Contingency was underestimated, and an excessive level of risk was transferred to the Council.

2.17 **Project Specification**

While the project outcomes were defined, a corresponding detailed specification and confirmation of client requirements required further definition following contract award. This was in part due to a lack of stakeholder engagement early in the scheme.

2.18 This was evidenced through extended periods of clarifications and amendments to layouts and servicing, particularly for the Library and the food provision, the consequence being extended design periods and contractor costs due to delays.

- 2.19 **Value Engineering**
The costs presented at Cabinet included a number of value engineering opportunities which at the time were anticipated to be realised as the design was completed. However, this has not been the case and an element of the assumed savings have been added back into the project.
- 2.20 **Provisional Sums**
The contract with Henry Boots Construction Ltd contained £3.5m on provisional sums i.e. unconfirmed budgets against which actual costs would be attributed as the project progressed. The risk of any cost increase in these provisional sums was accepted by the Council.
- 2.21 **Health & Safety and Compliance**
During on-site delivery, further design changes have been required to address compliance and health and safety requirements for all elements of the project. These works are largely due to legislative changes or the discovery of unknown construction items during the project timeline. Any legislative changes would have been applied to the existing building regardless of the wider project.
- 2.22
Many of these requirements were unable to be identified at the point of contract award whilst areas of the markets were occupied, due to the nature of the invasive surveys required. Further assessment of the property concluded that the building was in a worse condition than originally assumed.
- 2.23 **Design**
At the point of contract award there remained significant elements of design work to be undertaken and drawings were not as well developed as assumed. The volume of design work required was further exacerbated by the requirement for clarification of specifications as outlined above. The consequence of this was far reaching.
- 2.24
The outstanding design work required the appointment of additional design expertise, this process in itself leading to significant delays and resultant costs due to the impact on the contractor's programme.
- 2.25
The volume of design work, clarification and consolidation between numerous design teams led to further delay and cost.
- 2.26 **Unidentified Cost Elements**
Additional costs were also identified post Cabinet. This included items such as insurance, utilities and diversion works which have proven essential for delivery but were not accounted for in the original budget or included in the contract.

- 2.27 **Contingency**
The contingency set at Cabinet was insufficient to absorb these cumulative impacts and was not reflective of the level of assumptions and risk associated with the project at this point in time.
- 2.28 **Governance & Resourcing**
Fundamental aspects were lacking at crucial stages of the project, which led to uncertainty in decision-making and meant the scheme was not prioritised for oversight, management and resource in a way that properly reflects its multi-faceted nature and scale.
- 2.29 **Eastwood Lane**
The original scope included the provision of office and meeting space intended for use by third sector and voluntary organisations. A tenant was identified at an early stage of the project; however, changes in the tenant's business requirements meant that the originally proposed accommodation was no longer suitable.
- 2.30
As a result, this element of the scheme has been re-specified to subdivide the space into smaller, more flexible units, which are considered more attractive to a wider range of prospective tenants. This redesign had a knock-on effect on the overall design programme, contributing to further delays and therefore cost.
- 2.31 **Public Realm and Events Space**
The UK High Street Task Force recognises events as a primary driver of footfall in town centres, with the Centre for Cities citing specific examples across the country where spend increased up to 30% during event days.
- Enhanced public realm is a core element of the scheme. With improvements to Eastwood Lane nearing completion, the benefits of this new outdoor space are already becoming apparent. The area represents a valuable events and leisure asset with the potential to become a defining feature of the town centre. A complementary enhancement is proposed, in the form of a large outdoor screen to strengthen the town centre offer by supporting major sporting broadcasts, national events and inclusion within the local events programme.
- 2.32 **Enabling Activity**
Sitting outside of the budget approved in March 2024 a number of additional investments are recommended to help secure the final product as a success. These include costs for fitting out where required for future use, additional wayfinding during the temporary relocation of traders, and relocation support for traders.
- These items total £950k.

2.33 Taken together these challenges have resulted in additional costs to the budget previously agreed at Cabinet and therefore a recommendation is made to increase the project budget by £5.95m.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Wath Library

Option 1: Proceed with the scheme as the scope agreed at Cabinet in July 2024 and the design as approved at Planning Board in October 2024 and increase the budget accordingly. While this option sees a cost increase it allows delivery of the scheme within the expectations of Cabinet and the public. **This option is recommended.**

3.2 **Option 2:** Proceeding with the value engineered option would require changes to the project scope and design, alongside an increased budget. While this option (Option 2) is approximately £200,000 cheaper than the recommended approach, it would introduce an additional 3–4 months of delay. The level of saving is not considered sufficient to justify the extended programme and reduction in amenity space and therefore **this option is not recommended.**

3.3 Rotherham Markets & Library

Option 1: Proceed with the scope as set out at 2.11 and increase the budget accordingly, bringing the total scheme costs to £46.8m acknowledging that this limits the product from achieving its full potential in securing the scope agreed at Cabinet.

This option is recommended.

3.4 **Option 2: Do nothing.** This option would see the completion of the Market Hall (Outdoor Covered Market) and Library and no works being undertaken on the Indoor Covered Markets or perimeter units on Howard Street and Eastwood Lane. This option would see the Indoor Market and perimeter units taken out of use and mothballed for a future provision.

This option is not recommended.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Wath Library

Two periods of consultation and engagement have been carried out in Autumn 2023 and March 2024, with feedback from these sessions being used to inform and develop design plans. Council officers engaged with over 185 residents and stakeholders at the face-to-face events.

4.2 Recognising that young people were under-represented at the initial consultation events, further consultation took place with 50 students at Wath Academy in February 2024.

4.3 The recommended option facilitates the delivery of the scheme which has been consulted upon.

4.4 **Rotherham Markets & Library**

Extensive engagement and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders has been undertaken on the Markets & Library development project throughout the entire design period. Details of the consultation undertaken are provided in Appendices 6 & 7.

5. **Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 As reported to Cabinet in July 2024 the Wath Library scheme was scheduled for completion in Spring 2026. The revised construction timeline will see completion in December 2027.

5.2 The latest contractor programme for the Markets & Library scheme indicates completion as follows:

- New Market Hall: June 2026
- Library: Autumn 2026
- Public Realm: Spring 2027
- Indoor Market: Autumn 2027

6. **Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

6.1 The contracts referenced in this report were procured in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Any changes to these existing contracts must comply with Regulation 72 of those regulations. Where proposed changes significantly alter the cost or scope of a contract, there is a risk that the revised requirement could be viewed as being materially different from what was originally tendered. If this were to happen, suppliers who were not given the opportunity to bid, or who were not successful in the procurement exercise may challenge the Council's decision on the grounds of non-compliance with procurement law. Such a challenge could lead to financial costs for the Council and potential reputational impact.

6.2 The forecasted costs of the Wath scheme have increased as detailed in 2.5. Appendix 1 provides the costs and budget required to fund the original design. For this, the project budget will need to increase by £2.040m funded by unallocated Local Regeneration Grant (LRG). The use of this unallocated grant funding will be reported to Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through required monitoring returns. The revenue costs of this scheme have not been

considered as part of this update but were included as part of the July 2024 report to Cabinet.

6.3 Appendix 5 provides the costs and budget required to deliver the project. The proposed budget increase totals £5.951m, to be funded by unallocated Local Regeneration Fund £0.240m, unallocated Town Centre Investment Fund £1.660m and a contribution from the Council's Capital Contingency Fund £4.051m. Further details on the costs and funding are outlined in Appendix 5. As at 6.2 any use of unallocated LRF grant funding will have to be approved at the Town Board and reported to MHCLG through required monitoring returns. The revenue position of the scheme has not been considered as part of this update. It should be noted that the current revenue overspend in the Market's operations is £0.5m as reported in the December Financial Monitoring Report to Cabinet in February 2026.

6.4 The cost projections for both schemes are based on the latest information from the Council's construction partners and latest forecasts from the project team based on non-construction costs

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The legal implications in respect of compliance with the relevant procurement legislation are set out above. If the recommendations are accepted the appropriate variations to the respective contracts will be concluded with the contractors.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 Any workforce changes arising from the implementation of the recommendations will be managed in accordance with Council HR policies and procedures.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Wath Library

The Council's Library Strategy offers a rich core service provision for children and young people with a wide range of initiatives. The service is aware that the number of young people aged 11+ accessing library provision is low. The new library will improve the offer for all users but with particular focus on this age group, with the provision of a modern inviting space to deliver a variety of programmes including code clubs, young readers groups, and a makerspace with new digital technology. Young people will also be encouraged to volunteer at their new library.

