

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, ROTHERHAM.
S60 2TH**

Date: Wednesday, 18th April, 2018

Time: 1.30 p.m. for Meeting

1.00 p.m. for Pre-Meeting

A G E N D A

1. To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.
2. To determine any item(s) the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for absence
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Questions from members of the public and the press
6. Communications
7. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th March, 2018 (Pages 1 - 14)
8. Homelessness in Rotherham (Pages 15 - 42)
9. Date and time of the next meeting - Thursday, 7th June, 2018 at 1.30 p.m.

Improving Places Select Commission Membership:-

Councillors Albiston, Allen, Atkin, Buckley, B. Cutts, Elliot, Jepson, Jones, McNeely, Mallinder (Chairman), Price, Reeder, Sheppard (Vice-Chairman), Taylor, J. Turner, Vjestica, Walsh and Wyatt.

Co-opted Member:- Mrs. L. Shears.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Wednesday, 14th March, 2018

Present:- Councillor Mallinder (in the Chair); Councillors Albiston, Allen, Buckley, B. Cutts, Elliot, Jepson, Jones, McNeely, Price, Reeder, Sheppard, Steele, Taylor, Julie Turner, Vjestica, Walsh and Wyatt and also Mrs. L. Shears, Co-opted Member.

Also in attendance was Councillor Steele, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Councillors Hoddinott and Lelliott, Cabinet Members, for Minute Nos. 117, 118 and 119.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Atkin.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

112. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to report

113. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

114. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair was pleased to welcome Paul Whitehouse, BBC Local Democracy Reporter, and also Councillor Steele, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to the meeting.

The Commission were also encouraged to attend the development session on Strengths for Asset Based Approaches to Community Development taking place on Tuesday, 20th March, 2018 in the John Smith Room commencing at 2.00 p.m. till 4.00 p.m. and repeated at 4.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.

115. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission, held on 7th February, 2018, be approved as a correct record.

Reference was made to Minute No. 109 (Governance and Performance - Repairs and Investment Contract) and whether there had been any further consideration to a member of the Improving Places Select Commission being involved in the retendering/commissioning process of contracts.

This would be followed up and ascertained.

With regards to Minute No. 110 (Temporary Relocation of the Bus Interchange) information requested was to be shared.

116. REVISED "ROTHERHAM MBC CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HIGHWAY INSPECTION AND ASSESSMENT"

The Chair introduced Councillor Hoddinott, Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety, who presented the report proposing a revised "Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment", including policies for both Highway Safety Inspection and Skidding Resistance.

The revised "Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment" took account of recommendations within a report commissioned by the Department for Transport named "Well-managed Highway Infrastructure" (A Code of Practice). This new code will replace "Well-maintained Highways", "Management of Highway Structures" and "Well-lit Highways" in October 2018.

The new code significantly changed from the reliance on specific guidance and recommendations to a risk-based approach to highway asset management. The purpose of a risk based approach for highway safety inspections was to determine the scale of the risk presented by a highway defect in order to prioritise the appropriate category of response.

The introduction of a risk-based approach to highway inspection moved away from a highway inspection system based on specific defect intervention/repair levels and replaced it with a system that required risk assessment to determine the need for repair works. Therefore, the proposed "Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment" had been developed taking into account the change in national guidance.

Councillor Hoddinott invited Colin Knight and Andrew Rowley to give a presentation on the Revised Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment.

The presentation drew attention to:-

- Rotherham MBC Road Network.
- Guidance and the programme of highway maintenance.
- The existing Code of practice for highway inspection and assessment.
- National Guidance - 'Well-maintained Highways 2005.
- The NEW National Guidance - 'Well-managed Highways Infrastructure'.
- Highway Inspection Policy and its Objectives.
- Developing a Revised Code for Rotherham.
- Determining Frequency of Inspections for Carriageways and

Footways.

- Minimum Investigatory Levels.
- Defect Identification and Evaluation - Risk Based Approach.
- Highway Defect Risk Matrix.
- Response Times/Repair Types.
- Defect Categories.
- Skidding Resistance Policy.
- Guidance and Training for Officers.

A question and answer session ensued and the following were raised and clarified:-

- If there was any methodology with regards the location and benefits of trees and with the management of the root action close to highways and footways.

Whilst the primary objective was to keep the tree safe as it grew within the community it was important to liaise with the Tree Section to maintain the safe passage on highways and footways. The Cabinet Member was briefed on the trees in the borough and additional funding to address condition of the footpaths had been secured. Work to look at tree lined routes within Rotherham would take place in the longer term.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety confirmed there were no plans for tree removal. Each area was different and concerns and risks would be assessed and mitigated as and when they arose.

- The Highways Section were commended for the work they undertook across the borough and the work they did on the pavements in the town and districts. Page 13 of the report referred to implications for other partners and it was asked if there were any collaborative partnership work with the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive where bus routes were changed on to routes that were less suited to vehicles resulting in damage to kerbs that required replacing.

All bus routes were determined by the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and operators and as long as there was no damage to highway Rotherham were supportive of the usage. If there was a problem liaison would take place and this would involve the Ward Member.

- Had there been any consideration of fitting electronic survey devices to waste collection vehicles which could then download data to a central database.

Electronic surveys undertaken were different to that could be undertaken by a waste refuse vehicle. However, pathways were also being considered and being looked into further.

- Were there any plans to look own into in-house resurfacing teams to be reactive to potholes and increase general resurfacing of complete roads.

Additional highway works were all carried out by the Council's own Highway Teams. The Teams had been invested into through the development of the apprenticeship programme which included a mixture of college attendance and onsite practical experience. From those that had completed the course the Council had successfully appointed to positions and wherever possible utilised within the Highways Team.

