



CABINET

Monday 28 March 2022

10.00 a.m.

**Council Chamber, Rotherham Town Hall,
Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH**

Cabinet Members:-

Leader of the Council
Deputy Leader of the Council,
Neighbourhood Working Portfolio
Adult Social Care and Health Portfolio
Children and Young People Portfolio

Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance
Portfolio
Housing Portfolio
Jobs and the Local Economy Portfolio
Social Inclusion Portfolio
Transport and Environment Portfolio

Councillor Chris Read
Councillor Sarah Allen

Councillor David Roche
Councillor Victoria
Cusworth
Councillor Saghir Alam

Councillor Amy Brookes
Councillor Denise Lelliott
Councillor Dave Sheppard
Councillor Dominic Beck

CABINET

Venue: Council Chamber - Rotherham Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S60 2TH

Date and Time: Monday 28 March 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

Agenda Contact Governance Unit – governance@rotherham.gov.uk

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.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies from any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting, to confirm the nature of those interests and whether they intend to leave the meeting for the consideration of the item.

3. Questions from Members of the Public

To receive questions from members of the public who wish to ask a general question in respect of matters within the Council's area of responsibility or influence.

Subject to the Chair's discretion, members of the public may ask one question and one supplementary question, which should relate to the original question and answered received.

Councillors may also ask questions under this agenda item.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 9 - 21)

To receive the record of proceedings of the Cabinet meeting held on 14 February 2022.

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Agenda Items 8, 10 and 11 have exempt appendices. Therefore, if necessary when considering those items, the Chair will move the following resolution:-

That under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

CORPORATE SERVICES, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND FINANCE

6. Rotherham Town Centre Wi-Fi (Pages 23 - 38)

Report from the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

1. To agree to the delivery of free public Wi-Fi provision to the new town centre library and markets development.
2. To explore the potential for providing free public Wi-Fi within other areas of Rotherham town centre, utilising existing Council buildings and assets.

7. Support For Energy Bills - Council Tax Rebate Scheme (Pages 39 - 55)

Report from the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the proposed approach to providing the £150 Council Tax rebate payment to liable Council Tax payers in bands A-D.
2. Approve the Councils proposed discretionary scheme as set out within section 2.17 of this report.

8. New Application for Business Rates Hardship Relief (Pages 57 - 73)

Report from the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

1. That the application for Hardship Relief be refused.

9. New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham (Pages 75 - 89)

Report from the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years.

JOBS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

10. Forge Island Delivery Update (Pages 91 - 123)

Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet notes the positive progress towards delivery of the Forge Island scheme and, to allow successful negotiation of commercial terms for construction of the development to start, it reaffirms the agreement of December 2018 to authorise the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy (subject to confirmation by the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services that the final proposal is affordable within the Budget and Financial Strategy) to agree the final proposal for the scheme to be funded through a head-lease arrangement with an investor.
2. That a provision is made from the remaining balance of the Town Centre Investment Fund to provide a potential capital contribution to the scheme, as detailed in the exempt appendix 1.

11. Regeneration Programme: Strategic Land Assembly (Pages 125 - 143)

Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet authorise the acquisition of the Freehold and Leasehold interests in the land and properties shown edged red for identification purposes only on the plans at Appendix 1.
2. That the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport be

authorised to negotiate the acquisition by agreement of the property interests at Appendix 1, in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, and the Assistant Director of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary transactions.

3. That Cabinet grant a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers. In the event that terms cannot be agreed in relation to all or any of the property interests, or cannot be agreed within the prescribed timeframe, a further report may be submitted to Cabinet seeking a formal resolution to acquire those property interests through the exercise of the Council's Compulsory Purchase Powers.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

12. Covid Recovery Fund (Pages 145 - 159)

Report from the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

1. Approve the Council's proposed use of the Covid Recovery Fund for the following purposes:
 - £500k Cash grant scheme to provide support for households with the rising cost of energy bills.
 - £300k additional funding to top up the Councils Discretionary Housing Payments fund.
 - £100k to support cultural recovery events.
 - £50k to facilitate the administration of these proposals.
2. Note that a report will be presented to a future meeting regarding the remaining funding of £679k.

13. Social Value Annual Report (Pages 161 - 185)

Report from the Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

1. That the annual report is received noting the increased social value commitments along with outcomes achieved.
2. That the key priorities for 2022 include:
 - a. Launch of the Social Value Commissioning Toolkit to be held in May.
 - b. Further embedding Social Value across the Council.
 - c. Focus on increasing social value commitments for skills and employment.

- d. Engagement with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority in development and delivery of social value in the sub-region.
- e. Building on anchor network development as part of the Rotherham Together Partnership Social Value Charter.
- f. Further research to build local market intelligence.

CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

14. Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Rotherham Community Hub (Pages 187 - 191)

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

1. That the following recommendations from the review be received:
 - a) That the excellent work of Rotherham Community Hub be commended, especially in respect of the befriending service which helped relieve loneliness and isolation throughout the pandemic.
 - b) That Members be encouraged to add the Community Hub to their ward priorities and e-bulletins to better support vulnerable residents and families.
 - c) Whereas the current Community Hub model is due to end in March 2022, should there be a further evolution of the Community Hub model, that an update be brought in 12 months' time.
2. That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

15. Scrutiny Review Recommendations - Support for Young Carers (Pages 193 - 198)

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

1. That the following recommendations from the review be received:
 - a) That action plans and performance matrix be supplied as part of the next update in 6 months' time.
 - b) That a plan be developed to address the current data gap in

respect of young carers who mature into adult carers, with a view to providing the best preparation possible and making this transition as seamless as possible for young carers who may continue to have caring responsibilities into adulthood.

- c) That consideration be given to how best to provide additional support to young carers seeking to access employment skills, education and training.

- 2. That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

16. Scrutiny Review Recommendations – External Funding (Pages 199 - 203)

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the following recommendations from the review be received:

- a) That the ambition of the service in submitting bids be commended.
- b) That the feedback from the government regarding the Dinnington and Wath bids for Levelling Up Funds be circulated when available.
- c) That the Governance Advisor liaise with the Regeneration Strategy team to coordinate upcoming scrutiny work on markets with a view to feeding into future bids involving markets.
- d) That efforts to ensure Rotherham receives its fair portion of gainshare or “single pot” funds from the Mayoral Combined Authority be noted.

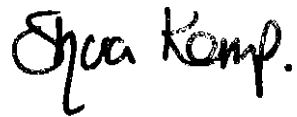
- 2. That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

17. Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

To receive a report detailing the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in respect of the above items that were subject to pre-decision scrutiny on 23 March 2022.

18. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Monday 25 April 2022 commencing at 10.00am in Rotherham Town Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Kemp". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Sharon" and the last name "Kemp" clearly distinguishable.

SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

THE CABINET
14th February, 2022

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Beck, Brookes, Cusworth, Lelliott, Roche and Sheppard.

Also in attendance was Councillor Clark (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board)

100. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lelliott declared an interest in Minute No. 109 (Business Rates Discretionary Relief Renewals in 2022/23). As it was a pecuniary interest, Councillor Lelliott took no part in the discussion or vote on this item.

101. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Ball explained that there had been another death on Cumwell Lane and that he had been to Cabinet in December 2021 following a death on the road to ask for more safety measures. An e-petition had been launched on the same day as the recent accident and Councillor Ball asked whether the lengthy processes outlined in response to his previous question to improve road safety on Cumwell Lane could be sped up as a matter of urgency?