9.2 **Rotherham Markets & Library**

In collaboration with Rotherham College, Officers are exploring opportunities to involve students in the future Indoor Market. Early engagement is underway, with plans to launch student focus groups to help shape ideas about what they would like to see in the market. Separately, the Market's Operations Team is keen to develop a young enterprise element and is working with the college to define what this could look like. Given that Rotherham College's student population includes a high proportion of disadvantaged learners, the project is committed to ensuring their needs and perspectives are carefully considered as the scheme develops.

10. **Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 **Wath Library**

Consultation for the scheme has been open to all. The development aims to enhance the town centre through a new library and community facility, improved public spaces between Biscay Way and the High Street, and new commercial space units. Feedback requesting more ground-floor library space was incorporated into the July 2024 planning submission. Equality implications have been captured in a Part B assessment and will continue to be monitored throughout the development of detailed designs and ahead of a Full Business Case for the scheme.

10.2 **Rotherham Markets & Library**

Further details on the equality impacts of this scheme are detailed in the Part B assessment at Appendix 7.

10.3 In summary, consultation has been undertaken with a diverse range of stakeholders. This includes Market Traders, Library Staff, and users of these services. This represents individuals of differing age ranges, individuals from different ethnic/religious groups and traders/businesses within the local area. This consultation involved activities such as events, focus groups, workshops and online questionnaires in order to gain a wide-ranging reach, accessibility in relation to engagement and multiple opportunities for community feedback.

10.4 This approach has informed the redevelopment scheme design from inception through to construction, where feedback has been captured and taken into account to improve the design wherever feasible.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Wath Library

The scheme is designed to promote a healthier and a more active Wath town centre, with improved public realm and landscaping. The replacement of the existing building will ensure much improved energy efficiency in the operation of the library and commercial unit. This will slightly offset the increased emissions during the demolition and rebuild of the library. Air source heat pumps and photovoltaic energy production will be included in the scheme.

11.2 The Council will ensure emission reducing measures are implemented wherever feasible in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the building and public realm.

11.3 Rotherham Markets & Library

The scheme is designed to promote a healthier and more active Rotherham town centre, with improved public realm, landscaping and leisure spaces. By reusing the existing indoor market building and improving its environmental performance, the waste and emissions related to demolition and rebuild have been prevented for this part of the development.

11.4 The new buildings will ensure much improved energy efficiency in the operation of the library, gallery/event space and café. The gas fuelled heating and cooling system in the existing indoor market building will be replaced with air source heat pumps which are powered by electricity, and all new buildings will be heated and cooled by renewable fuel sources. The inclusion of PV panels within the scheme will also help to reduce the council's carbon footprint and revenue requirements, saving the council 3.5tCO_{2e} annually.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no direct impacts from this decision on the delivery of services by partners. The delivery of the Markets & Library scheme is widely seen as an important catalyst in regenerating Rotherham town centre and delivery of the recommended option further secures a positive future for the town centre. Likewise, the Wath Library project will have a positive impact on the local area providing improved services for local people and an improved sense of place.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 **Risk 1:** Further cost increases as a result of a volatile construction market

Mitigation: Wath Library is contracted under a JCT contract allowing transfer of risk to the contractor. Adequate contingency is allowed for both projects to counter any further cost increases.

13.2 **Risk 2:** Lack of commercial interest in both properties following completion.

Mitigation: Marketing and lettings strategy to be developed. Incentives for tenants to be developed.

13.3 **Risk 3:**
Risk that trader expectations are not met, leading to reputational damage and deterioration in relationships.

Mitigation:
Managed through clear and consistent communications, ongoing engagement with traders, and transparent explanation of delivery timing, constraints and outcomes.

14. Accountable Officers

Simon Moss, Service Director; Planning, Regeneration & Transport

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	28/04/26
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	28/04/26
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	13/04/26

Report Author: Lorna Vertigan, Head of Regeneration.
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 report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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Appendix 1 Wath Library Cost Plan & Budget Implications

1 Cost Update

- 1.1 The estimated cost of the scheme was provided to Cabinet in July 2024, where an increased budget of £9.941m was approved. The construction costs were based on an estimate provided by external cost consultants, Turner and Townsend. Costs for the alternative option as per 2.3 of the main report are not considered as part of this appendix.
- 1.2 The cost estimates below have been provided by the construction partner for this project, Tilbury Douglas. These costs include the latest forecast for the delivery of the main construction works on site, along with the wider project costs required to deliver a scheme of this type.

Section	Item	Amount (£000s)
Core Construction	Core works (demolition, building, externals, s278 highway works, identified items)	6,675
	Forecast inflation applied to project costs up to the anticipated mid-point of construction (Q2 2027)	410
	Preliminaries (site set-up, welfare, non-staff)	850
	Insurances & construction risk (applied to works)	234
Subtotal – Core Construction		8,169
Construction phase additions	Site staff preliminaries	461
	Construction stage design fees	209
	Overhead & profit, risk & construction insurances.	246
	Provisional sums for the demolition, asbestos, and reading garden.	164
Subtotal – Construction phase additions		1,080
Client & Professional	Design development risk / contingency	653
	Professional and statutory fees	878
	Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) covering detailed design and pre-construction activities (awarded April 2025)	497
	Surveys	69
	Client direct costs (decant, corporate recharges, advertising, marketing, fixtures, fittings and equipment, and Housing car park contribution)	675
Subtotal – Client & Professional		2,772
Total		12,021

The project, to its original design, is now estimated to cost £12.0m.

2 Funding

2.1 The budget presented to Cabinet in July 2024, was as follows:

Funding Stream	Amount (£000s)
Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Grant <i>Awarded in July 2023</i>	8,941
Towns and Villages Fund (Council Borrowing) <i>Agreed in July 2024</i>	1,000
Total	9,941

Following this update to Cabinet, a £40k contribution from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was agreed for their proportion of the costs attributable to the car park works. The current budget is therefore:

Funding Stream	Amount (£000s)
MHCLG Grant	8,941
Towns and Villages Fund	1,000
HRA Contribution	40
Total	9,981

As at March 2026, £1.3m has been spent against this budget.

2.2 As noted in section 1.1, the contractor's latest cost estimate exceeds the approved budget. There is an estimated budget shortfall of £2.0m:

	Amount (£000s)
Estimated cost	12,021
Current budget	9,981
Shortfall	2,040

2.3 The Local Regeneration Grant (LRG) is a mix of the Towns Fund, High Streets Fund and Levelling Up Funds that Government have been combined to simplify the governance and monitoring arrangements for. The fund has spare capacity as projects that were funded by the LRG have been delivered with a small saving or have sourced additional grant funding, allowing an element of the LRG to be released. The Council has control over how this fund is allocated, though it does need to report outputs and outcomes delivered back to MHCLG.

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title	
Title: Wath Library & Public Spaces Redevelopment	
Directorate: R&E	Service area: RiDO
Lead person: Andrea Brough	Contact: William Rayner
Is this a:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify: Wath Town Centre Capital Regeneration Project	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
<p>The supported scheme will include the demolition of the existing library building and the creation of a brand-new library to create a modern, inviting, and inclusive community facility. The redevelopment will be designed to open up public spaces between Biscay Way and the High Street and encourage visitors into the town centre.</p> <p>Investment in the surrounding public realm aims to draw people into the town centre, and the redevelopment will include commercial space to support a vibrant mix of businesses in the town centre.</p>

The existing building, currently scheduled to be demolished by July 2026, was not fit for purpose and did not address the public realm. It was not viable to make changes to the existing building to facilitate the desired uses of the library and meet environmental performance targets.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent, and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>	X	
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason.		

If you have answered **no** to **all** the questions above, please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above, please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

An in-depth stakeholder database was prepared to ensure that the consultation and engagement that has been undertaken reached a wide audience. The events and activities were accessible and open to everyone and were advertised and promoted via a number of platforms designed to reach a wide audience.

Public events have taken place in the current Wath library and will continue to do so throughout the lifespan of the development, with no access restrictions. Focus groups will be arranged to capture feedback from, for example, hard-to-reach groups.

Library service users have been considered throughout the design stages to accommodate and provide access for all.

One key element of this project was to provide appropriate temporary premises to ensure service provision continues as much as possible throughout the redevelopment works. The premises on 4 Sadygate meets all DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance regulations following the addition by the Council of an accessible W/C on the ground floor.

The temporary premises are within 35 metres of the former library and accessible via foot and public transport, with accessible parking nearby.