- Changes within the Policy had there been any assessment of impact or cost implications.

This was to be monitored. There was no huge change from the existing code of practice based on rigid guidance. There was some discretion to carry out repairs with no fundament change in the numbers.

- Evaluation of highway safety and consideration of demographics and population in certain areas and whether it was cost effective to wait till a pothole worsened and it got bigger.

Defects in the highway were assessed against investigatory level depth in line with specifications, intervention levels and sizes. A large section of potholes were inspected post repair to gauge the lifespan of the pothole. This work was undertaken by the Highway Supervisor and in 95% of all cases the repair was still successful. Work did take place to identifying works areas that were starting to develop before they turned into potholes.

Whilst consideration was given to defects within certain populated areas, there was no consideration of an individual's circumstances.

- Training programme timeframes for Highway Inspectors.

Training timescales were currently being arranged with the provider for all Highway Inspectors to be trained in line with recognised standards before the implementation in October, 2018.

- How would it be known if the Code had been implemented effectively, when would the implementation be reviewed and were there any major implications to changes to working practices.

Performance management information data was to be collected and analysed on a quarterly basis, which not only included potholes, but insurance claims. The Code of Practice would also be updated every year in accordance with the Council's insurers and solicitors.

In terms of the capacity of the Highway Inspectors, this comprehensive role was designed as a single point of contact related to highways within wards and from a customer perspective. This would be monitored and discussed on a monthly basis for any workload changes, but no major changes were envisaged.

- Page 17 detailed how the Code applied to adopted highways, but what justification was there, if any, on any unadopted roads.

Work on unadopted highways was limited as responsibility lay with who owned the highway frontage. The Council was happy to provide support, advice and guidance where applicable and would work with Ward Members to keep areas safe. The Council was under no legal obligation to resurface an unadopted road.

- Page 29 referred to street lighting routine inspections and clarification was sought if there were any legal timeframes.

This would have to be deferred to the Street Lighting Engineers.

- Page 30 related highway drainage and road gullies and clarification as sought on those gullies that were persistently blocked.

There was an inspection regime for maintenance of the 45,300 gullies across the borough. Over 90% of the gullies were kept free and working correctly. There may be occasions when a gully was blocked, but the system was designed for this to be bypassed and for surface water to travel to the next one. The team were happy to respond to concerns or requests. The team did struggle to inspect every gully as occasionally they were blocked by a vehicle.

- Page 32 detailed a grid of action for verge maintenance and advice was sought on verge overgrowth obstructions and the requirement for road signs to be visible to road users.

Any obstruction of road signs would be inspected and vegetation removed where necessary.

- Page 88 referred to the performance management framework and measures, their publication and would this be scrutinised.

Performance management and the sliding scale for the condition of the highway network was monitored quarterly. More operational type measures relating to potholes, vegetation etc. were published on the Council website along with customer satisfaction surveys. On

the completion of schemes affected residents were written to and notified accordingly.

- Page 71 detailed when other road safety measures or additional routine maintenance had been identified were relevant departments advised of the performance of other departments and would there be an obligation to respond to those inspections.

Performance management data for highways was published. It was not known how other Departments published their own data.

- Page 19 (3.1) referenced unclassified routes and residential state roads when the biggest problem was when rural roads were populated by HGVS. Was this reported and could any statistics be broken down into ward areas for any particular issues.

On unclassified routes, as long as vehicles were not damaging the highway nor were there any weight restrictions, then HGVs had a right to use the highway.

Whilst data was not broken down into specific wards, the team would be happy to sit down and extract some reports that may be relevant.

- Street signage and the legal requirement for illuminated signs.

There was some legislation related to illumination and clarification would be sought from the Street Lighting Engineer.

- How do we ensure adopted footways and highways owned by Housing were also inspected and made safe and subject to the same rigid inspections under this Code.

Services were responsible for their own area to ensure footways etc. were safe and in good condition and the responsibility of asset owners.

- Was there any consideration to upgrading the laser based scanner system to do more surveying to a higher standard for less money.

The scanner was only available for certain mechanical vehicles. This service was bought in collectively across the region as a joint consortium to minimise cost.

- Once information was recorded was it analysed to determine the effectiveness of repair techniques.

There were inspectors in house looking at defect material and data. The use of historical information was used to build highway schemes, frequency numbers and condition data.

- Page 20 referred to highway structures being inspected every two years and in principle between 6-12 years and questioned whether this should say months.

Clarification would be sought from the Structures Team.

- Page 66 related to highway authorises of South Yorkshire and any roads that crossed over boundaries and whether there was any cost savings from any collaborative work, especially around level crossings.

All Local Authorities consulted with their neighbours, but due to costs involved may not always join up with their work.

In terms of level crossings only the approaches were the responsibility of Highways. The crossing itself was the responsibility of Network Rail.

The Chair thanked Councillor Hoddinott and Colin Knight and Andrew Rowley for their very informative presentation and suggested that any further questions be forwarded on.

Resolved:- (1) That the revised “Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment” (Appendix A) to ensure that the highway is safely maintained, thereby safeguarding users of Rotherham’s highways be supported.

(2) That performance management data published on the website be shared with the Improving Place Select Commission Members.

(3) That feedback be provided on the areas requiring further clarification.

(4) That a further update be provided in due course and for this to incorporate resident satisfactory survey data, identification of any savings and if there were any reduction in accidents.

117. **STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN AND PROPERTY REVIEWS**

The Chair introduced Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy who introduced this presentation. This involved the Strategic Asset Management Plan which formed part of the Council’s health check.

Paul Smith and Louise Murray from Asset Management gave a PowerPoint presentation which drew specific attention to:-

- Background information.
- Strategic Asset Management Plan.