Councillor Beck offered his condolences to the friends and family of the individual who had passed away. As details on the incident were scarce, work was ongoing to ascertain what had happened. Regular sweeping of the road continued to take place along with regular engagement with the landfill site. Medium to long term plans were being looked at in the form of Traffic Regulation Orders or changes to the speed on Cumwell Lane along with any other available options and those conversations were happening at pace. Councillor Beck offered his reassurances that this matter was being treated seriously.

The Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment explained that immediate actions included the placement of temporary road signs. The matter had also been escalated to South Yorkshire Police and the Safer Roads Partnership in terms of enforcement action. In terms of road safety there were three E's: Enforcement which was undertaken by the Police; Education and Engineering. It was explained that it was the engineering solution that took the most time. Officers had been looking at the data which would feed into a series of options that could be looked at in further detail. These options could include lowering the speed limit, narrowing the road, creating crash barriers etc. It was confirmed that the matter was at the top of the list in terms of bringing forward long term solutions.

102. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet held on 24th January, 2022, be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

103. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that there were no items of business on the agenda that would require the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

104. PROPOSAL TO INCREASE CAPACITY AT BRINSWORTH ACADEMY

Consideration was given to the report which detailed the proposal to allocate £1.7m of capital funding to increase capacity by 150 places (30 places per statutory year group) at Brinsworth Academy.

Brinsworth Academy was rated Good by Ofsted and was currently oversubscribed with the trend set to continue for future years. This would be further impacted upon by the higher cohort number of pupils applying for secondary education following the opening of the new Waverley Junior Academy in September 2020 as the Waverley development partly sits within the secondary catchment area of Brinsworth Academy.

Approval of the proposals would allow the Academy and Governing Board to plan for the expected increase in future years with the assurance that there would be sufficient space to continue to deliver the curriculum and enable more parents to access their first preference school for their child. This would therefore maintain or increase performance against that indicator on national offer day for entry to secondary phase education. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council had a historic profile of satisfying 90%+ for parental first preferences for entry to secondary school education on national offer day. This was above the national average as verified by the Department for Education.

The option of maintaining capacity at the school at the current level had been rejected due to the fact the school was already over subscribed.

There had been consultation with governors, parents/carers, staff, Elected Members, the relevant Parish Councils, the Constituency MP, neighbouring schools and other interested parties. The consultation took place between 19th November and 17th December, 2021, and the responses were summarised in Appendix 1 to the report. There were 11 responses.

If approved it was expected that the additional capacity spaces would be available for the start of the 2023/24 academic year.

Resolved:-

That approval be granted to the proposal to allocate £1.7m capital funding to increase capacity by 150 places (30 places per statutory aged year group) at Brinsworth Academy, subject to a successful planning application.

105. IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION - POST CSE SUPPORT SERVICES

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the findings and recommendations of the recent Improving Lives Select Commission working group on Post-CSE Support Services. The findings of the group had been reported to the Improving Lives Select Commission in December 2021 and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in January 2022.

Councillor Clark, who had been part of the sub-group, presented the item to Cabinet. It was explained that the delivery of the report had been delayed due to circumstances beyond the Council's control. On 3rd March, 2020, it was agreed by the Improving Lives Select Commission that the benchmarking work on post-CSE Support Services should resume and be published in a standalone report. The review approach was outlined in section 3 on the sub-groups report.

The sub-group spoke with the providers of the current services and learnt that Rotherham had a blended offer as set out in section 4 of the report. The conclusions from the meetings and benchmarking activities were that Rotherham compared well with the benchmarked authorities. The benchmarked authorities (Durham, Kirklees, Rochdale, Sunderland and Telford & Wrekin) had been chosen due to their innovative practices in key areas such as prevention and post-abuse support. Discussions were held on what had worked well and what challenges continued to be faced. The conclusions and recommendations formed by the sub-group focussed on good practice and on strengthening the survivor's voice.

Councillor Cusworth, who had also been a member of the sub-group prior to being a Cabinet Member, voiced her support for the recommendations.

Resolved:-

1. That the report be noted, and that Cabinet agree to consider the following recommendations:
 - a) That post-CSE Services be transferred to the Adult Social Care, Housing and Public Health Directorate to enable the greater integration and co-ordination of support pathways that are available to adult victims of trauma as children.

- b) That further work be undertaken with relevant partners and survivors to improve the ways in which survivors' voices are captured to inform future reviews of post-abuse services (for example drawing on the research from Sheffield Hallam University, the development of voice and influence groups or other survivor's forums).
 - c) That consideration be given to appropriate governance arrangements to enable Elected Members to provide a steer on the activity that was taking place within the Borough to stop CSE/CCE and support survivors.
 - d) That the Improving Lives Select Commission continue to monitor the provision of post-abuse support to survivors of CSE.
 - e) In relation to recommendations c) and d), that consideration be given how survivors' voices to inform these processes.
 - f) To emphasise the shared responsibility of all Elected Members, that an annual training event/workshop be delivered. This is to ensure that all Elected Members are kept up-to-date with the activity within the Borough to protect young people from being at risk of harm from CSE/CCE and support adult survivors to move forwards in their lives.
 - g) That the relevant Strategic Directors explore options for sharing best practice with other local authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber Region.
 - h) Drawing on the good practice from Durham County Council, that consideration be given to the language used in the provision of post-CSE support to ensure that it is positive and inclusive of the needs of those accessing services.
2. That the response of Cabinet to the recommendations be reported to Council.

106. THE YEAR AHEAD PLAN (UP TO NOVEMBER 2021) - FINAL PROGRESS REPORT

Consideration was given to the report which was the final progress report on the Year Ahead Plan. The Plan had been approved by Cabinet in September 2020 as the Council's Plan for operating in and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The original Plan had set out the headline themes and corresponding outcomes and key actions from September 2020 through to June 2021. An extension to the Plan was agreed in June 2021 and remained in place until the new Council Plan came into effect. The new Council Plan was approved by Council in January 2022.

As at 28th January, 2022, 85% of the activities outlined within the extended Year Ahead Plan were either complete or on track and ongoing. 9% were behind schedule and 5% were off track. 6 actions from the original Plan were still ongoing at the time of the previous report. 3 of these had since been completed, 1 was on track, 1 was behind schedule and 1 was off-track. Further details and updates were outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.

At the meeting Cabinet Members highlighted particular actions that had been completed from their portfolios over the course of the Year Ahead Plan. They wished to place on record their thanks to all officers involved with the completion of those actions.

The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process and they noted the report as per the recommendation.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet note the progress made with the Year Ahead activities.

107. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2022/23 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the report on the Council's proposed Budget and Council Tax for 2022/23, based on the Council's Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022/23, budget consultation and the consideration of Directorate budget proposals through the Council's formal Budget process alongside a review of the financial planning assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

In setting the proposed 2022/23 Budget, Cabinet was asked to recommend to Council an increase of 1.5% in the Council's basic Council Tax plus an increase of 3% for the Adult Social Care precept. The proposed revenue budget for 2022/23 was £259.6m with the proposed capital expenditure being £244.7m.

The Budget also proposed a Local Council Tax Support Top-up Scheme to operate across 2022/23 and 2023/24 to provide further support to low income working age households in the Borough.

Cabinet Members explained that the budget had been agreed in order to balance the needs of the residents and the funding of services with the need for financial stability. The Council's finances were still being impacted by the previous reductions caused by austerity, the increase in demand for Adult Social Care and more recently inflation. It was reported that this was a positive budget despite previous funding cuts and it would allow for investments in areas such as road safety, SEND provision and climate change.

It was confirmed that the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement had now been finalised and the details would be updated for the report to Council.