The temporary library has been successfully operating since June 2025 and continues to provide a full range of services. While the Library Service has had to adjust its offer to suit the smaller building footprint, staff have effectively adapted the programme of events to ensure the temporary premises are used to their fullest potential. This has allowed the service to remain both accessible and user-friendly. To date, no equality-related issues have been reported.

As shown on the planning drawings, the building provides fully accessible, level access throughout the ground floor, connecting directly to the public realm at Montgomery Square. The ground floor includes an accessible WC, a Changing Places facility, and a dedicated parent changing room. The first floor that can be

accessed via a lift also includes an accessible WC. Overall, the new building is fully compliant with all DDA and associated accessibility regulations.

Beyond physical accessibility, the layout and facilities have been developed to support a wide range of community needs. A dedicated Makerspace room will enable hands-on, creative STEM activities for children of all ages, supporting inclusive learning opportunities. A large community exhibition space, capable of accommodating two full class groups, will allow the Library Service to host a wider range of events than previously possible in Wath. This flexible space will be available for hire by local community groups, can be used to display work by local artists, and will help strengthen community participation across diverse groups.

The building will also offer a bookable meeting room for corporate or community use, alongside a large open-plan ground-floor library area featuring over 7,000 books, a dedicated children's zone, and an IT study area. Together, these facilities ensure the new Library delivers an inclusive, welcoming environment for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

- **Key findings**

Consultation has been open to all. It is the intention of the development to improve the town centre with the construction of a new library and community facility, improved public spaces between Biscay Way and the High Street, and new commercial units.

Feedback received highlighted that users wanted to see more of the library itself delivered from the ground floor. Following consideration by the architect, the relevant changes were met and submitted as part of the planning application in July 2024.

Though the library service has had to reduce their offer during the redevelopment period, all the necessary mitigations and considerations have been put in place to ensure there are no issues around accessibility to a temporary premise, as detailed above.

Wath town centre provides important community services, and all and any services which are being provided by private entities within the library such as hirers of the library space have already all relocated or sought other temporary locations to deliver their service for the duration of the construction and works, library staff have supported all groups in ensuring they have located suitable premises to continue to deliver community services.

- **Actions**

Consultation has been carried out in an open and transparent manner, encouraging all stakeholders to share their views and opinions on the redevelopment proposals. Ongoing engagement with the community will continue throughout the duration of the project, and a comprehensive communications plan has been collated, including attendance at key local events such as the Wath Festival and the Christmas Light Switch-On, as well as direct communication through leafleting to residents and

businesses alongside corporate social media updates This ensures the community remains fully informed and involved as the project progresses.

The temporary library provides an accessible, scaled-down facility that continues to offer a full range of services to the community, ensuring this valued local asset remains available throughout the redevelopment period. Accessibility for all users has been a priority, and internal adjustments have been made to ensure everyone can access an appropriate W/C. No further alterations to the temporary premises have been required to deliver a high-quality, inclusive and accessible service.

As part of the development, a commercial unit will be located on the ground floor with direct access from Montgomery Square. This space was originally intended to accommodate a Banking Hub; however, the Banking Hub has since relocated to the Tesco car park and has confirmed it will not be moving into the new library building. As a result, the commercial unit currently has no proposed end user.

A marketing and letting exercise will therefore be required to identify a suitable new tenant. Any future tenant will be sought with a view to providing much-needed, accessible services for the Wath community, helping to complement the library offer and increase footfall within the building.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	11/03/26
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	11/03/26
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	William Rayner

5. Governance, ownership, and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
William Rayner	Project Manager	10.02.26

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	10/03/2026
Report title and date.	Wath Town Centre Capital Regeneration Project
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	For Cabinet May 2026
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	11/03/2026

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Wath Library Redevelopment	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 11th March	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment	Service area: Regeneration
Lead Manager: William Rayner	Contact: William.rayner@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
William Rayner	RMBC	Project Manager
Catherine Davies	RMBC	
Lorna Vertigan	RMBC	Head of Regeneration

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

The overarching aim of the redevelopment is to tackle the deprivation and inequality faced in the town centre of Wath by maximising the opportunity for local growth in the civic, commercial, and cultural sectors. By re-establishing the town centre as a destination for socialising, learning, and enterprise, we will increase footfall to sustainable levels, and restore a sense of pride of place amongst the communities. Redevelopment of the site will improve connectivity and showcase what the town has to offer.

Delivered through a landmark mixed-use development in Wath, there will be fresh incentives to visit the town centre to shop, relax, learn and play in high quality, convenient and connected facilities. The project aims to deliver:

- Development of a state-of-the-art library building.
- Improved public realm.
- Redesign of the site to enhance connectivity and visibility of town centre offer, and address perceptions of security.
- Provision of a new commercial unit in prime location on the market square to attract new businesses.
- Improvements to the civic centre facilities for learning, working, and making.
- Improvements to the car park.

The redevelopment will deliver facilities of a modern standard, with sustainable and inclusive design. It will also tackle persistent anti-social behaviour issues through the enclosure of the resident accessible housing external staircase and passageway which currently runs between the library and the adjacent residential and commercial block, which is housed by RMBC tenants and managed by Housing services.

This programme will be delivered with funding from the Capital Regeneration/ Government funding. The programme aims to transform prominent sites within Rotherham's principal settlements for growth. The scheme aims to deliver high quality place making to restore the cultural heart of the town centres, increase footfall, boost the local economies, and restore a sense of pride amongst communities.

Following Cabinet approval to accept the grant and proceed in August 2023 and approval to progress the scheme at Cabinet in July 2024, the Council has developed the scheme's feasibility and design. The redevelopment has been designed to enhance user experience between Biscay Way and the High Street to encourage visitors into the town centre.

Since June 2025, the Library service has decanted the existing Library building into a temporary site 35 metres away at Montgomery Square and has been successfully operating and continues to provide a full range of services. While the Library Service has had to adjust its offer to suit the smaller building footprint, staff have effectively adapted the programme of events to ensure the temporary premises are used to their fullest potential. This has allowed the service to remain both accessible and user-friendly. To date, no equality-related issues have been reported.

A contractor for the scheme has been appointed and is currently demolishing the old library building, and works are expected to take place until July 2026, with construction of the new library scheduled to begin in November 2026 and continue until December 2027.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

Wath upon Dearne (Wath) is a small town in the north of the borough, within the lower Dearne Valley. It has a population of 16,964 and comprises of council estates, terraced housing, suburban areas and new developments, which make it typical of the Borough, data provided from 2021 census.

Wath is an ex-coal mining town and suffers from a legacy of inequality and deprivation which can be evidenced across a wide range of indicators. Using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019), Wath is in the most deprived 10% of communities nationally. This is also true when considering specific inequalities such as: Employment; Education, Skills and Training; Health; and Income Deprivation affecting Children.

Education attainment at GCSE level is significantly below the national average, which reduces opportunity for high-skilled, high-paid careers. Progression into Level 4 and above qualifications is severely impacted, with just 15.5 and 14.2% of the population having higher level qualifications, compared to a national average of 27.4%.

As part of the planning and design process, consultations were held with the public, local business and stakeholders to ensure that the design for the new library is fit for purpose, accessible and addresses anti-social behaviour. These consultations were key in ensuring that the new library is fit for purpose for generations to come.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

No gaps identified.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

As part of the wider scheme, engagement with the community will be undertaken at regular intervals throughout the project implementation. A detailed comms plan has been collated for the duration of the scheme.

Regular meetings are held with ward members, neighbourhood coordinators and library service staff, providing a forum for issues within the community regarding the project to be raised or dealt with.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

Two public engagement sessions and specific sessions with Wath Comprehensive School were undertaken in 2024 as part of the design development. Feedback received highlighted that users wanted to see more of the library itself delivered from the ground floor as well as increasing accessible toilet and changing room facilities. Further sessions were then undertaken to show the public how their feedback had been considered. the relevant changes were made and submitted as part of the planning application in July 2024.

Ongoing engagement with the community will continue throughout the duration of the project, and a comprehensive communications plan has been collated, including attendance at key local events such as the Wath Festival and the Christmas Light Switch-On, as well as direct communication through leafleting to residents and businesses alongside corporate social media updates This ensures the community remains fully informed and involved as the project progresses.

Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

As part of the wider scheme, there has been extensive engagement with Members in the formulation of the scheme. This has taken the form of monthly ward updates, as well as the regular Regeneration update meeting with the Leader.

The project also reports into the Regeneration Programme Board, Capital DLT and Capital Programme Board on a regular basis through the Regeneration Programme Dashboard.