- Policy and Strategy.
- Objectives.
- Action Plan and Delivery.
- Operational Property Review.
- Non-Operational Property Review.
- Surplus Properties.
- Community Buildings Review.
- Other Reviews.
- Next Steps.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Would Ward Members be involved in the report for more specific information for the Community Buildings Review which would be submitted to the Asset Management Board.

Ward Members would be consulted. Only twelve buildings were affected so did not involve each of the Borough's wards.

- Was there any criteria to retain buildings of benefit to the borough for non-operational properties.

There was some criteria, but this depended on the benefit to the community and the use and demand for those properties. Consultation would take place with Ward Members and all interested parties on the use of those properties going forward.

- In the objectives it referred to supporting economic growth and the town centre regeneration. Would this include outlying town centres as well. The building asset list circulated to Ward Members was also out-of-date.

Comments on the building asset list were welcomed and this would be updated with a more comprehensive representation in due course.

In terms of town centres, consideration was being given to Swinton and Wath and others going forward.

- Objective 4 related to developing growth income for non-commercial activities and a smart action plan. Could clarification be provided on quantitative measures, figures, direction of travel, financial targets and delivery outcomes.

From a savings point of view there was to be £1 million this year and next year combined. The planned reviews would assist, make better use of facilities and development of working practices was key.

There were some income targets with growth in academy income. The trading income was looking at a larger planed investment strategy in developing other property. For example the site in Manvers next to business incubation centre may be developed on a commercial basis and invested in by the Council to provide much needed jobs and provide income. A report on this commercial approach was to be submitted to the Asset Management Board.

- Did it cost anything to be members of CIPFA and were officers able to provide a challenge to service areas on how to use buildings more effectively and deliver a better service, are they able to do this through this strategy.

The Council did have CIPFA membership. Challenges to service areas were primarily to do with building usage and not delivery of the services within it. WorkSmart initiatives would be reinvigorated to help reduce the building catalogue.

- Anston Library Is a building that appeared to be in Council ownership, but was in fact owned by the Parish Council. Consideration needed to be given to land and property and any asset transfers to other interested bodies, including Parish Councils, before disposing of land.

This Asset Management Review formed part of the process and Parish Councils would be added to the stakeholder list before decisions were made to dispose or declare buildings surplus.

Clarification was provided on the differences between the Community Asset Register and the Community Right to Bid for Community Asset Transfers.

- Was there any obligation under the One Public Estate to consult others when properties were to be disposed of to ensure agreement.

The One Public Estate included all Councils in the Sheffield City Region, the Fire Authority and NHS. This was run by the Joint Asset Board chaired by the Chief Executive and it was this Board that decided on the delivery of the funding. There was no clawback feature.

- If there were surplus properties in a ward and community benefit could be proven was there any reinvestment into that area from the proceeds of any disposal.

Proceeds from asset disposal could not be ring-fenced and was included within the capital fund. The capital fund target was £2 million within the MTFs; some of which went back into the revenue budget.

- The Wingfield Community Buildings Review had identified twenty-three accessible buildings and questions were asked how the asset lists were compiled.

The list was compiled from information held by the Terrier Section. Hopefully Ward Members would assist as they were the ones that really knew their areas. This would assist in compilation of more accurate lists.

Resolved:- (1) That Councillor Lelliott, Paul Smith and Louise Murray be thanked for their informative presentation.

(2) That any material be forwarded onto the Parish Councils to maintain information flow.

118. ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

The Chair introduced Councillor Lelliott, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy who introduced this presentation which formed an overview of the Town Centre Masterplan and following the consultation the process of moving forward.

Officers from RiDO gave a PowerPoint presentation which drew specific attention to:-

- Masterplan Overview and the Approach.
- Shaping Strategy.
- Masterplan Recap.
- Forge Island.
- Riverside Residential.
- Indoor and Outdoor Covered Markets and the view from Drummond Street.
- Guest and Chrimes.
- Bus Interchange and Multi-Storey Car Park.
- Streets and Spaces for Improvement.
- Results of the Consultation.
- Town Centre Transformation – Achievements and Progress.
- Forge Island Development Timetable and Flood Defences.
- Markets Investments.
- Public Realm.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Welcomed investment into the town centre and the need for quality developments with the impacted businesses given adequate notice.

Careful consideration would be given to developments to ensure future problems did not occur. Some business were affected and any relocation would be supported to the benefit of the town centre.

- The need for good quality well designed buildings in the town centre to replace those lost.

This would be controlled by the development agreement and written into the agreement to control quality and design. The end product had to be high quality and attractive from a user point of view and include linking through to Forge Island and the Minster Gardens.

- The shaping strategy referred to quality drinking. It was hoped the right balance of establishment could be easily managed and for this to be family orientated to prevent the risk of anti-social behaviour.

The phraseology could have been better. The plan was for more leisure and food outlets. This was very much a quality family destination not a set of bars. The competition stage 1 tenders had been sent out inviting a number of developers to come to stage 2 and the elements would be a mix of competitive features and not just one developer or design.

- Shopping was not always the answer. Were there any plans to reduce the shops around town to avoid sprawling gaps.

The town centre was too large and drawn out with Tesco at the one end of the high street. This would form part of the Local Plan to look to shrink the town centre from Wellgate and reclassify as part of the Local Plan adoption.

- If Rotherham was to become a child centre borough how was this reflected in the master plan.

Young people had been included as part of the consultation and generally liked the ideas, especially for the cinema. The interchange had been highlighted as an area of concern and this had been taken on board as part of the redevelopment.

- Delivery of the photo montages, especially for the market, would set Rotherham on the map, but was there concern about competition from developers from areas like Sheffield.