The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process. The Board were supportive of the recommendations, with one Member voting against.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet recommend to Council:

1. Approval of the Budget and Financial Strategy for 2022/23 as set out in the report and appendices, including the proposed budget adjustments and investments, a basic Council Tax increase of 1.5% and an Adult Social Care precept of 3%.
2. Approval of the proposed Local Council Tax Support Top Up scheme, that will provide additional support to low income households most vulnerable to rising household costs, as described in section 2.5.11-14.
3. Approval of the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2025/26.
4. Approval of the Reserves Strategy as set out in Section 2.8 noting that the final determination of Reserves will be approved as part of reporting the financial outturn for 2021/22.
5. To note and accept the comments and advice of the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services (Section 151 Officer), provided in compliance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, as to the robustness of the estimates included in the Budget and the adequacy of reserves for which the Budget provides (Section 2.12).
6. To note the feedback from the public and partners following the public consultation on the Council's budget for 2022/23 which took place from 22nd December, 2021, to 23rd January, 2022, attached as Appendix 9.
7. Approval of the proposed increases in Adult Social Care provider contracts and for Personal Assistants as set out in Section 2.4.
8. Approval of the revenue investment proposals set out in Section 2.7 and Appendix 2.
9. Approval of the Council Fees and Charges schedules for 2022/23 attached as Appendix 7.

10. Application of the Business Rates Reliefs as set out in Section 2.9, in line with Government guidance.
11. Approval of the proposed Capital Strategy and Capital Programme as presented in Section 2.10 and Appendices 3A to 3F.
12. Approval of the Treasury Management matters for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 4 of this report including the Prudential Indicators, the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, the Treasury Management Strategy and the Investment Strategy.
13. Approval of the Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2022/23 (Appendix 5).
14. Approval to transfer any 2021/22 revenue outturn underspend into the Council's reserves, to be held within the Budget and Financial Strategy Reserve.
15. Approval to transfer any remaining Covid funding balances into the Council's reserves to meet Covid related pressures and costs in 2022/23.
16. Approval that any changes resulting from the Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23 be reflected in the Budget and Council Tax Report to Council on 2 March 2022.
17. Approval that the Capital Programme Budget continues to be managed in line with the following key principles:
 - (i) Any underspends on the existing approved Capital Programme in respect of 2021/22 be rolled forward into future years, subject to an individual review of each carry forward to be set out within the Financial Outturn 2021/22 report to Cabinet.
 - (ii) In line with Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules 7.7 to 7.11 and 8.12, any successful grant applications in respect of capital projects will be added to the Council's approved Capital Programme on an ongoing basis.
 - (iii) Capitalisation opportunities and capital receipts flexibilities will be maximised, with capital receipts earmarked to minimise revenue costs.

108. DECEMBER FINANCIAL MONITORING 2021/22

Consideration was given to the report which set out the financial position of the Council as at the end of December 2021 and was based on actual costs and income for the first 9 months of 2020/21 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year.

Financial performance was a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework and essential to achievement of the objectives within the Council's Policy Agenda. As such, this was the fifth financial monitoring report of a series of reports for the current financial year which would continue to be brought forward to Cabinet on a regular basis.

As at December 2021, the Council expected to deliver the overall outturn within budget for the financial year 2021/22. Whilst the Directorates had a forecast year-end overspend of £8.2m on the General Fund, this was mitigated by the Government's provision of COVID-19 Emergency Support Grant and Sales, Fees and Charges Income Compensation. However, it was noted that the longer term impacts of Covid-19, Public Health measures and the pace at which services could return to normal, was unknown. This was further exacerbated by current uncertainties brought about by the Omicron variant that may lead to further financial implications for the Council.

The 2021/22 Budget was supported by the use of £7.5m from the Budget Strategy Reserve. However, following detailed work to assess the financial impacts of Covid-19 on 2021/22, the Council estimated that the costs and income losses as a result of Covid-19 would be in excess of the resources provided by Government for the financial year £8.3m, the Emergency Support funding carried forward from 2020/21 of £5.3m and the Sales, Fees and Charges Income Compensation of £0.4m. Therefore, it was deemed appropriate to utilise during 2021/22 the maximum amount of Covid funding eligible. This was likely to mean that not all of the Budget Strategy Reserve 2021/22 would be required and, therefore, any balance remaining would be left in the Council's reserves. This was anticipated to be in the region of £5.8m.

The Capital Programme 2021/22 totalled £144.347m split between the General Fund (£92.171m) and the HRA (£52.176m.) This was a decrease of £27.614m to the position as at the end of November 2021 reported to Cabinet in January 2022. The majority of the decrease related to the reprofiling of schemes due to delays caused mainly from COVID-19 and the high volume of capital activity taking place nationally that was straining resources from an internal and external delivery point.

Authority had been delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, to determine revised and final allocations for the Household Support Grant including provision to include new claimants of Council Tax Support who were not

eligible on 4th December, 2021. However, based on the current caseloads of Council Tax Support claimants, it was unlikely that the remaining funds available from the Household Support Grant would be sufficient. The additional cost was expected to be around £200-300k and would therefore be funded from elsewhere within the Council's budgets.

The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process and they noted and agreed with the recommendations.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet:

1. Note the General Fund Revenue forecast of a balanced budget.
2. Note that actions will continue to be taken to ensure that a balanced financial outturn is delivered.
3. Note the Capital Programme update.
4. Approve the extension of the Local Council Tax Support Top Up to include new claimants of Local Council Tax Support during 2021/22 who were not eligible on 4th December, 2021, as per section 2.45 of the report.

109. BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY RELIEF RENEWALS IN 2022/23

Consideration was given to the report in respect of the renewal applications for the award of Discretionary Business Rate Relief for a variety of organisations and premises. The report was submitted in accordance with the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy, which had been approved by Cabinet on 12th December, 2016. Appendix 1 to the report set out the Business Rates Discretionary Relief Renewals for 2022/23.

Resolved:-

1. That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for the organisations listed in Appendix 1 of the report and in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to the report, for the 2022/23 financial year.

(Councillor Lelliott declared a Pecuniary Interest in this item and did not speak or vote thereon.)

110. COVID-19 ADDITIONAL RELIEF FUND

Consideration was given to the report which explained that on 25th March, 2021, the Government announced a new COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) of £1.5 billion. However, the guidance on how the relief could be utilised was only released on 15th December, 2021.

The guidance stated that the Fund was to be made available to support those businesses affected by the pandemic but that were ineligible for existing support linked to business rates, such as through the Government's Extended Retail Relief Scheme. The Council's allocation of the fund is £4,851,486 and is available to provide businesses with business rates relief for the financial year 2021/22. It is a discretionary fund so the Council must design a scheme that utilises the grant fund to provide the relief.

The proposed scheme would provide business rate relief of 50% of the business rates bill up to a maximum of £6k. If a business met the eligibility criteria, the business would then have its business rates bill re-issued, taking account of the rates relief awarded. The scheme will open for applications from 1st March, 2022, through to 30th April, 2022. If there was a residual balance remaining once all successful applications had been reviewed and their initial award calculated, it would be distributed across all successful applications to maximise the use of the grant. To enable that, either the £6k cap or 50% of business rates level would be increased, whichever produced the best fit with the Councils available funding.

Resolved:-

1. That Cabinet approve the Councils proposed use of the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF.)
2. That the authority to make any final further payments to ensure that the Fund is fully utilised be delegated to the Strategic Director, Finance and Customer Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety & Finance and the Leader of the Council.