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

By replacing a tired building that acted as a blight on the high street that acted as a barrier in the town centre with a welcoming community space and public realm, the area gains natural surveillance and a stronger sense of security, helping older people, disabled residents, women, young people and minority groups feel more confident and able to access local facilities equally. Reducing ASB and improving safety around the new library has been a key driver of this project and ASB mitigation measures have been factored into the design to make the community feel safer when in the town centre.

As illustrated on the planning drawings, the building has been designed to support equitable access for all users, including those with protected characteristics. It provides fully accessible, level access throughout the ground floor, with a direct connection to the public realm at Montgomery Square. Facilities include an accessible WC, a Changing Places facility, and a dedicated parent changing room. The first floor, which is accessible via lift, also contains an accessible WC. The design is fully compliant with DDA requirements and all relevant accessibility regulations, ensuring that people with disabilities can use the building independently and safely.

Beyond physical access, the internal layout and range of facilities have been developed to meet the needs of a diverse community. A dedicated Makerspace room will support inclusive, hands-on STEM learning for children and young people, including those who may benefit from alternative learning environments. A flexible community exhibition space, sized to host two full class groups, will enable the Library Service to deliver a wider range of cultural and educational activities. This space will also be available for local groups and artists, strengthening participation and representation across different ages, backgrounds and community identities.

The building additionally provides a bookable meeting room for community or corporate use, alongside a spacious, open-plan ground-floor library area. This includes more than 7,000 books, a dedicated children's zone, and an IT study area.

Additionally, a commercial unit will be located on the ground floor with direct access from the shopping precinct Montgomery Square. A marketing and letting exercise will be undertaken to identify a suitable new tenant. Any future tenant will be sought with a view to providing much-needed, accessible services for the Wath community, helping to complement the library offer and generate community cohesion.

Together, these elements create an inclusive, welcoming environment that supports people of all ages, abilities and protected characteristics, ensuring equal opportunity to access learning, culture and community activities.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

None identified

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

The service delivers significant positive impacts by improving accessibility, expanding opportunities and removing barriers for people across all protected characteristics in accessing library services in Wath. The new library provides level access throughout, a Changing Places facility, accessible WCs on both floors, and lift access, ensuring equitable use for people with disabilities and reducing barriers that previously limited independent access. The open, flexible internal layout supports a wide range of learning, cultural and social activities, helping people from different age groups, ethnic backgrounds, faiths and family structures to participate fully.

Enhanced facilities, including an expanded book stock, children's zone, IT study area, Makerspace for hands-on STEM learning and a community exhibition space, all seek to promote digital inclusion, lifelong education and cultural engagement.

By replacing an old, underused building with a modern, active, well-used public facility, the scheme helps reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour (ASB) and improves natural surveillance in the area. A vibrant community presence throughout the day increases feelings of safety for local residents, while the removal of blight and vacant buildings on the high street signals investment, confidence and uplift in the local area.

It is also anticipated that any new tenant for the commercial unit will offer much-needed, easily accessible services that will benefit residents across Wath and strengthen the role of the library as a community hub. This added provision aims to complement existing library activities, increase footfall, and support greater community cohesion by creating a welcoming place where people can access multiple services in one convenient location."

These improvements create more opportunities for positive interaction between diverse groups, strengthen representation of local voices and support community cohesion. By providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment, the service reduces social isolation, supports families, encourages intergenerational use and ensures that all residents can access high-quality community resources without discrimination.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

The new library will have a positive impact on community relations by providing a larger, inclusive, accessible space where people of all ages, backgrounds and protected characteristics can come together to read, learn, participate and socialise.

Its welcoming design will have fully accessible facilities and flexible rooms for events, exhibitions and community activities to create shared opportunities for interaction and collaboration for the Wath community for generations to come.

By offering cultural programmes, educational resources, digital access and spaces that local groups can use and shape, the library helps strengthen mutual understanding, supports representation of diverse community voices and fosters a stronger sense of belonging across the whole community.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Wath Library Redevelopment
Directorate and service area: Regeneration and Environment
Lead Manager: William Rayner
Summary of findings:
The redevelopment of Wath Library will provide a positive impact on those with protected characteristics.

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Ongoing Oversight of Equalities issues as the scheme progresses	All	12/27
Ongoing public/stakeholder engagement	ALL	12/27

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Simon Moss	AD R&E	8/04/26
Cllr Williams	Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy	09/04/26

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	11/03/26
Report title and date	Wath Library Redevelopment
Date report sent for publication	In accordance with May Cabinet Timescales
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	11/03/26

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Will the decision/proposal impact...	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified:			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across the Borough as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	Decrease	<p>There will be an initial increase in emissions during the construction phase, associated with demolition and construction processes. During this phase, waste will be minimised.</p> <p>Demolition of the existing library building is necessary as it is no longer fit for purpose, and it is not viable to retrofit. A new building will be built at the same site.</p> <p>Components of the existing building will be reused wherever possible.</p>	<p>Temporary increases in Borough emission throughout construction.</p> <p>New non-domestic buildings will be designed to minimise carbon emissions operationally.</p>	<p>The new building will comply with Part L of building regs. During detailed design, we will work with the design team to explore sustainable material sourcing, passive heating systems, renewable energy.</p> <p>Once completed, the new library building will have enhanced environmental performance, requiring less energy to heat. Air source heat pumps will be included in the new building as well as photovoltaic energy production.</p> <p>Sustainable sourcing of local materials will be</p>	<p>The main contractor will be responsible for compliance with Part L of building regs.</p> <p>The emissions of the new RMBC non-domestic assets will be recorded and monitored by the council's Climate Change Team.</p> <p>Replacing outdated with energy-efficient buildings is part of RMBC's wider strategy on reducing carbon emissions and will be monitored as part of the annual reporting process.</p>

				<p>practiced wherever possible.</p> <p>The old library was heated with gas and the new building will be all electric in line with the council's drive to achieving Net Carbon Zero by 2030.</p>	
Emissions from transport?	Increase	<p>During the construction phase, there will be an increase in traffic and machinery on site, having an impact on emissions.</p> <p>A slight decrease in emissions is anticipated in operation.</p>	The projects will enhance existing leisure and skills sites across the borough so may generate an increase in visitors/ car journeys.	<p>The public realm will be revitalised to encourage walking and cycling. Active travel will be built into the scheme, including cycle parking tying into the Wath – Manvers cycleway.</p> <p>The site is well connected to public transport links.</p> <p>The number of electric vehicle charging points will be increased.</p>	<p>The main contractor appointed will be required to abide by standards to minimise emissions.</p> <p>Once in operation, RMBC may monitor active travel in Wath more generally and the impact of the project on this.</p>
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Increase	Increased emissions due to demolition, site clearing works and waste from construction.	Increased waste whilst construction takes place but no expected additional waste from completed scheme	In line with Part H of building regs., waste will be kept to a minimum, with reuse and recycling wherever possible.	As above the main contractor will be responsible for compliance, which will be monitored by RMBC.

Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emissions from construction and/or development?	Increase	<p>The proposed construction works will have a direct impact on emissions. This includes travel to site, operation of vehicles on site, operation of any other vehicles needed to construct/dig proposed components, and the use of local power generation (generators) until permanent power is available.</p> <p>The embodied energy required to produce construction materials will increase emissions.</p>	Temporary increase in Borough emissions during construction works	Compliance with relevant building regs will ensure emissions and waste are kept to an absolute minimum.	RMBC will monitor works and ensure that the main contractor is complying with all relevant regulations.
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	None	A small number of trees and landscaping will be added to the public realm as part of the improvement works, however this is not	N/A	N/A	RMBC will monitor quality of landscaping works and overall environmental impact of the scheme.

		expected to have a notable impact on carbon capture.			
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Identify any emissions impacts associated with this decision which have not been covered by the above fields:

Actual carbon impacts will be firmed up during detailed design stages.

Will the proposal affect Council services' resilience to climate change, or the capacity of people living in the Borough to adapt to climate change?

Libraries provide positive outcomes for community cohesion and access to services which may increase resilience to its impacts. A new modern building can provide greater resilience through better thermal management and can also provide some additional adaptive capacity: 'cold refuges', where people can escape the heat of the day in air-conditioned public buildings, have been proposed as a complement to 'warm banks', as provided in some areas since the energy price crisis of winter 2021/22.

Provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

The scheme is designed to promote a healthier and a more active Wath town centre, with improved public realm and landscaping. The replacement of the existing building will ensure much improved energy efficiency in the operation of the library and commercial unit. This will slightly offset the increased emissions during the demolition and rebuild of the library. Air source heat pumps and photovoltaic energy production will be included in the scheme.