Sheffield was a city and had high quality public realm, some of which was the best in the country. Every effort would be made to get the right level of quality and design for Rotherham. Cost had to be taken

on board for initial capital and maintenance. Rotherham was different and there were plenty of developers looking for opportunities.

Whilst every effort would be made to seek a building depicted by the photo montage for the markets, it had to be DDA compliant and it had been agreed that the Guardian Centre would be demolished and the whole area opened up.

- Planning permission had been granted for residential development with some retail for Westgate Chambers which was objected to by 1915 Bar due to its close proximity.

It was a fantastic opportunity for the redevelopment of Westgate Chambers with 62 residential units. Adequate soundproofing would be required given the proximity of the public house.

- Was there any inclusion of other town centres throughout the borough including in this masterplan.

Invitations had gone out to the market for the redevelopment of Swinton and it was not certain about other outlying town centre areas. However, officers were happy to look at other project areas.

Other town centre development could be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board's work plan and prioritised in due course.

- Rotherham had to compete with big developments like Meadowhall who were a private concern and had to offer something completely different to other areas. Could areas of historic interest be incorporated such as the Guest and Chrimes site as part of the redevelopment.

The Council had successfully acquired Forge Island, the Magistrates Courthouse and the bridge and officers were working hard to get the best offer for Rotherham off the ground. Leases had also been secured for the cinema. The consultation feedback had also the need for a different landscape to places like Meadowhall and were to focus on keeping the masterplan local for local people who were excited about the future.

- There was a need for a clear communication strategy to advise the public on which buildings would be demolished, about the relocation of the interchange and evidence of the landscape moving forward. The advertising hoards would tell Rotherham's story.

The advertising hoards were being designed following a visit to Barnsley and to learn how best to be proactive in getting the

message out across the borough. A task and finish group had also been set up regarding the town centre communication strategy.

The Town Centre Marketing Sub-Group had produced some information. This would be circulated by email to Members.

- Could the 2019 public realm proposals be shared in due course.

Public realm 2019 was being considered as part of the task and finish group public realm. These issues were important and would be shared at the earliest opportunity.

Resolved:- (1) That Councillor Lelliott and the officers from RiDO be thanked for their informative presentation.

(2) That information relating to the communication plan be circulated by email to Members.

(3) That feedback from the consultation process be incorporated into designs as much as possible

(4) That consideration be given to developing plans for other town centres across the borough and for this to be included within the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board's work plan in due course.

119. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission take place on Wednesday, 18th April, 2018 at 1.30 p.m.

**Actions and Update Arising from the previous meeting
held on 14th March, 2018**

Minute No. 116 - Revised "Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment"

Street Lighting:-

- Page 29 referred to street lighting routine inspections and clarification was sought if there were any legal timeframes.

The only legal timescales are to electrically test highway electrical installations at least every 6 years under BS7671 (Guidance to the IEE wiring regulations). These inspections are recorded on the Deadsure street lighting asset database which also prompts the next routine electrical test.

With regard to visual / structural inspections there is no legal timeframes for these to be carried out but they are inspected at each reactive maintenance visit and in addition a detailed structural inspection is carried out every 10 years. These are recorded in the Deadsure street lighting asset database which also prompts inspections.

- Street signage and the legal requirement for illuminated signs.

A review of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions has introduced a new default lighting requirement that only requires all upright signs (signs on poles and columns) to be reflectorised. There are still a selection of specific signs that in most cases must be externally illuminated which are:-

- Warning and regulatory signs at level crossings
- Headroom restrictions at low bridges/structures
- Stop and advance notification of a give way
- Speed limit terminal signs (only on principal or trunk roads)
- Regulatory terminal signs, vehicle restrictions and banned manoeuvres
- Motorway entry/exit and gantry signs

Structures:-

- Page 20 referred to highway structures being inspected every two years and in principle between 6-12 years and questioned whether this should say months.

Confirmed for bridges with a general inspection every two years. The principal inspection would be every six to twelve years.

Bridges carrying a highway (i.e. most) would also have a highway inspection through the normal highway regime.

Improving Places Select Commission Briefing Paper - Homelessness in Rotherham

This briefing paper aims to give an awareness of homelessness in Rotherham and the issues that those people in housing need face. It also details what actions are being taken to prepare for the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act which comes into force in April 2018.

Contents of Briefing Paper

1. Overview of the Homelessness Strategy 2011-2018
2. Homelessness prevention activity
3. Housing Related Support
4. Changes to Homelessness legislation
5. Actions taken in preparation for new legislation
6. Duty to Refer
7. Care Leavers and personalised housing plans
8. Homelessness funding
9. Key statistics
10. Contact details

1. Overview of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy

Rotherham's Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2011-2018 sets out the Council's vision which is to "*offer early intervention and support to ensure people don't become homeless.*"

The Council's main purpose is to sustain or find affordable alternative accommodation for customers and we aim to provide services that are personalised so that vulnerable people and excluded groups have increased access and choice of suitable accommodation.

There are seven priorities within the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2011/2018

- Supporting young people to live independently
- Ending rough sleeping in Rotherham
- Providing quality information on all housing options
- Reviewing the provision of temporary accommodation
- Reducing the risk of people becoming homeless due to financial difficulties
- Helping more people to access and sustain private rented accommodation
- Improving access to suitable accommodation for people leaving supported and institutionalised establishments

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy complements the wider Rotherham Housing Strategy which sets out how the Council will ensure the housing needs of Rotherham's residents are met by:

- Understanding housing needs in specific areas

- Building new Council homes and enabling homes of a wide range of tenures to be built, to achieve the 900 homes per year target
- Remodelling existing Council homes to reflect the changing needs of applicants on the Housing Register such as single person households
- Ensuring a well-co-ordinated approach between Housing, Adult Care and Children and Young People's Services to meet the needs of people requiring specialist accommodation

Both the overall Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Prevention Strategies will be reviewed during 2018, to reflect recent legislative and policy changes, in consultation with residents, Members, partners and all stakeholders.