111. IMPROVING AIR QUALITY IN ROTHERHAM - SUBMISSION OF FULL BUSINESS CASE

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on progress towards approval of the Full Business Case (FBC) for the jointly mandated Sheffield and Rotherham Joint Air Quality Improvement Plan. The Plan enabled the implementation of all air quality improvements identified over the last 4 years to achieve compliance with the Government's National Air Quality standards. A number of Rotherham specific schemes had been approved by Cabinet in March 2021 and these were now progressing to implementation.

It was reported that the proposed reduced speed limit on the Sheffield Parkway would be subject to statutory advertisement in the first half of 2022 with implementation upon completion expected in November 2022. The goods vehicle prohibition on Wortley Road north-west bound was expected to go live in February 2022 and construction of the improvement junction at Rawmarsh Hill and Bellows Road had already commenced with completion expected in late Spring/early Summer 2022.

The proposal was to delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, so that they were able to agree to the submission of the FBC to Government which was being compiled by Sheffield City Council as the lead partner for the scheme.

It had been proposed in the report that the FBC be submitted to Government by 31st March, 2022. However, it was reported at the meeting that the deadline was to be removed from the recommendation. Whilst it was still hoped that the FBC would be submitted to Government by 31st March ,2022, the removal of the date allowed for more flexibility if that deadline were to be missed.

Resolved:-

1. That Cabinet delegate responsibility to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, to jointly submit, with Sheffield City Council, the Rotherham and Sheffield Full Business Case to Government.
2. That Cabinet delegate responsibility to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, to commence procurement for any necessary infrastructure, goods and services to implement the mitigating measures.
3. That Cabinet agree to receive a further report on Rotherham's clean air proposals should Government require significant changes once Government has assessed the proposals in the Full Business Case.

112. FEASIBILITY STUDY PRIOR TO AN APPLICATION FOR MOVING TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT POWERS (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ACT PART 6)

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on progress towards approval of the Full Business Case (FBC) for the jointly mandated Sheffield and Rotherham Joint Air Quality Improvement Plan. The Plan enabled the implementation of all air quality improvements identified over the last 4 years to achieve compliance with the Government's National Air Quality standards. A number of Rotherham specific schemes had been approved by Cabinet in March 2021 and these were now progressing to implementation.

It was reported that the proposed reduced speed limit on the Sheffield Parkway would be subject to statutory advertisement in the first half of 2022 with implementation upon completion expected in November 2022. The goods vehicle prohibition on Wortley Road north-west bound was expected to go live in February 2022 and construction of the improvement junction at Rawmarsh Hill and Bellows Road had already commenced with completion expected in late Spring/early Summer 2022.

The proposal was to delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, so that they were able to agree to the submission of the FBC to Government which was being compiled by Sheffield City Council as the lead partner for the scheme.

It had been proposed in the report that the FBC be submitted to Government by 31st March, 2022. However, it was reported at the meeting that the deadline was to be removed from the recommendation. Whilst it was still hoped that the FBC would be submitted to Government by 31st March, 2022, the removal of the date allowed for more flexibility if that deadline were to be missed.

Resolved:-

1. That Cabinet delegate responsibility to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, to jointly submit, with Sheffield City Council, the Rotherham and Sheffield Full Business Case to Government.
2. That Cabinet delegate responsibility to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, to commence procurement for any necessary infrastructure, goods and services to implement the mitigating measures.

3. That Cabinet agree to receive a further report on Rotherham's clean air proposals should Government require significant changes once Government has assessed the proposals in the Full Business Case.

113. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Consideration was given to the circulated report, the contents of which were included as part of the relevant items and the details included accordingly.

114. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

That the next meeting of the Cabinet be held on 28th March, 2022, commencing at 10.00 a.m.

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Rotherham Town Centre Wi-Fi

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)

Susan Gray, Service Manager, Digital Services

Susan.gray@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle

Report Summary

To present an update on the potential options to provide free public Wi-Fi within parts of Rotherham Town Centre.

Recommendations

1. To agree to the delivery of free public Wi-Fi provision to the new town centre library and markets development.
2. To explore the potential for providing free public Wi-Fi within other areas of Rotherham town centre, utilising existing Council buildings and assets.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Report: Free Public Wi-Fi for Rotherham Town Centre

Cabinet & Commissioner Decision Making Meeting – 21 May 2018

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Rotherham Town Centre Wi-Fi

1. Background

- 1.1 Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 21 May 2018 to the delivery of public access Wi-Fi across Rotherham Town Centre through a concessionary contract.
- 1.2 The Council tendered a concessionary contract in December 2019 to provide a free public access Wi-Fi solution for Rotherham town centre and identified a chosen supplier in January 2020.
- 1.3 However, by November 2020, the Council had been unable to progress the formal award and enter into contract with the chosen supplier due to changes within the company, and a general lack of engagement from them in progressing the contract award. As such the Council took the decision to withdraw the award and abandon the procurement.
- 1.4 Council officers have been investigating alternative options since the procurement was abandoned and have held a number of discussions with commercial organisations and telecommunication providers already working with the Council, with a view to looking at the feasibility for alternative delivery methods. The pandemic has impacted the timescales associated with furthering this work.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The landscape for the provision of free town centre Wi-Fi has changed considerably since RMBC initially agreed to procure a concessionary contract. Consequently, many other local authorities have either abandoned their provision or find themselves in a situation where concessionary contracts aren't achieving the level of projected income for the chosen supplier to make them viable.
- 2.2 This has been attributed to the communications market significantly reducing the cost of personal data bundles on mobile devices and more town centre shops and cafes offering free Wi-Fi to customers. A small number of local authorities are investing in multi-million-pound digital infrastructure projects of which free public town centre Wi-Fi is a part, which makes it more commercially attractive.
- 2.3 The abandonment of the procurement, along with the change in landscape, results in very little commercial appetite to provide town centre Wi-Fi within Rotherham.
- 2.4 Discussions with current suppliers engaged in improving connectivity within the Rotherham borough resulted in a poor response to offer a potential solution. However, on further exploration these would require a greater level of certainty, commitment, and investment by the Council in order to de-risk the commercial uncertainties for the supply market and make the opportunity more attractive.

The options now available to the Council are set out below.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Option 1: The Council's ICT Service provides the infrastructure, management and support of a free town centre Wi-Fi offering.

3.1.1 Feasibility of Option 1: ICT staff do not currently possess the highly specialised technical skills and knowledge to design, deploy and manage a public wireless infrastructure across the town. As a provider the Council would need to conform to the necessary compliance and regulatory regimes associated with commercial infrastructure providers. This option is not considered viable, nor affordable on a sustainable basis.

3.2 Option 2: Commission a third-party provider to deliver a free town centre Wi-Fi offering at a cost to the Council.

3.2.1 Feasibility of Option 2: Market research has been undertaken to identify potential costs for delivery. Two organisations were engaged in this work. The first of which showed initial interest but has since withdrawn from the market. The second offered a free site survey however this was caveated with a requirement that the Council enters into contract with them to provide the full deployment. Given the unknowns in terms of potential investment costs and to ensure compliance with public procurement law, the Council could not commit to this. In addition, the ongoing redevelopment of the town centre hinders a potential supplier's ability to validate footfall data and carry out "line of sight" surveys and accurately map and identify buildings and street furniture required to support the deployment of a wireless network.

3.3 Option 3: Explore the potential to utilise Council building assets to extend the Council's current corporately managed free public Wi-Fi network to key areas of the public realm (e.g. Forge Island and Snail's Yard) within Rotherham town centre and as a minimum to incorporate as part of the new library and markets development. The enclosed market area was identified as the priority area within the original procurement and was a key area in which a free town centre Wi-Fi would benefit the market traders and customers alike.