The Council will ensure emission reducing measures are implemented wherever feasible in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the building and public realm.

When appointed, the main contractor will be responsible for compliance with relevant building regs and other relevant legislation, which RMBC will monitor carefully.

Supporting information:	
Climate Impact Assessment Author	Nicola Glynne-Jones Project Manager Regeneration and Environment Regeneration Regeneration and Environment
Please outline any research, data or information used to complete this Climate Impact Assessment.	Stage 0-3 Design Information
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	N/A
Validation	Tracking Reference: CIA345 Katie Rockett Climate Change Officer

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Appendix 5 Markets and Library Cost Plan & Budget Implications

1 Cost Update

- 1.1 In March 2024 it was reported to Cabinet that the total scheme cost was forecast to be £40.89m.
- 1.2 There have been a series of challenges in the delivery of the project, as detailed in the Cabinet report itself. As a result of these challenges, the current cost of delivering the scheme as previously outlined to Cabinet is now £46.8m, £6m above the available budget. The table below sets out the revised cost projections and proposals for how those additional costs can be funded.

Expenditure Area	Total Project Budget	Option 1: Forecast Outturn Position	Option 1: Variance to Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Main Contract	37,715	41,735	4,020
Total Construction	37,715	41,735	4,020
Professional Fees	2,865	2,903	38
Non-Construction Costs	314	2,206	1,893
Total Project Costs	40,894	46,844	5,951
Funded By:			
Local Regeneration Fund Surplus			-240
Town Centre Investment Fund			-1,660
Capital Programme Contingency			-4,051

2 Funding

- 2.1 In order to fund either option it is proposed that the Council utilise unallocated funding already held within the existing approved Capital Programme. The three funding sources are, the Local Regeneration Fund (LRF) surplus, Town Centre Investment Fund and the Capital Contingency Fund.
- 2.2 The Local Regeneration Fund currently has an unallocated surplus balance of £2.3m. This fund is a mix of the Towns Fund, High Streets Fund and Levelling Up Funds that Government have been combined to simplify the governance and monitoring arrangements for. The fund has spare capacity as projects that we being funded by the LRF has been delivered with a small saving or have sourced additional grant funding, allowing an element of the LRF to be released. The Council has control over how this fund is allocated, though it does need to report outputs and outcomes delivered back to MHCLG.

- 2.3 There is also an unallocated balance remaining from the Town Centre Investment Fund, £1.7m. This funding was specifically allocated to the regeneration of the Town Centre, the residual funding remains unallocated as the Council has been successful in bidding for and accessing external grant funding to support its schemes. As such this fund remains unallocated but earmarked towards the redevelopment of the Town Centre.
- 2.4 The Capital Programme Contingency of £10m was added to the Council Capital Programme as part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23. It was set in anticipation that the Council's ambitious Capital Programme was being delivered in a period of high inflation, construction market pressures and funding pressures caused by Government funding being linked to tight timeframes for delivery. These factors were expected to drive up the costs of projects within the Regeneration Capital Programme, in particular, over the next 5-10 years of delivery. As such this contingency would be used to allow the Council to address any significant cost and delivery pressures arising.
- 2.5 Whilst the Capital Contingency has been used, it has been used infrequently. In the main, this contingency has been increased as savings on the Capital Programme have been identified. Since it was approved, the Capital Contingency has risen from £10m to £17.7m. As such this contingency can be used to cover the £4.0m contribution to the Markets and Libraries project.

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title	
Title: Rotherham Markets and Central Library Redevelopment	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment	Service area: Regeneration
Lead person: Alice Bancroft	Contact number: 01709 249955
Is this a:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
Redevelopment and repurposing of the Rotherham Markets Complex, new Central Library relocation and public realm improvements, delivering key components of the Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan 2017.
Previous public and stakeholder consultation for the Town Centre Masterplan and the Cultural Strategy identified a need to improve the cultural and leisure offer within Rotherham town centre. This involves improving the proximity and

connectivity between key amenities, upgrading the quality of the built environment and delivering inclusive access to the different facilities on offer. The scheme, together with the Forge Island development, will regenerate the town centre, creating new economic opportunities through well designed, lower carbon and inclusive spaces. This will have spillover effects for the wider town.

Bringing together the library, markets, food hall and gallery/ event spaces on one site will provide the potential to increase footfall and in turn help support and sustain the future of the library service and the market. It will also provide the opportunity for the library and markets to work closely together in order deliver a more compelling offer to a wider range of residents and visitors.

The aim of the scheme is to provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment freely open to all which encourages participation, creativity and mutual learning and support. This will be enhanced through more collaborative working internally and externally with partners and services such as the markets, colleges, local schools, voluntary organisations, to ensure that all needs are captured.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>	X	

<p>Could the proposal affect how the Council’s services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i></p>		X
<p>Could the proposal affect the Council’s workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i></p>		X
<p>If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason</p>		
<p style="height: 50px;"></p>		

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual’s needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- How have you considered equality and diversity?**

The aim of the project is to increase use of the markets, library, the public realm and the wider town centre, to create accessible, thriving spaces through inclusive, community-led facilities. Throughout the entire design period, extensive engagement has been undertaken on emerging proposals with a wide range of stakeholders.

Following an 18-month programme of consultation and engagement, the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 was adopted by the Council on 11th November, 2020. A key priority detailed within the Strategy was to create a new library for the town centre. Following this a design brief was created through information collected by RMBC’s libraries team on current uses, and ways to improve the service so that more people can benefit from the services on offer.

The project is designed with the service users fully in mind, through assessing and accommodating wherever possible, the requirements of different groups.

For the design of the markets, extensive consultation has been undertaken with businesses currently operating and trading from within the Markets complex itself.

Engagement with businesses operating within the Markets complex will continue through the redevelopment period with a range of relocations, both temporary and permanent, required to facilitate the planned works. Acknowledging this challenging and disruptive period, the Council approved a rent concession of 50% for market traders to be implemented from the Summer of 2023 and to be continued throughout the construction programmes duration. Engagement with traders will be undertaken more frequently as the decant period nears. The markets operations team are in daily dialogue with traders.

• **Key findings**

Despite the library at Riverside House delivering a good service, highly-valued by existing customers, borrowing and physical visits never recovered following the transfer of location from Walker Place in 2012. The relocation resulted in an immediate 31% reduction in the number of annual visits to the central library. Relocation to be part of a wider cultural hub will create more of a destination, with better public transport links, and walking and cycling routes. Schools and a number of community groups are located in the Eastwood area, which is convenient for the new site.

The Council's Improving Places Select Commission undertook a review of Rotherham Markets and the emerging redevelopment proposals as reported at the meeting held 07 June 2022. A key finding of this was:

That any re-design of markets spaces duly consider usability and aesthetics, availing market research to optimise spaces for inclusiveness and accessibility, and to make the offer especially attractive to students and young people.

For both services the aim is to provide spaces for different groups to meet, fostering a sense of community. There will be opportunities to host a range of events in the new facilities. This will positively benefit community cohesion within the town centre.

• **Actions**

A Part B was completed for the Rotherham Markets and Central Library Redevelopment in 2023. This covers all equality implications and has continued to be updated throughout the project.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	See above
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	See above
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Alice Bancroft Project Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	Job title	Date
Lorna Vertigan	Head of Regeneration	12/03/2026

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	10/03/2026
Report title and date	Date: May 2026 Title: Rotherham Market & Libraries
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	10.03.2026

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PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Rotherham Markets and Library Redevelopment	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): Original - 10/07/23 Updated – 24/6/25, 24/11/25, 10/03/2026	
Directorate: R&E	Service area: RiDO
Lead Manager: Updated 24/6/25 – Alice Bancroft Further update 24/11/25, 10/03/26 – Alice Bancroft	Contact number: 01709 249955
Is this a:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

If other, please specify

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (e.g., service user, managers, service specialist)
Tanya Shvab	RiDO	Project Manager
Alice Bancroft	RiDO	Project Manager
Lorna Vertigan	RiDO	Head of Regeneration

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, other groups or stakeholder/s e.g., service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

Redevelopment and repurposing of the Rotherham Markets Complex, new Central Library relocation and public realm improvements, delivering key components of the Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan 2017.

Previous public and stakeholder consultation for the Town Centre Masterplan and the Cultural Strategy identified a need to improve the cultural and leisure offer within Rotherham town centre. This involves improving the proximity and connectivity between key amenities, upgrading the quality of the built environment and delivering inclusive access to the different facilities on offer. The scheme, together with the Forge Island development, will regenerate the town centre, creating new economic opportunities through well designed, lower carbon and inclusive spaces. This will have spill over effects for the wider town.