2. Homelessness prevention activity

A wide range of activities are undertaken to meet the objectives of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy and tackle poverty, including the following:

- The Housing Income team interviews new applicants to try and maximise the customer's income to enable them to afford to pay the rent.
- Referrals are made to the Employment Solutions Officer.
- Affordability assessments are undertaken prior to an offer of Council accommodation.
- Pre tenancy interviews are mandatory for households wishing to join the Housing Register.
- The Allocation Policy has been amended so that new tenants must attend a pre tenancy workshop before joining the Housing Register.
- Recruitment of new pre tenancy support officers.
- Online housing benefit claims are made prior to signing for a new tenancy.
- Rent in advance loans are offered to help people access the private rented sector.
- The Allocation Policy has been amended so that the highest band is awarded to those households affected by bedroom tax.
- Alternative loans are available to help those at risk of losing their home through mortgage repossession.
- The homelessness team negotiates with landlords to allow the tenant to remain in their home, offering support to people with complex needs to sustain their tenancies.
- One member of the homelessness team spends time in the community supporting people at risk of homelessness and in need of resettlement. This includes visiting the prison in Doncaster, liaising with probation and the Community Drug Team; Clearways and also undertaking a drop in advice session at Shiloh. (Shiloh is a local organisation that helps some of our most vulnerable residents with alcohol, drug addiction and mental health issues, supporting them to move on with their lives.)
- There is positive multi agency work being undertaken with the vulnerable person's team, the police and the homelessness team to help rough sleepers.

- We have been successful in accessing additional Government Grant funding for the next 3 years. (See further information regarding its usage and other funding attained in Section 5)
- The Council is currently considering individual and sub regional approaches and protocols, sharing good practice – for example a prison leaver’s protocol, and/or information sharing between areas to support people moving around the region.
- The Council supported the opening of Shiloh’s new premises which provides a range of services for rough sleepers in the borough including access to GPs, tenancy support, meals, washing facilities, access to drug and alcohol support. If a rough sleeper was not able or didn’t feel comfortable to come into Riverside can now arrange to meet them at Shiloh.
- Amending the Allocation Policy so that Rough sleepers and single homeless households do not need a local connection to Rotherham to access the Housing Register.
- There is close working relationships with the police to identify Rough Sleepers and street beggars
- The Council is providing a safe and warm bed for rough sleepers to meet the National Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP).
- The recruitment an Employment Solutions Officer to support clients who are not in employment to complete CVs and match them with employer vacancies.
- The Homelessness Prevention Grant helps to pay for upfront costs to secure private rented accommodation. The Grant also covers administration charges for private rented accommodation when the applicant is unable to afford the payment themselves.
- Supporting victims of child sexual exploitation and liaison with all agencies involved, including attendance at meetings.
- Working with the wardens and other agencies to identify and work with rough sleepers.
- A Homelessness Forum meets bi- monthly. Attendees include representatives from support providers, the police, health, education, Shiloh, and officers from various Council services.

3. Housing Related Support (Prevention)

Rotherham Council understands the relationship between Housing Related Support, (previously known as Supporting People) a preventative programme providing ‘downstream’ cost-effective services and social care. Rotherham has continued to commission HRS provisions. Although, over time through reduced budgets due to significant funding reductions in the Council. There continues to be an offer of both floating support and accommodation related homeless services, including the pilot of Housing First to commence at the beginning of April 2018.

HRS has a proven record in delivering good value, cost effective services that promote or maintain independence of vulnerable adults. The value is much richer than cost alone and continues to make a positive impact on people’s lives enabling

people to build capacity and resilience, as well as confidence so they develop the skills to find their own solutions and improve individuals health and wellbeing and building stronger communities.

4. Changes to the Homelessness legislation

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 amends Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. There are a number of clauses that amend many existing duties and bring in a substantial number of new duties. This will be enacted in April 2018.

The main changes to homelessness legislation are:

- The Act extends the period an applicant is “threatened with homelessness” from 28 to 56 days. This means more homeless applications will be triggered for people with a housing problem and risk of homelessness who meet the legal definition of ‘may become homeless in the next 56 days’.
- The Act places a new duty on local authorities to help prevent the homelessness of all families and single people, regardless of priority need, who are eligible for assistance and threatened with homelessness.
- There will be a duty for ‘specified public bodies’ with the agreement of the homeless person to refer them to the Council’s homeless service that will need to take a homeless application.
- The public bodies will be specified by regulation. Judging from the examples given in debate when the measure was discussed at the report stage in Parliament they are likely to include schools, hospitals, GPs, prisons and the Police.
- There will be no local connection criteria at the 56 day prevention stage.
- The new duty will require a local housing authority to meet the customer and agree the actions that will form a written personal housing plan.

It is anticipated that homeless applications will rise by at least 50% or possibly double. This is because:

1. The duty on specified public authorities to refer will mean most referrals will trigger a homeless application.
2. Continuing impact of welfare reform and especially uncertainty over impact of Universal Credit
3. The new legislation is likely to be launched with a huge publicity campaign by the Government and charities
4. Plus the code is likely to stress, as it did in Wales, that all prevention work should be undertaken under a statutory homeless application

However, until a new Homeless Code of Guidance is published (likely to be spring 2018 following a public consultation) it will not be possible to give a final definitive view on how the new Act will work.