3.3.1 Feasibility of Option 3: This would be technically feasible as it is in effect an extension of the type of public Wi-Fi offered within community libraries and other public buildings. The limitations would be the areas of public realm where this might be possible, without significant additional investment.

3.4 Recognising the change in demand for free town centre Wi-Fi, reduced appetite within the commercial sector and looking to limit the risks and cost implications for the Council, option 3 is most viable. However, this is a significant change from the original aim and planned coverage.

3.5 Other Information

Notwithstanding the options highlighted above, the Council is about to embark on a range of digital inclusion initiatives, one of which is a 'baseline assessment' for Rotherham, which will be used to inform the development of the digital inclusion strategy and accompanying action plan. It is recommended that the Council uses this opportunity to assess the demand for free town centre Wi-Fi to ensure there is still a need for some form of provision and where this would be feasible and most beneficial.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Public consultation will be carried out via a short online survey on the Council's website to identify what members of the public would like and where Wi-Fi would be of use to them.

4.2 The wider work on Digital Inclusion, most notably the baseline assessment for Rotherham, will be used to ascertain the level of need for free public Wi-Fi within Rotherham town centre.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Assuming Cabinet agree with the broad direction and recommendations outlined in the report, the Assistant Director for Customer, Information and Digital Services will be responsible for the work required to explore the extent to which the chosen option can be deployed, the costs and indicative timescales.

5.2 If agreed, the provision of free public Wi-Fi for delivery in the new library and market development will follow the timetable associated with that scheme. It is therefore proposed that this element of the Wi-Fi project will be reported on as part of any update on the new library/markets scheme.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 Key procurement updates have been provided throughout the main body of the report. Where there is a need to engage third party providers to support / deliver elements of the proposed recommendation this must be undertaken in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

6.2 The Report seeks approval to change the approach for providing Wi-Fi within the Town Centre. At present this report does not propose any additional cost pressures as the recommended option needs to be fully investigated to establish the financial implications. Where possible any additional costs arising from the recommended option will be factored into the Council's ICT capital projects and revenue budgets to cover any asset investment and ongoing maintenance. Should the review and assessment of the recommended option present additional costs above what can be absorbed within the existing budget provision the service will need to identify additional capital and revenue funding streams.

- 6.3 The potential inclusion of the proposed Markets and Libraries investment will need to be reviewed in detail to ensure that the proposed new building is suitable and that any use of this new building falls within available budgets.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 It has been confirmed that the initial contract award has now been terminated.
- 7.2 Additional legal advice will be required should the Council decide on a future procurement option.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 Not all mobile device users have access to broadband within their own home or mobile tariff and therefore this service would extend that opportunity and improve accessibility and support digital inclusion.
- 9.2 The service will apply all Safeguarding and Information Security policies to the Wi-Fi provision (in line with policies applied to free RMBC Wi-Fi in public buildings) to protect the vulnerable groups within our community. Content filtering will be applied in line with RMBC public Wi-Fi policies.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The proposed plans for the town centre will enhance the public open space(s) and provide opportunities for town centre users to socialise together. The improved open space will also provide additional areas to hold events in the town centre, further providing opportunity for increased social interaction. Equipment and furniture etc. will be selected to ensure it is accessible and suitable for all users. Safety improvements will be made to ensure the town is a welcoming environment, including improved lighting and the removal of steps and raised areas (where practicable). Additional disabled parking is being introduced on College Street which will enable users to park in the Town Centre.
- 10.2 Overall, there are no significant differential, positive or negative, equality impacts from the provision of free town centre Wi-Fi. However, access to the internet more broadly affords the opportunity to connect with family and friends, provide access to goods and services at reduced cost and take advantage of special promotions and offers only available online.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 The Carbon footprint of mobile devices, consuming Wi-Fi, and internet services account for about 3.7% of global greenhouse gasses and emissions. These emissions are predicated to double by 2025. (Source: Mike Hazas, Lancaster University).

- 11.2 According to Google's own figures, however, an average user of its services, someone who performs 25 searches each day, watches 60 minutes of YouTube, has a Gmail account and accesses some of its other services, produces less than 8g (0.28oz) CO₂e a day. According to Facebook's sustainability report, a user's annual carbon footprint is 299g CO₂e, which is less than boiling the water for a pot of tea.
- 11.3 The use of mobile devices and the consumption of Wi-Fi and internet services at a Rotherham Town Centre level is impossible to calculate at this stage as the Council is unable to predicate levels of usage of any deployment.
- 11.4 Overall, the decision to deploy free public Wi-Fi is not considered to have a significant effect on the Council's carbon reduction ambitions. A Carbon Impact Assessment has been completed and included in the report.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 It is intended that Rotherham town centre market traders will be able to access unlimited, free, and secure Wi-Fi and internet services whilst carrying out their day-to-day business.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1	Risk	Description	Mitigation	Impact and Probability
	ICT staff do not currently possess the technical skills and knowledge to design, deploy and manage a public wireless infrastructure across the town.	As a provider the Council would need to conform to the necessary compliance and regulatory regimes associated with commercial infrastructure providers.	Commission a third-party provider to deliver a free town centre Wi-Fi offering at a cost to the council. Alternatively, RMBC could limit the scale of the provision to the Rotherham indoor market area and deploy RMBC public building Wi-Fi services.	High, High
	Reputational risk from an inappropriate access	It is possible that some people, including potentially vulnerable individuals could access inappropriate internet information or	A full filtering service will be delivered as part of the contract which will exclude access to commonly regarded inappropriate materials e.g., drugs, violence,	Medium, Low

	images through the free Wi-Fi.	pornography. However, it is inevitable that some inappropriate material can be accessed from any internet connection that is filtered.	
Reputational risk from a poor-quality service	Examples of poor-quality service include: a poor-quality customer experience for access, registration, and use; poor coverage; poor upload and download speeds; periods of unavailability. There is also a risk that RMBC could become liable for legislative obligations under DPA and RIPA.	RMBC will engage with a third-party supplier in the design, delivery, and rollout of the service.	Medium, Low

14. **Accountable Officers**

Steve Langrick, Head of Digital Services

Luke Sayers , Assistant Director Customer, Information & Digital Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	08/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	09/03/22

Report Author: Susan Gray, Service Manager, Digital Services
Susan.gray@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website.

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 Town Centre Wi-Fi

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services

Service area: Digital Services (Customer, Information and Digital Services)

Lead person: Susan Gray

Contact: susan.gray@rotherham.gov.uk

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☒

Service / Function

☐

Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The provision of RMBC free Town Centre Wi-Fi within the Rotherham indoor market/library redevelopment plan with the potential to extend the service to other outdoor public places where local authority assets and buildings support the deployment of outdoor free public Wi-Fi.

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?**

The proposal is intended to have a positive outcome for all groups.

Specific considerations are:

- The Wi-Fi user interface will be based on the current RMBC free Wi-Fi offered in RMBC public buildings and will be accessible for people with protected characteristics (design for all).
- Free town centre Wi-Fi allows the council an opportunity to improve services for people with protected characteristics and support digital inclusion.

- **Key findings**

Unfiltered access to access to Wi-Fi with the town centre could negatively impact children, young people, and vulnerable groups.