Bringing together the library and markets all on one site will provide the potential to increase footfall and in turn help support and sustain the future of the library service and the market within the town centre. It will also provide the opportunity for the library and markets to work closely together in order deliver a more compelling offer to a wider range of residents and visitors.

The aim of the scheme is to provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment freely open to all which encourages participation, creativity and mutual learning and support. This will be enhanced through more collaborative working internally and externally with partners and services such as the markets, colleges, local schools, voluntary organisations, to ensure that all needs are captured.

Key Stakeholders are:

- Market Traders (both indoor and outdoor)
 - NMTF Committee
- Market Customers
- Library Service Users
- Markets Staff (Council employees)
- Library Staff (Council employees)
- Neighbouring Businesses (including Council leaseholders)
- Facilities Management
- RMBC Staff

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

Contextual information from a range of sources, including the 2011 and 2021 Census, [Population – Rotherham Data Hub](#) and the Council Plan consultation, is provided below.

Population

- Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Rotherham increased by 3.3%, from around 257,300 in 2011 to around 265,800 in 2021.
- The population is ageing; People aged 65 years or over comprise 19.6% of Rotherham's population, which is a higher proportion than 18.6% across England and Wales.
- Rotherham's BAME population is concentrated in the inner areas of the town whilst the outer areas were 96% White British in 2011. 42% of BAME residents live in areas that are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country and for some groups the figure is higher. This compares with the Borough average of 19.5%.
- The age and gender profile of the town centre population is set out below:

Age range	Male	Female	TOTAL
0-15	248	221	469
16-29	380	303	683
30-44	464	280	744
45-64	364	159	523
65+	124	119	243
All Ages	1,580	1,082	2,662

Health and Wellbeing

- The percentage of people who identified as being disabled and limited a lot in Rotherham decreased by 2.10% between 2011 (12% 29,080) and 2021 (9.9%, 26,115). In 2021, 11.40% (30,065) were identified as being disabled and limited a

little, compared with 11.20% (27,520) in 2011. In England, the percentage of people who identified as being disabled and limited a lot was 2.40% lower than Rotherham. Overall, the percentage of disabled residents, both limited a lot and a little was lower in England (17.70%) than in Rotherham (21.30%), with a difference of 3.6%.

- In the Council Plan consultation, in response to the question on what would have the biggest positive impact on wellbeing and quality of life, men (30%) and those without a disability (27%) were more likely to state environmental improvements (23% overall), while more women and those with a disability stated, 'More things to do in the community' (16% women, 22% with disability, 13% overall).

Economy

- Rotherham has a polarised geography of deprivation and affluence with the most deprived communities concentrated in the central area whilst the most affluent areas are to the south, although the overall pattern is complex.
- Rotherham experiences high levels of deprivation, with 19.5% of residents living in England's most deprived 10% of areas. Central neighbourhoods close to the town centre such as Eastwood, Ferham, Canklow, East Dene, Clifton, and East Herringthorpe are especially affected.

Consultation

The Town Centre Masterplan has been subject to wide consultation with business and stakeholder groups. A public event was held in All Saint's Square on 28th June 2017 attended by 75 people over the course of the day. Feedback was wide ranging but there was a clear desire to see improvements in the town centre including a stronger leisure offer to serve the needs of local people who currently needed to travel to other centres to access facilities. The consultation also highlighted safety and the management of anti-social behaviour as important priorities.

Further consultation included a meeting with Rotherham Older People's Forum at Talbot Lane Methodist Church which highlighted a need for new developments to be older person friendly, to include more seating with and provide easy level access wherever possible and with good connections to public transport. Consultation with the Looked After Children's Council focused on the need for things to do in the town centre and the importance of creating a safe environment. The consultation emphasised a cinema as being an important attraction that is missing from the town centre offer for young people.

Rotherham Sight and Sound group were consulted on public realm proposals in the town centre on 16th January 2020. The group highlighted the importance of design in ensuring public spaces are accessible including the choice of materials, surface finishes, improved lighting and accessible seating.

Our Rotherham, Our Borough consultation and engagement to inform the new Council Plan took place from 9th August to 19th September 2021 to seek the views of Rotherham residents and other local stakeholders. The consultation included focused groups, short interactions, online and postal survey and Rotherham Show, with over 1,300 interactions taking place in total across all methods of engagement.

The short interactions and focus groups aimed to make up some of the engagement gaps, by engaging stakeholders working with some of the groups whose views were underrepresented in the survey, and those sharing protected characteristics.

Throughout the whole consultation and engagement, a common theme was a desire to see Rotherham town centre vibrant, flourishing, clean, safe and attractive to all. There were many suggestions as to how this may be achieved including incentives such as free parking, reduced rents to encourage a wide range of shops and businesses, improved safety and security measures in certain areas, plus investments made to attract families with children, and young people into the town centre.

Linking to messages concerned with the town centre, retaining business and encouraging trade and industry into the area, were responses concerned with local jobs for local people. Street scene matters were also frequently mentioned for the town centre and across the borough.

Many expressed a desire for a wider range of “decent” shops, more activities for families with young children, and greater accessibility for disabled and those with sensory impairments.

Of the children and young people consulted, young people wished for Rotherham town centre to be a place that people want to visit, for there to be more shops, activities, and places for young people to go. They also spoke about wanting to feel safe and secure in the town centre.

Across the last ten Rotherham Residents surveys, respondents’ feelings of optimism have shown a consistent divide between perceptions of the borough as a whole and views of the town centre. Overall, 53 per cent of respondents reported feeling very or fairly optimistic about the future of Rotherham as a place to live, a figure broadly in line with the ten-survey average of 54 per cent. Younger residents, particularly those aged 18–24, were the most positive, with 70 per cent expressing optimism, and women reported higher levels of optimism than men. In contrast, optimism about the town centre remained significantly lower: only 27 per cent felt very or fairly optimistic about its future, a figure that has remained unchanged for the last three survey waves but still sits above the ten-survey average of 23 per cent. Meanwhile, 35 per cent of respondents said they were not optimistic at all about the town centre.

Specific Library and Markets Consultation

The aim of the project is to increase use of the markets, library, the public realm and the wider town centre, to create accessible, thriving spaces through inclusive, community-led facilities. Throughout the entire design period, extensive engagement has been undertaken on emerging proposals with a wide range of stakeholders.

Following an 18-month programme of consultation and engagement, the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 was adopted by the Council on 11th November 2020. A key priority detailed within the Strategy was to create a new library for the town centre. Following this a design brief was created through information collected by RMBC’s libraries team on current uses,

and ways to improve the service so that more people can benefit from the services on offer.

The project has been designed with the service users fully in mind, through assessing and accommodating wherever possible, the requirements of different groups.

For the design of the markets, extensive consultation has been undertaken with businesses currently operating and trading from within the Markets complex itself.

Engagement with businesses operating within the Markets complex has continued through the redevelopment period with a range of relocations, both temporary and permanent, required to facilitate the planned works. Acknowledging this challenging and disruptive period, the Council has already approved a rent concession of 50% for market traders to be implemented from the Summer of 2023 and to be continued throughout the construction programmes duration.

As of November 2025, specific trader engagement sessions have taken place to give market traders further information about the decant from the ICM into the temporary market. An initial session took place 15th July 2025 with a further session taking place on the 12th November 2025. Both sessions were supported by specialist consultants Next Phase and aimed to give traders the opportunity to view designs of their stalls and provide key information surrounding the move. Both sessions were well attended and the council continues to keep traders informed via a monthly E-Bulletin that provides updates on the scheme.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

No- All groups responded, and a wide selection of views gathered. Where individual market traders have been unresponsive to consultation events we have followed-up one-on-one to gather their views and respond to any concerns.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

As the Markets/ Library complex is a run by Council, service delivery is continually monitored.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (Date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

**29/05/2018-15/06/18 Indoor Market exhibition
Rotherham Markets: Past, Present and Future
Exhibition comments**

- Reduce the rents and get more people to trade
- Better signage and opening up the front
- More Parking
- Visible security
- Proper lighting
- Repair and improve the roof
- Changing spaces needed with adequate room