5. Actions taken in preparation for the new legislation

The Homelessness team has been very busy preparing for the changes. An action Plan has been implemented. Some of the key actions are:

- Revising the Homelessness team's structure and processes.
- Meeting Homelessness Consultants, attending various webinars and training delivered by Shelter and attendance to regional Homelessness Forums.
- Revising the Allocation Policy to include those owed a reasonable preference to local connection exemption criteria.
- Developing the format for Personnel Housing Plans
- Upgrading the ICT systems to record new performance data.
- Implementing Housing Related Support Contracts to include a Housing First Contract
- Reviewing and implementing the Homelessness Code of Guidance

The Homelessness team will continue to be pro-active in addressing homelessness, seeking to work effectively with other services within the Council and our partners to make the best use of our resources.

6. Duty to Refer

There is a duty with the new homelessness legislation on specified public bodies to refer (with consent) any household which is threatened with homelessness or is homeless within 56 days to a housing authority with the service user's consent. The following services are among those subject to the duty to refer:

(a) Social service authorities; and,

(b) Custodial institutions, youth offending teams and probation services

7. Care Leavers and personalised housing plans

When a young person aged between 18 and 24 approaches directly or is referred to a housing authorities homeless service, if it is known that the young person is a care leaver or the young person says they are a care leaver, then the children's services local authority which has responsibility for them should be informed as soon as possible, with consent from the young person.

Where there is a duty to assess a care leaver's housing and other support needs and develop a personalised housing plan, arrangements should be in place to enable their Personal Adviser to be involved in the assessment process with the young person's consent. The Personal Adviser may also be requested to take actions to deliver the personalised housing plan.

Where there is no agreed local working arrangement, or where the young person has been looked after by a children's services authority which is not part of local joint protocol arrangements, the housing authorities homeless service must continue without delay with the duties owed to the young person under Part 7 of the 1996 Act.

There is further guidance on assessments and personalised housing plans in the recently published Homelessness Code of Guidance in Chapter 11.

8. Homelessness funding

The annual cost to run the Homelessness Service is £612,461 (for both staffing and non-staffing costs)

The Council funded a project to complete building and maintenance works for the Shiloh at their new base on Station Road, Rotherham - a former council building. The works have been carried out our housing maintenance contractors; Fortem and Mears as part of their Corporate Social Value activity. The cost has been met using the Council's share of efficiency savings from the repairs and maintenance contracts with these 2 Contractors.

We have been successful in accessing additional Government Grant funding to support 4 key themes. The global grant funding totals:

2017/18 = £319,063

2018/19 =£314,710

2019/20 = £166,831

Details of the 4 themes are set out below:

1. **The Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and New Burdens Funding** will support the introduction and new duties of the Homelessness Reduction Act. This will include all prevention activities such as support and advice to all homeless households or those threatened with homelessness, irrespective of priority need.
2. **The Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and New Burdens Funding** will cover the cost of the above. It is also proposed that this funding covers other prevention measures including new prevention officers, bond and rent in advance schemes and additional outreach work.
3. **The Rough Sleeper Funding** is earmarked to recruit more people to work with those who have been on the streets for some time, or those at risk of sleeping rough, and to improve how services work together. The grant has funded a Development Officer for the rough sleeper programme who is now in post to help those already on the streets of Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham. Their role will be to develop of an out of hour's place of safety where individual's needs are assessed and rough sleepers can be advised on their housing options. A street outreach service is also being proposed which will give us accurate intelligence of the issues rough sleepers face and the support they require. An annual amount of £37,500 is available to each of the authorities, and is being used to support rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping.

In Rotherham we are commissioning a street outreach service pilot, over a 3 month period to provide a comprehensive picture of the issues in Rotherham. This service will provide information of people found to be sleeping rough and work with them intensively to assist in finding accommodation, help to make benefit claims and seek medical help needed. They will also visit Shiloh weekly to

provide an additional outreach service to local people. It is also proposed to employ part-time mental health worker, with the remaining funding, to work with anyone who is rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.

4. **Domestic Abuse Funding** - this has provided accommodation with support for victims of domestic abuse that would not normally be able to access a refuge e.g. due to age of children and pets. Intensive support is offered in the accommodation and a perpetrator programme is included. One property has been set up and a further property will be set up during 2018.

What more can we do with further funding?

There is uncertainty regarding funding for homeless households beyond the year 2020 so the Council will continue to actively make bids for external funding. The Council's ambition is to reduce the number of homelessness people and ultimately eradicate homelessness in Rotherham especially families with children.

Other innovative solutions for homeless households are being considered as detailed below:

- The Council is currently considering the cost and feasibility of setting up a small pilot of modular construction method, allowing additional accommodation units for homeless households to be built on unused land. The intention is for the units to be used to house homeless single people waiting to find a permanent residence, either with the council, housing association or private rented accommodation. This accommodation will also be available for rough sleepers.
- Rotherham's Furniture Scheme is also considering setting aside £100,000 for the next three years to help homeless households and young people with the cost of furniture when setting up their home.

9. Key statistics about homelessness in Rotherham

(a) Reasons for homelessness

In the most recent quarter (October – December 2017), the top five reasons for homelessness in Rotherham were:

- Loss of an Assured Shorthold (private rented) tenancy
- Relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate
- Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate
- Required to leave accommodation provided by the Home Office
- Relationship breakdown

During the same period, the top five priority need categories were:

- Applicants with dependent children
- Pregnancy
- Vulnerable due to a physical disability
- Vulnerable due to a mental illness

- Fleeing home because of domestic abuse or threat of violence

(b) Numbers of homelessness acceptances and preventions

There are currently 132 open homeless cases which undergoing assessment. The outcome of these cases could be potential preventions or acceptances.

Two rough sleepers were identified on the Rough Sleepers Count in November 2017.