- **Actions**

The service will apply all Safeguarding and Information Security policies to the Wi-Fi provision (in line with policies applied to free RMBC Wi-Fi in public buildings) to protect the vulnerable groups within our community. Content filtering will be applied in line with RMBC public Wi-Fi policies.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	1 April 2022
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	30 June 2022
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Susan Gray, Service Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Steve Eling	Policy and Equalities Manager	11/02/2022

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	08/02/2022
Report title and date	Rotherham Town Centre Wi-Fi, 28 March 2022
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	28 March 2022
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	08/02/2022

User guidance:

- The first section of this form guides users through considering major areas where emissions are likely to occur. If emissions are impacted in a way not covered by these categories, please identify this at the bottom of the section
- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
 - **Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions:** two sections deal respectively with emissions from the Council (including those of contractors), and emissions across Rotherham as a whole. In both sections please explain any factors that are likely to reduce or increase emissions. If **impact unknown** has been selected, then identify the area of uncertainty and outline known variables that may affect impacts.
 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
 - **Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out:** in this section outline any steps taken to monitor emission levels, or steps taken to monitor the factors that are expected to increase or reduce emission levels (for example, if waste or transport levels are being monitored this would be described here)
- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	Impact Unknown	Carbon emissions are produced in the manufacture of mobile devices, Wi-Fi transmission equipment, the provision of Wi-Fi and broadband. These devices consume electricity in their manufacture and running. The council procure the Wi-Fi and intranet infrastructure from third party providers.	Increased use of Wi-Fi and broadband services will initially be concentrated in the indoor/outdoor Rotherham market space	None	Levels of usage and time spent accessing the free public town centre Wi-Fi area are unknown at this moment in time. However, following roll out, usage stats will be collected.
Emissions from transport?	Not Applicable				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Not Applicable				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Not Applicable				

Emissions from construction and/or development?	Impact unknown	Carbon emissions are produced in the manufacture of mobile devices, Wi-Fi transmission equipment, the provision of Wi-Fi and broadband. These devices consume electricity in their manufacture and running. The council procure the Wi-Fi and intranet infrastructure from third party providers.	Increased use of Wi-Fi and broadband services will initially be concentrated in the indoor/outdoor Rotherham market space	None	Levels of usage and time spent accessing the free public town centre Wi-Fi area are unknown at this moment in time. However, following roll out, usage stats will be collected.
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Not applicable				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

The Carbon footprint of mobile devices, consuming Wi-Fi and internet services account for about 3.7% of global greenhouse gases and emissions. These emissions are predicted to double by 2025. (Source: Mike Hazas, Lancaster University).

According to Google's own figures, however, an average user of its services, someone who performs 25 searches each day, watches 60 minutes of YouTube, has a Gmail account and accesses some of its other services, produces less than 8g (0.28oz) CO₂e a day. According to Facebook's sustainability report, a user's annual carbon footprint is 299g CO₂e, which is less than boiling the water for a pot of tea. Depending on the number of people using the Rotherham free town centre and the duration of its use, it may be possible to quantify the carbon emission generated as a result of providing this service.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

Depending on the number of people using the Rotherham free town centre and the duration of its use, it may be possible to quantify the carbon emission generated as a result of providing this service.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Susan Gray, Service Manager, Digital Services, FaCS
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Lancaster University, Google, Facebook
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.	
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	Sam Blakeborough, Policy Officer, PPI, ACEx

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Support For Energy Bills - Council Tax Rebate Scheme

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)

Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance
01709 254518 or rob.mahon@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

On 3 February 2022 Government announced a package of support known as the Energy Bills Rebate to help households with rising energy bills, worth £9.1 billion in 2022-23. This included:

- A £150 non-repayable rebate for households in England in Council Tax bands A – D, known as the Council Tax Rebate (property must be occupied and not a second home). This scheme is to be administered by Local Authorities.
- £144 million of discretionary funding for billing authorities to support households who are in need but are not eligible for the Council Tax Rebate, known as the Discretionary Fund. This scheme is to be designed and administered by Local Authorities within predetermined parameters.

This report sets out how they will be administered by the Council.

Government released the guidance for the Council Tax Rebate and Discretionary Fund on 23 February 2022, with the Council allocated £16.421m for the Council Tax Rebate scheme and £0.616m for the discretionary fund. For the discretionary fund the Council must design a scheme that utilises the grant funding available to provide support to households impacted by rising energy bills.

The main scheme requires the Council to design a process that in Rotherham's case will allow up to 112,000 households, in bands A-D to receive a payment of £150 to

the liable Council Tax payer, as at the 1st April 2022. This report sets out the Council's proposed approach to making these payments across existing Direct Debit payers and non-Direct Debit payers.

The discretionary scheme has been provided so that billing authorities can provide support to other energy bill payers who are not eligible under the terms of the main scheme. The Council's proposed scheme is set out in this report, it will equally share out the discretionary funding using the same criteria as the main scheme, across all households in bands E-H. This is estimated to generate a payment from the Council to these households of £82. Therefore, all households in the borough, liable for Council Tax will receive some level of support.

In administering these two schemes the Council's intention is to ensure that every eligible household receives their share of the available funding as quickly as possible, without being required to complete an application form, ensuring that all the available funding reaches Rotherham residents. It is anticipated that the Council's approach to the main scheme and the discretionary scheme will see up to 119,000 households benefit from this support.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the proposed approach to providing the £150 Council Tax rebate payment to liable Council Tax payers in bands A-D.
2. Approve the Council's proposed discretionary scheme as set out within section 2.17 of this report.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Government Guidance for Council Tax Rebate

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Support For Energy Bills - Council Tax Rebate Scheme

1. Background

- 1.1 On 3 February 2022 Government announced a package of support known as the Energy Bills Rebate to help households with rising energy bills, worth £9.1 billion in 2022-23. This included:
- A £150 non-repayable rebate for households in England in Council Tax bands A – D, known as the Council Tax Rebate.
 - £144 million of discretionary funding for billing authorities to support households who are in need but are not eligible for the Council Tax Rebate, known as the Discretionary Fund.
- 1.2 Government released the guidance for the Council Tax Rebate and Discretionary Fund on 23 February 2022, with the Council allocated £16.421m for the Council Tax Rebate scheme and £0.616m for the discretionary fund. For the discretionary fund the Council must design a scheme that utilises the grant funding available to provide support to households impacted by rising energy bills.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The funding for the Council Tax Rebate is to provide some immediate relief for rising costs, while targeting those most likely to require support, with billing authorities expected “to provide a £150 one-off payment to liable Council Tax payers in bands A-D”. Payments made through the Council Tax Rebate grants should be paid as soon as possible from April 1st 2022 and based on Council Tax liability on that date. For the Council this means that up to 112,000 households will receive a payment of £150 and the Council needs to establish processes to allow that to happen. All payments within scope of the main scheme will need to have been made by 30 September 2022. Payments will be made for every household that occupies a property which meets all the following criteria on 1 April 2022:
1. It is valued in Council Tax bands A – D. This includes property that is valued in band E but has an alternative valuation band of band D, as a result of the disabled band reduction scheme.
 2. It is someone’s sole or main residence.
 3. It is a chargeable dwelling, or in exemption classes N (students), S (under 18), U (SMI) or W (Annexe); and
 4. The person who is liable to pay the Council Tax (or would be were the property not exempt) is not a local authority, a corporate body or other body such as a housing association, the government or governmental body.

2.2 For clarity this means that:

- A property that meets all the criteria, but has a nil Council Tax liability as a result of local Council Tax support, **will be eligible**.
- A property that has no permanent resident and is someone's second home **will not be eligible**.
- An unoccupied property (for the purposes of calculating council tax) **will not be eligible**

2.3 Eligibility for a payment has to be determined based on the position at the end of the day on 1 April 2022. The Council must take reasonable steps to ensure information at the time is accurate, for example the Council will need to consider how to address any outstanding Council Tax change notifications ahead of processing or changes affecting eligibility notified at a later date.