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free short stay vehicle access – disability and collection • Opening times to reflect modern needs – i.e., opening later • Encouragement of e-business – purchase via web • Public food court • Provide other reasons to visit i.e., sports centre, health centre, learning and education uses. • School stalls and community stalls given for free, pop-up style • Integration of postal service facility for businesses • More choice of stalls • New flooring, air conditioning • More and improved access to top level • Meeting places • Market should be more accessible for everyone, the main entrance could be easier as it is quite a slope, perhaps some kind of escalator which could accommodate wheelchairs. • More events • Modernise stalls, better entertainment • Keep lower indoor market, concentrate on that, and make street market twice weekly, Tuesday and Saturday. <p>06/11/2019- Town Centre - Student Focus Group Markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food hall with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a variety of foods ○ healthier options ○ street food ○ cultural foods ○ Arcades and games • More stalls choice • More green spaces • Playgroup (for parents to leave kids as they shop) • Improvements to crossing from college (Eastwood Bldg) to markets • Events – festivals • Better social area – USB points • Breakfast places – open earlier? • Wi-Fi <p>06/11/2023- Occupants of the RAIN Building – Carer’s Corner, NHS Mental Health, Credit Union Officers presented the latest options,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • option 1 two individual buildings, larger space available for both Library and Community Hub
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • option 2 adjoining buildings, smaller space available for both Library and Community Hub <p>Feedback on design options presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The smaller building will not have enough space to accommodate all of the services currently in the RAIN Building and so would likely only hold the Citizens Advice Rotherham. • Issue would then be where to accommodate the displaced services. • The current set up has an operational requirement for 15 of the small meeting rooms to deliver the services offered. • There is no room for growth, something they have aspirations for in the future. • Security/health & safety issues raised with the design, they did not approve of having meeting rooms on a floor where there is no reception or office staff presence. • It is not essential for the Credit Union to have their own reception, a shared reception for the building would work. • All tenants will require a street presence regarding signage. <p>Option 1 is the preferred option.</p> <p>09/03/2020 and 10/03/20 – Market Traders with Design Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queries raised on the level of rent that will be expected. Comment made that rents need to be competitive. • Traders suggested a temporary market on the street. • Discussion on food ensued as to whether it should be distributed throughout units or in one location, such as an oasis. • Officers advised of the intention to connect the indoor and outdoor market with a food court area for seating. • Traders queried whether there would be a reduced number of stalls? Officers advised that they should be of similar number. • Traders raised the issue of inconvenience during the course of the works, that they would incur costs. • Traders raised the issue of social media and the absence of any presence of the market on social media. Also, social media gave an adverse
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	<p>impression of the town centre out of hours, providing adverse press.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traders suggested that young people were scared to come into the town centre and this needs to be addressed by RMBC. • Traders identified, and attendees agreed, that the library had been relocated to the wrong place out of the town centre, and that the relocation into the town centre and thus it's inclusion in the scheme was understandable. <p>03/09/2021 - 05/09/2021- Gazebo at Rotherham Show (approx. 750 people across 3 days). Public information event to showcase the updated markets redevelopment plans.</p> <p>01/10/2021 – 05/10/2021 Indoor Market Stall public information event (Approx. 200 people reached)</p> <p>09/03/2021 and 10/03/21 – Market Traders with Design Team</p> <p>Public information event to showcase the updated redevelopment plans.</p> <p>19/10/2021 and 21/10/21 – Market Traders with Design Team Workshops</p> <p>Key questions raised by traders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will there be a financial package available for traders while works are ongoing? Will be reflected in leases and rent reductions • What will happen to the food retailers on the ground floor? The food retailers will be put together in one area. Will speak to each individually • What sizes will the stalls be, will they provide market dividers to split the units up and allow stock display? To be decided • Can the empty space in the markets be used to build the new stalls and traders move into and continue trading? • Will there be options to trade elsewhere? • Will storage of goods be provided? • Will the lifts and stairs remain in the same place? • Will the permitter units be redeveloped? • Will the fronts and signage change for everyone?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If cladding is being added will the markets be lit better? <p>06/06/22-20/06/22 – Online survey with 295 responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 125 comments made which included: feeling safe and secure is priority, more free parking, additional seating, better access to library, more shops, better food offer, study space in library, more themed markets and events <p>14/06/22-16/06/22 – On-street consultation</p> <p>(approx. 200 attended)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit trees should be planted • Charge for toilets to reduce ASB • More events • Gallery exhibition space would be useful to work with the college <p>03/09/22-04/09/22 – Gazebo at Rotherham Show to share information and respond to queries.</p> <p>Over 1,000 people attended.</p> <p>23/02/23 and 28/02/23 – Indoor Market Traders Consultation</p> <p><i>What about specific requirements for i.e., cafes</i> Council will support businesses moving and plans will be put in place for specific businesses like cafes, food outlets and butchers etc. including water and drainage etc.</p> <p><i>On the moving day, how will you compensate businesses?</i> Can discuss the move individually with businesses and look at specific details</p> <p><i>What will happen with the trader's car park?</i> Council looking to put temporary arrangements in place for parking as it will be out of action for a while. Will maintain loading and access for traders though</p> <p><i>Will there be advertising to let the public know about the relocation?</i> Marketing will be undertaken including signage, social media and adverts etc.</p> <p><i>Footfall already falling off now</i></p>
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	<p><i>Some traders not happy as some people are paying £50 per week. Everyone should pay the same.</i> Officers clarified that all traders will get access to the 50% off rent deal, not including existing concessions. <i>When the redevelopment is finished, will the rents increase?</i> No plans to. Intention is to keep the same as they are currently.</p> <p>07/03/23, 17/03/23 and 11/04/23, 19/04/23 – One-on-one meetings with stall holders</p> <p>36 businesses attended</p> <p>07/06/23, 12-13/06/23 – visits to market units: 66 stalls covered, spoke to 40 traders</p> <p>15/6/25, 12/11/25, 27/03/2026 – trader engagement sessions focussed on the plans for the decant</p>
<p>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>Markets and Libraries Service staff have been key stakeholders in the decision-making process throughout the development of this project, including at the various Working Groups and the Markets and Library Development Board.</p>

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

Careful consideration has been given to the needs of a broad range of people including those with protected characteristics who will use the Markets/ Library for purposes outlined below to ensure that the proposed development promotes social inclusion:

- Customers for the Markets
- User-groups for the library
- Visitors using the public realm
- Markets and Library staff
- People using the neighbouring commercial units and wider town centre.

Feedback from consultations has been considered by the design team and aspects of the design have been developed in response to these considerations to ensure that all people have free access to use the scheme:

- Creation of accessible routes to all of the different functions of the development, suitable for all pedestrians, wheelchair users and people with prams or buggies.
- Accessible routes around the site during construction wherever possible.
- Providing pictogram signs that reinforce the routes through the site for people with difficulties in reading text.
- Providing appropriate lighting, recognised tactile surfacing and sufficient contrast between floor and wall surfaces for people with visual acuity difficulties.

In response to specific concerns raised by existing Market Traders:

- Maintain affordable rents to retain existing Market Traders and protect their livelihoods.
- Ensure car parking is maintained in a safe, well-lit area.
- Improve welfare facilities for Traders.

Careful consideration has been given to the needs of a broad range of people, including those with protected characteristics, to ensure the Markets and Library development promotes social inclusion and is accessible to all. This includes customers using the Markets, user-groups accessing the Library, visitors moving through the public realm, members of staff, and people accessing neighbouring commercial units and the wider town centre.

Feedback from public consultations has directly shaped the design approach, with particular focus on ensuring that elderly and disabled people can navigate and use the facilities independently, safely, and confidently. The scheme incorporates fully accessible routes to all functions of the development, designed to accommodate pedestrians with limited mobility, wheelchair users, and people using prams or mobility aids. Where construction works affect normal movement, accessible diversion routes will be maintained wherever possible to minimise disruption. To support people with cognitive or literacy-related barriers, pictogram-based signage will reinforce key routes and aid intuitive wayfinding.

Collectively, these measures ensure the redevelopment supports independence, safety, and dignity for disabled people, elderly residents, and all users of the site.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

The project is intended to create an inclusive, safe and welcoming environment for all users of the space. The project intends to bring together diverse groups within the community and provide spaces for exchange.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

The project will address accessibility concerns with the current site, where access ramps are non-compliant with building regs.

The Indoor Market complex is currently in a poor condition, with damaged flooring and non-contrasting surfaces which do not create an accessible space. The redevelopment will address these issues, making a safe, accessible space for all.

All other areas of the scheme will be fully compliant with Building Regs and provide greatly improved public realm for the diverse communities that visit the town centre, to enjoy.