The number of Homelessness acceptances:

- 2016/2017 = 100
- April 2017 to 2nd February 2018 = 92

The number of homelessness preventions:

- 2016/2017 = 611
- April 2017 to 2nd February 2018 = 451

During April 2017 to 2nd February 2018, 55 households have been rehoused into Council Housing

(c) The Housing Register

On 2nd February 2018 there were 6512 applicants on the Housing Register. Applicants who join the Housing Register are assessed and placed into one of the following bands:

Band 1 = There are 184 applicants with immediate housing need
Band 2 = There are 1586 applicants with very urgent housing needs
Band 3 – There are 1724 applicants with urgent housing need
Band 4 – There are 1819 applicants with no housing needs
Transfer Band – There are 1199 Council or Housing association tenants with no housing need

Total - 6512

There were 1586 registered in band 2 for a variety of reasons, for example due to medical requirements. The households detailed below have approached the authority due to homelessness issues and have been placed in band 2 on the Housing Register:

- 148 households not ready to leave supported accommodation
- 99 households subject to domestic abuse
- 65 households ready to leave supported accommodation
- 37 households who have been assessed as statutory homeless

283 households have been assessed as 'non priority homeless' and of these 68 are under the age of 25

10. Contact details

The Homelessness Team is based in Riverside House and is part of the Adult Care, Housing and Public Health Directorate.

Key contacts for further information about homelessness are:

Sandra Tolley, Housing Options Manager, 01709 255619,
sandra.tolley@rotherham.gov.uk

Jill Jones, Homelessness Manager, 01709 255618, jill.jones@rotherham.gov.uk

28th February 2018

**Improving Places Selection Commission
Informal Session
18th April 2018**

**Homelessness Prevention Activity
in Rotherham**

Introductions - Presenters

- Sandra Tolley - Head of Service, Housing Options
- Sam Barstow Head of Community Safety, Resilience and Emergency Planning
- Helen Caulfield-Browne, Strategic Commissioner
- Jill Jones – Homelessness Manager
- Shaun Needham – CEO Target
- Gareth Parkin - SYHA
- John McDonnell, Chairman, Shiloh Rotherham
- Guests

Agenda

To give an awareness of homelessness in Rotherham and the issues that those people in housing need face. It also details what actions are being taken to prevent homelessness in the Rotherham.

1. Key statistics
2. Overview of the Homelessness Strategy 2011-2018
3. Homelessness prevention activity
4. Rough Sleeping and begging
5. Changes to Homelessness legislation
6. Homelessness funding
7. Housing First
8. Shiloh
9. Contact details

Key Statistics

- Universal Credit - No hard and fast predictions
- Main reasons for Homelessness
- Temporary accommodation
- Between April 2017 to March 2018
 - 122 households who were accepted as statutory
 - 714 households were prevented from becoming homeless.
 - 484 homeless households on the Housing Register
- Rough Sleepers – 2 Counted

Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2011-2018

- The themes of the Prevention Strategy
- Loans, rent in advance
- Negotiations with Landlords
- Tenancy Support
- Pre- tenancy interviews and workshops
- Furnished tenancies
- Financial Inclusion team
- Outreach advice – hospital, prisons, Shiloh, Rough Sleepers

Begging

- Offence under the Vagrancy Act 1824 (!)
- Complaints mainly from Business
- Police Operation in November/December to focus on Begging
- Multi-Agency Day of action 5th Dec (another due in Jan)
- Staged Approach
- 15 warnings, 4 cautions, 1 summons, 11 referrals made

Anti-Social Behaviour Tools and Powers

- Public Space Protection Orders
 - Proportionate, Reasonable Appropriate
- Community Protection Notices
- Civil Injunctions
- Sec 222 Local Government Injunctions

Rough Sleeping

- Official numbers are low
- The act of sleeping rough in itself is not anti-social
- Enforcement is not always the right way
- The behaviours that can sometimes be associated are anti-social and can be dealt with
- The official Rough Sleeper Count – reporting and help available

Changes to Homelessness legislation

- The Homelessness Reduction Act – the changes
- Actions taken in preparation for new legislation
- Assess all eligible applicants through an advisory service and agree a personalised plan
- Tailored the service to meet the needs of vulnerable people, where their problems are “more than just the need for a roof”
- Advice on preventing and relieving homelessness
- October 18 - New Duty on public bodies to notify the local authority if they are aware of someone who is faced with or is homeless

Homelessness funding

Annual Cost to run the Homelessness Service = £612,461

- Flexible Homelessness Support Grant
- Burdens Funding
- The Rough Sleepers
- Domestic Abuse