2.4 To provide some context for the Council's position, 94% of Council Tax payers within the borough fall within the bands A-D, therefore, around 112,000 properties are expected to qualify for the scheme, as at 1st April 2022. The key issue for the Council in making these payments is managing the approach for both Direct Debit payers, where the Council holds banking information and non-Direct Debit payers where it does not.

Direct Debit Payers

2.5 As per Government guidance, where the Council holds live direct debit instructions for a liable Council Tax payer of an eligible household, it can make an automatic payment in the 2022-23 financial year, provided that the Council assures itself that the household is eligible and the bank details have been verified. Where multiple residents of an eligible household are jointly and severally liable for Council Tax, and a council holds live Direct Debit instructions for that household, the full £150 payment should be made to the Direct Debit account. In order to confirm eligibility, the Council will use its records of Council Tax payers and to ensure the banking information is as accurate as possible, the payments will be made after the April Direct Debit payments have been taken. It is reasonable to assume that if a person has been paying their Council Tax and continues to do so in April, that they remain the liable Council Tax payer.

2.6 For some Council Tax payers who have registered for Direct Debit shortly before the end of April 2022 or have no Council Tax payments to be called, due to discounts including Council Tax Support or exemptions, there will have been no recent Direct Debit payments. Although the number of such cases will not be known until payments are called it is likely to be a relatively small percentage of the overall direct debit payers and the risk to these payments is considered to be low. It is therefore estimated that Direct Debit payers will be paid at the end of April 2022. Once a clear list has been defined, a payment file can be run to issue payment to these households. That would enable payment to approximately 74,000 of households based on Rotherham's 66% Direct Debit payers. Each household will receive a letter ahead of the payment, explaining the scheme and why and when they will receive the £150 payment.

2.7 Council Tax Non-Direct Debit Payers

Following the 74,000 of Direct Debit payers that will be automatically paid and stripping away an estimated 4,000 excluded properties (largely empties), this will leave approximately 34,000 of households that the Council will need to find a way to pay. Managing expectations around the time for processing will also be key, given the Government and medias messaging around this payment, as the Council does not hold banking information for these households there is no quick way to make 34,000 payments.

- 2.8 The Council therefore has to consider options for how it will make payments to non-Direct Debit payers, including how it might gain banking information. Government guidance points towards Councils creating a claim process to invite this section of Non-Direct Debit payers to apply for the support:

“Where a council does not hold live direct debit instructions for an eligible household, the government expects them to make all reasonable efforts to contact the household as early as possible to make them aware of the scheme and invite them to make a claim.

Councils can determine an appropriate claims method locally, considering the software solutions available to them, but should include an option for residents who are digitally excluded, for example assisted applications by phone. Payment methods other than BACS are acceptable, but all payments within scope of the reconciliation process should be made by 30 September 2022. As part of the claims process, councils can choose whether to offer £150 credit to an eligible household’s council tax account as a payment option.”

- 2.9 Whilst the Government guidance points towards the Council using a claim process, the Council considers this approach to be almost impossible given the volume of claims and timeframe to process them. It would require a significant increase in resources to have a chance at getting through 34,000 applications in a reasonable time period to allow prompt payment to residents. There would also be the challenge of ensuring that all residents to apply. For many residents there would likely be great frustration as many would be waiting a very long time to receive payment.
- 2.10 The Council has considered an approach of using a e-voucher scheme, where the Council Tax liable party would receive a unique code that allows them to redeem their £150 from Post Office or PayPoint sites in cash. However, this option is not viable as the Council would not want to test out this technology across 34,000 payments and it would present security risks to residents who would need to collect and carry £150 of cash. Not least the risk that these sites may not be able to cope with demand it would generate.
- 2.11 As such the Council proposes to make a direct payment to the Non-Direct Debit payers via a cheque. Whilst this is an approach that is used infrequently by the Council now, it remains a tool the Council has and can use to make payments to individuals in a secure way. This approach would allow the Council to issue cheques to all qualifying residents that are not Direct Debit payers at the same

time, allowing the Council to be fair in its approach to Council Tax payers in this sector.

- 2.12 There are challenges with this approach, firstly as Government have only recently announced the scheme, it leaves little time for the supply side of cheques to meet the additional need, especially as multiple orders will be going from different local authorities. Due to this demand, it is anticipated that the Council will only be able to receive the cheques and issue them at the end of May. This means that all eligible Council Tax payers (who are non-direct debit payers) will be paid at the same time.
- 2.13 The cheques also present the risk that in some cases the cheques would be issued in the name of the Council Tax liable party as per the Council's records, but this party is unable to cash it. In some circumstances this would mean that the cheques might be returned as the resident might not be able to cash it, for example if the liability is in the name of Mr and Ms Jones, but the residents don't have a joint bank account they may not be able to cash the cheque and it will need to be re-issued. However, given the delay in receiving the cheques from the supplier, the Council can use this time to carry out some additional validation of these aspects if necessary.
- 2.14 Whilst Government's guidance points towards a claim process, the checks that Government require the Council to carry out through the claims process can be carried out via issuing cheques and with regards to the banking checks Government require, these won't be needed as the Council will issue a cheque to the liable Council Tax payer rather than directly paying their bank account. Government's requirements are:
- Councils will be required to undertake pre-payment checks prior to payment of any grant which is not awarded to a live direct debit holder. These should allow them to:
 - a) Satisfy themselves that the person who is applying is entitled to payment; and
 - b) Satisfy themselves that payment details provided (if applicable) belong to an entitled person and relate to the relevant address
 - Councils should retain a record of:
 - i) all evidence provided as part of claims, and
 - ii) all pre-payment checks undertaken
- 2.15 If a claim process was used the Councils' check of liability would be to verify the claimant's details against the Council's Council Tax records, the Council cheque approach would be created from the very same Council Tax records as such that check is an inherent part of the Council's proposed process. Regarding the banking check, this would step would not be required.

2.16 Where a household is paid by cheque and doesn't cash the cheque within 3 months, the cheque will be cancelled and the value of the cheque will be credited to the Council Tax payer's Council Tax account. This enables the Council to ensure the Council Tax payer benefits from the £150 one way or another and the Council maximises distribution of the available funding. As with Direct Debit payers, in some cases checks will have to be made where the following scenarios apply, in order to ensure that payments reach the right party and to minimise fraud. This may result in delays in some payments although it is anticipated that the numbers will be relatively low.

- Where the resident requests a revised name on the cheque which is not clearly linked to the Council Tax liability.
- Where there is outstanding work which may change the liable party as at the effective date of 1/4/2022

Discretionary Scheme

2.17 A discretionary fund has been provided so that billing authorities can provide support to other energy bill payers who are not eligible under the terms of the core scheme. The Council will receive £615,900 of discretionary funding and there are 7,453 households in Band E and above.

2.18 The Council can determine locally how best to make use of this funding to provide payments to other households who are energy bill payers but not covered by the Council Tax Rebate. This could include households living in property valued in bands E – H that are on income related benefits or those where the energy bills payers are not liable for Council Tax. Allocations from the discretionary fund should be spent by 30 November 2022.

2.19 The Council proposes to allocate the discretionary funding across the households within these bands on an equal basis. Due to the level of funding that Government have provided, there are insufficient resources to provide a payment of £150. However, in order that the Council supports every Council Tax paying household with the rising costs of energy bills, the Council proposes to pay an estimated £82. This figure will be subject to change as the number of eligible households is subject to change up until 1 April 2022. The Council will aim to ensure that the final payment maximises the funding available.