By maintaining affordable rents, the existing market traders will be retained to the extent possible.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

The project is expected to help foster improved community relations, with a wider range of services available to groups, and improved accessibility to the site.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e., early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Rotherham Markets and Library Redevelopment
Directorate and service area: R&E RiDO
Lead Manager: Alice Bancroft
Summary of findings:
<p>Consultation has been undertaken with a diverse range of stakeholders. This includes Market Traders, Library Staff, and users of these services. This represents individuals of differing age ranges, individuals from different ethnic/religious groups and traders/businesses within the local area. This consultation involved activities such as events, focus groups, workshops and online questionnaires in order to gain a wide-ranging reach, accessibility in relation to engagement and multiple opportunities for community feedback.</p> <p>This approach has informed the redevelopment scheme design from inception through to construction, where feedback has been captured and taken into account to improve the design wherever feasible.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Ongoing consultation with market traders and community groups around the design of spaces and sequencing of construction works.	All	Ongoing
Designs of the buildings and public realm make reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act, and Part M of Building Regs. Improve the main entrance ramp which does not comply with Building Regs as is. Provide appropriate	A, D	Ongoing

lighting, recognised tactile surfacing and sufficient contrast between floor and wall surfaces for people with visual acuity difficulties.		
Working with the main contractor to ensure disabled access during construction process – maintaining clear pathways and keeping noise and disturbance to a minimum	A, D	Ongoing
On completion, marketing of the facilities and dissemination of information to be fully accessible	All	09/27
Request Equal Opportunities statements from all partners (i.e., Main Contractor	All	02/24

*A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Lorna Vertigan	Head of Regeneration	10/03/26

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	Original: 10/07/23 Updated: 24/6/25, 24/11/25, 10/03/26
Report title and date	Rotherham Market & Libraries May 2026
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	Original sent - 11/07/23 Updated sent – 7/7/25 Further update sent – 11 March 2026

Will the decision/proposal impact...	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified:			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across the Borough as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	Decrease	<p>The final development will reduce emissions from the operation of the Council-led Markets and Libraries services.</p> <p>The development will refurbish the 1970s indoor market, extending its useable lifespan and improving environmental performance, such as more effective passive heating/ cooling.</p> <p>The existing outdoor market and surrounding buildings will be demolished and rebuilt, resulting in an increase in emissions during construction. In operation the new buildings will generate less emissions than the existing. The markets building currently runs off gas heaters, which will be switched for air-source heat pumps which are powered by electricity.</p>	<p>Overall effect on emissions from non-domestic buildings across the borough is too complex to estimate. Main emission benefits have been accounted for in this document.</p>	<p>The design brief for the buildings includes measures to maximise energy efficiency and reduce emissions including for example BREEAM rating and travel plans, low energy lighting, passive heating/ cooling, clean fuel sources (switching from gas to electric) and thermal efficiency.</p> <p>Funding has been secured for rooftop solar PV panels that will reduce both the Council's carbon footprint and its revenue requirement for these sites. It is estimated that the solar PV will save the Council 3.5tCO₂e annually.</p> <p>Through reusing existing structures where possible and upgrading functionality, significant carbon emission savings will be made.</p>	<p>The main contractor will ensure compliance with all building regs and relevant legislation. This will be monitored by RMBC. During construction, regular workshops will be held to ensure the entire design and construction teams know their responsibilities in terms of BREEAM scoring.</p> <p>After completion and handover further client/ construction team liaison will be required for items such as seasonal commissioning which should be a targeted credit in terms of both BREEAM but also energy in use during all times of the year. Post occupancy reviews and measurement/targeting of energy use will also assist.</p>

Emissions from transport?	Decrease	During the construction phase, there will be an increase in traffic and machinery on site, having an impact on emissions.	The site is well connected to public transport links. The public realm will be revitalised to encourage walking and cycling. We envisage the revitalised and better-connected library site and public realm will reduce reliance on cars for shopping and leisure.	<p>The site is within walking distance of the bus interchange, tram train and railway station and the design brief for the scheme includes consideration of measures to enhance pedestrian connectivity with key arrival points including public transport nodes across the town centre.</p> <p>Active travel will be built into the scheme, including covered and non covered cycle parking facilities to ensure compliance with BREEAM.</p>	<p>The main contractor, Henry Boot Construction Ltd, will be required to abide by standards to minimise emissions.</p> <p>Once in operation, RMBC may monitor active travel more generally and the impact of the project on this.</p>
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	None	Increased emissions due to demolition, site clearing works and waste from construction.	Increased emissions due to demolition, site clearing works and waste from construction.	<p>Waste Management Plan to be prepared and be in place as part of planning condition requirements.</p> <p>In line with Part H of building regs., waste will be kept to a minimum, with reuse and recycling wherever possible.</p> <p>Reuse of the existing indoor markets building reduces waste significantly compared with new construction.</p>	<p>As above the main contractor, Henry Boot Construction Ltd, will be responsible for compliance, which will be monitored by RMBC.</p> <p>Prior to any work commencing on site (including demolition), a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) was submitted to Planning by the main contractor, to promote sustainable development.</p>

Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	None				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	Increase	<p>The proposed construction works will have a direct impact on emissions. This includes, traveling to site, operation of vehicles on site, operation of any other vehicles needed to construct/dig proposed components, and the use of local power generation (generators) until permanent power is available.</p> <p>The embodied energy required to produce construction materials will increase emissions.</p>	The works will be designed to minimise the impact on the town centre and surrounding areas, including reuse of existing buildings where possible and sustainable/ low-carbon design.	<p>Compliance with relevant building regs will ensure emissions and waste are kept to an absolute minimum.</p> <p>The proposal for the redevelopment of the Central Library aspires to achieve BREEAM Very Good and has achieved this ambition at the design stage pre-assessments.</p>	<p>RMBC will monitor works and ensure that the main contractor is complying with all relevant regulations and BREEAM targets.</p> <p>The BREEAM tracker is updated periodically to reflect any design changes, and an updated BREEAM assessment will be conducted following the conclusion of the RIBA Stage 4 design.</p>
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	None	The final development arrangement does not have any quantifiable impact on carbon capture.		The development will provide new soft landscaping and planting, but not significantly increase carbon capture.	Captured through Borough/Region wide indicators and monitoring – no site-specific monitoring proposed.
Identify any emissions impacts associated with this decision which have not been covered by the above fields:					
N/A					

Will the proposal affect Council services' resilience to climate change, or the capacity of people living in the Borough to adapt to climate change?

Positive outcomes for community cohesion and access to services are independent of climate change but may increase resilience to its impacts. Providing covered markets is well aligned with increasing summer temperatures – shaded arcades have long been used to mitigate heat and sun in urban centres – as well as increasing winter rainfall and increasingly intense downpours, all year round. Relocating the library from Riverside House will provide another public, indoor space, in the town centre. This may provide some additional adaptive capacity: ‘cold refuges’, where people can escape the heat of the day in air-conditioned public buildings, have been proposed as a complement to ‘warm banks’, as provided in some areas since the energy price crisis of winter 2021/22.

Provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

The scheme is designed to promote a healthier and more active Rotherham town centre, with improved public realm, landscaping and leisure spaces. By reusing the existing indoor market building and improving its environmental performance, the waste and emissions related to demolition and rebuild have been prevented for this part of the development. The new buildings will ensure much improved energy efficiency in the operation of the library, gallery/event space and café. The gas fuelled heating and cooling system in the existing indoor market building will be replaced with air source heat pumps which are powered by electricity, and all new buildings will be heated and cooled by renewable fuel sources. The inclusion of PV panels within the scheme will also help to reduce the council’s carbon footprint and revenue requirements, saving the council 3.5tCO_{2e} annually.

We will ensure emission reducing measures are implemented wherever feasible in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the building and public realm.

The main contractor, Henry Boot Construction Ltd, will be responsible for compliance with relevant building regs and other relevant legislation, which RMBC will monitor carefully.

Supporting information:	
Climate Impact Assessment Author	Alice Bancroft Project Manager Regeneration Regeneration and Environment
Please outline any research, data or information used to complete this Climate Impact Assessment.	Previous impact assessments have been used to prepare this one: Tracking reference: CIA 244

	<p>Author: Eleanor Bainbridge Completed for: Cabinet 18th March 2024 – Capital Project Update</p> <p>Tracking reference: CIA 500 Author: Alice Bancroft Completed for: Officer Executive Decision 30th July 2025 – Acceptance of SYMCA Gainshare Funding Decision record available from: https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/mgDecisionDetails.aspx?IId=104528&Opt=1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIA 500 was updated from CIA 244 to include further details of rooftop solar PV which were unknown at the time of the earlier assessment.
<p>If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.</p>	
<p>Validation</p>	<p>Tracking Reference: CIA 566</p> <p>Arthur King Principal Climate Change Officer</p>

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