2017/18 = £333,636

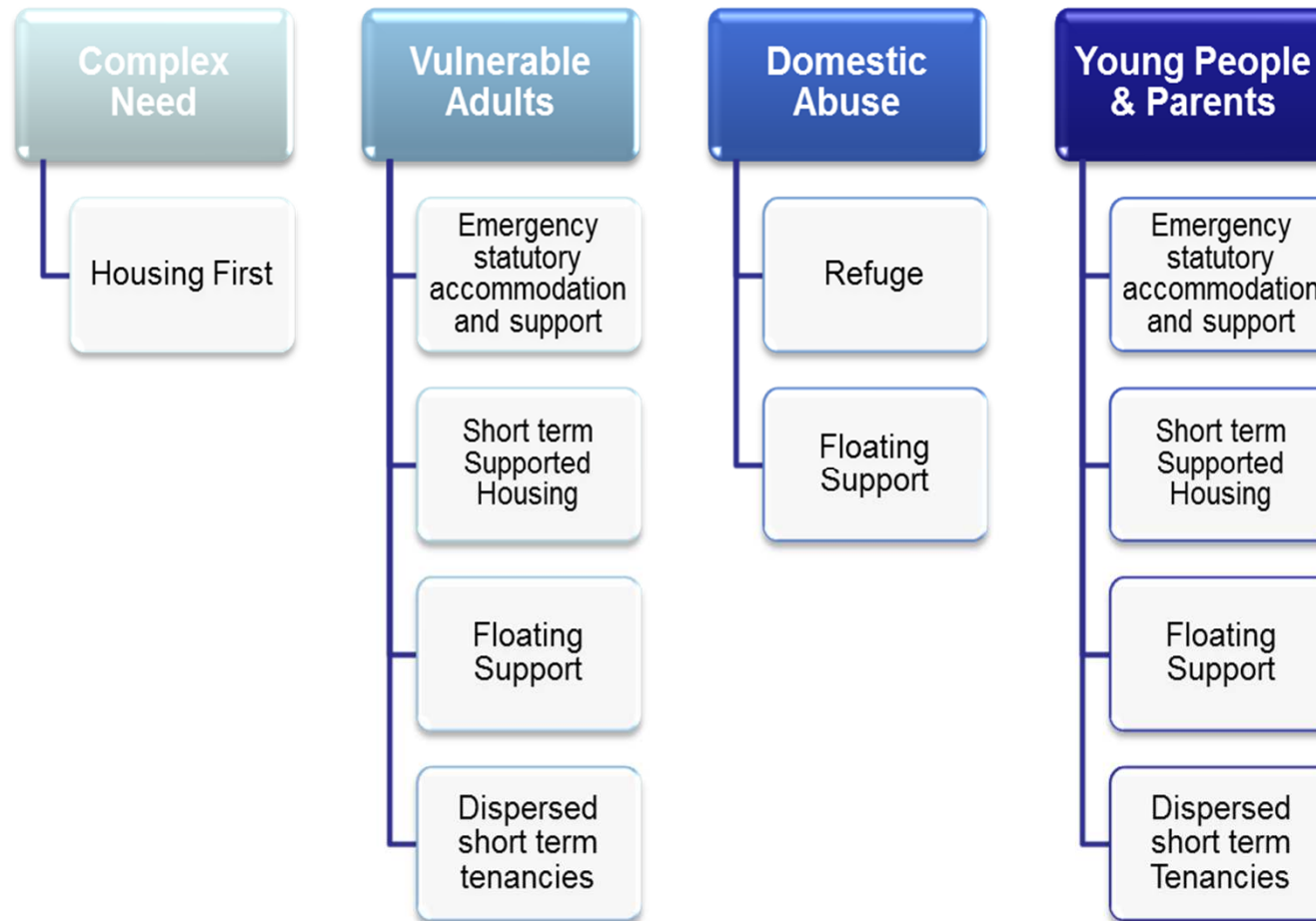
2018/19 = £314,710

2019/20 = £339,455

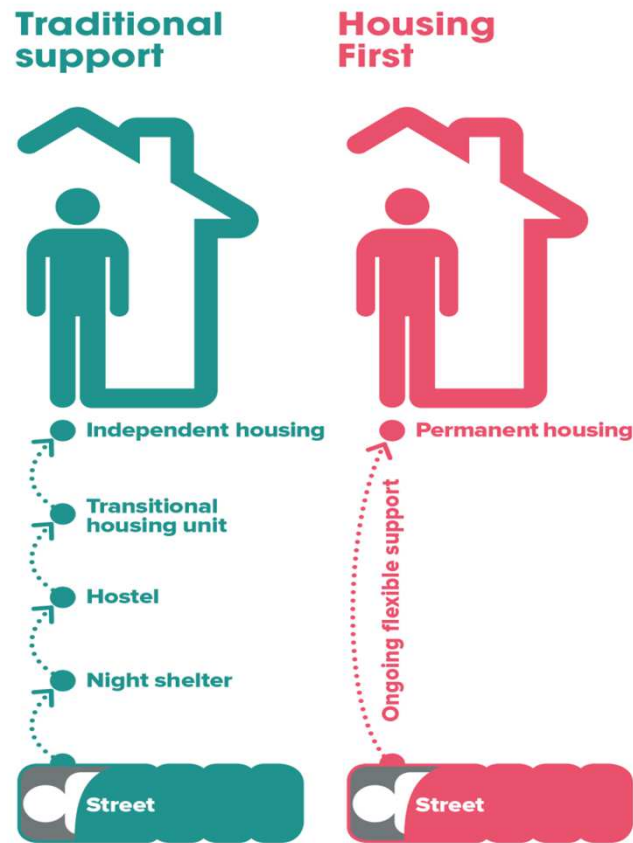
Housing Related Support

- HRS is a preventative programme providing 'downstream' cost-effective services and social care.

Housing Related Support Pathways



Housing First



- Unlike traditional staircase approach
- Permanent offer of a home
- No conditions other than maintaining tenancy
- Flexible, person-centred support
- Underpinned by a set of principles

Housing First

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPbxCA4Xc0c>

Housing First – Complex Needs

- Many unable to access or maintain existing provision
- Entrenched, repeat homelessness & health & social care needs
- Acute and expensive public services
- Hard Edges (2015) 58,000 people in the UK with multiple and complex needs
- Strong body of evidence
 - cost effective
 - delivering strong outcomes for people with high support needs

Shiloh Rotherham - John McDonnell, Chairman

Overview of the service

Case Studies

Two Case Studies

Contact Details

Reporting a Rough Sleeper – StreetLink – 0300 500 0914

- Homelessness Manager – Jill Jones 01709 255618
- Head of Housing Options – Sandra Tolley 01709 255619
- Head of Community Safety, Resilience and Emergency Planning - Sam Barstow 01709 254387
- Strategic Commissioner - Helen Caulfield-Brown 01709 254208

Any Questions?