2.20 The processes used for making these payments will mirror the main scheme with Direct Debit payers estimated to receive their payment at the end of April and non-Direct Debit payers estimated to receive their payment at the end of May. Each household will receive a letter ahead of the payment, explaining the scheme and how they will receive their payment.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The Council did consider other options for issuing the payments to non-Direct Debit payers, as covered in sections 2.7-2.16, however, the Council feels that the right approach to this scheme is to get households the payment they are eligible to, without them needing to go through a long claims process, a claims process that would lead to households benefitting from the payment at significantly

varying timeframes due to how quickly they were to apply and where they then would sit within a queue of 34,000. The use of cheque payments, even with the delayed delivery of cheques is therefore the Council's recommended option.

- 3.2 The Council consider different options to the proposed use of the discretionary funding, these included targeting household that are on benefits or that are able through a claims process to set out that they are in financial hardship. Whilst these options may have allowed some households to benefit from the full £150, this approach would not have provided a benefit to all. All households in the borough will face the pressure of rising household costs, as such the Council's proposed approach towards the use of the discretionary funding provides a mechanism to ensure every Council Tax paying household receives at least some level of support for those rising energy bills.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The Council has consulted with UK Councils, as part of a CIPFA and IRRV working groups, to try to ensure that the Council's approach to this scheme is similar to schemes that will be delivered via other local authorities.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Cabinet approval is required to deliver the proposed discretionary scheme. Should Cabinet approve the scheme, the Council will implement the scheme from 1 April 2022.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The Council's allocation is £16,421,400 for the main scheme and £615,900 for the discretionary scheme. Should the Council's payments on the main scheme legitimately exceed the allocation, further funding will be provided. For the discretionary scheme if the Council overspends against the allocation, the Council will need to meet that cost. The schemes will be tightly control to ensure that accurate and timely reporting can be produced to ensure financial risks to the Council are minimised.
- 6.2 There is an inherent level of fraud and error risk involved in the processing of 119,000 different payments to Council Tax payers, however, the Council is confident that its proposed approach will minimise that risk.
- 6.3 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The proposed scheme is consistent with the Government guidance in respect of the funding provided. Further, the scheme is consistent with relevant public law principles, in particular it is lawful, fair and rational.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 No direct implications.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Council's proposed administration of this scheme will benefit all households with a liability for Council Tax across the borough.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 No direct implications.

11 Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 No direct implications.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 No direct implications.

13. Accountable Officers

Graham Saxton, Assistant Director – Financial Services
Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	11/03/22
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	11/03/22

Report Author: Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A)

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.

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services	Service area: Finance
Lead person: Rob Mahon	Contact number: 01709 254518

1. Title:

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☒

Service / Function

☐

Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

On 3 February 2022 Government announced a package of support known as the Energy Bills Rebate to help households with rising energy bills, worth £9.1 billion in 2022-23. This included:

- A £150 non-repayable rebate for households in England in council tax bands A – D, known as the Council Tax Rebate.
- £144 million of discretionary funding for billing authorities to support households who are in need but are not eligible for the Council Tax Rebate, known as the Discretionary Fund.

Government released the guidance for the Council Tax Rebate and Discretionary Fund on the 23 February 2022, with the Council allocated £16.421m for the Council Tax Rebate scheme and £0.616m for the discretionary fund. For the discretionary fund the Council must design a scheme that utilises the grant funding available to provide support to households impacted by rising energy bills.

The main scheme requires the Council to design a process that will allow over 112,000 households, in bands A-D to receive a payment of £150 to the liable Council Tax payer, as at the 1st April 2022. This report sets out the Councils proposed approach to making these payments across existing Direct Debit payers and non-Direct Debit payers.

The discretionary scheme has been provided so that billing authorities can provide support to other energy bill payers who are not eligible under the terms of the core scheme. The Councils proposed scheme will split the funding equally across all households in these bands. This is estimated to generate a payment to these households of £82. Therefore, all households in the borough, liable for Council Tax will receive some level of support.

The Councils approach to the scheme delivery is considered to be as equitable as it can be. Where Council Tax payers currently pay by Direct Debit they will receive payment faster but this is only because the Council has their banking information available. For non-DD payers the Council will issue cheques, due to the delay in supply these will be issued much later in the process but this disparity cannot be avoided. In fact the payment by cheque means non-DD payers will actually receive payment at the same time as each other. With a claim based approach, they would receive the funding on a first come first served basis which would actively benefit the more digitally efficient in the borough.

The Councils approach to the discretionary scheme provides further equality as every household will receive at least some payment, it is non-discriminatory, though it is a smaller figure reflecting that residents in these banded households are likely to be more financially stable.

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, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?		x
Could the proposal affect service users?		x
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?		x
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services,		x

commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?		x

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 prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis**.

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 and use the prompts for guidance.

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

n/a

- **Key findings**

n/a

- **Actions**

n/a

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	n/a
--	-----

Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	n/a
--	-----

Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	n/a
---	-----

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Judith Badger	Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services	10/03/2022

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	10/03/2022
If relates to a Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, Council or a Significant Operational Decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	

User guidance:

- The first section of this form guides users through considering major areas where emissions are likely to occur. If emissions are impacted in a way not covered by these categories, please identify this at the bottom of the section
- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
 - **Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions:** two sections deal respectively with emissions from the Council (including those of contractors), and emissions across Rotherham as a whole. In both sections please explain any factors that are likely to reduce or increase emissions. If **impact unknown** has been selected, then identify the area of uncertainty and outline known variables that may affect impacts.
 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
 - **Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out:** in this section outline any steps taken to monitor emission levels, or steps taken to monitor the factors that are expected to increase or reduce emission levels (for example, if waste or transport levels are being monitored this would be described here)
- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from transport?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	<i>no impact</i>				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

This report seeks approval for the Councils operation of the Council Tax rebate scheme. As part of this scheme the Council will be using a large volume of checks for a one off approach that is unfortunately unavoidable due to the limited time frames for the funding.

Supporting information:

Completed by:
(Name, title, and service area/directorate).

Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance, Finance and Customer Services.

Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].

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.

Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]

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Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

New Application for Business Rates Hardship Relief

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)

Rachel Humphries - Operational Manager, Local Taxation
01709 255159 or rachel.humphries@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To consider the application for Business Rates Hardship Relief in accordance with the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy (approved by Cabinet on 12 December 2016).

Recommendations

1. That the application for Hardship Relief be refused.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Exempt Addendum to Report
- Appendix 2 Initial Equality Screening Document
- Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Discretionary Rate Relief Policy - Approved by Cabinet on 12th December 2016

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes Appendix 1

An exemption is sought for Appendix 1 under paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as this report contains the applicant's business financial information.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because disclosure could jeopardise the reputation of the business and place competitors at an unfair advantage.

New Application for Business Rates Hardship Relief

1. Background

1.1 The Council has a duty under Section 49(1) of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1988 to consider remitting or reducing rates where a ratepayer would sustain hardship if a remission or reduction was not granted and it would be reasonable to do so after taking regard of the interests of the Council Tax Payers. Hardship Relief can be granted in respect of rates on occupied and unoccupied properties.

1.2 Government guidelines advise that the granting of a remission or reduction should only be done in exceptional circumstances and consideration given to the following:-

- Whether the hardship is being suffered as a direct result of unusual factors outside the control of the business
- Would not granting the relief impact on employment within the borough
- Would relief give the business an unfair trading advantage
- Whether the business is suffering due to poor financial management.

1.2.1 The Council has operated a system of awarding relief through the application of a policy that was approved by Cabinet on 12th December 2016.

1.2.2 Central Government and councils share every £1 of rates due as follows:

Central Government	50%
South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority	1%
Rotherham MBC	49%

1.3 Application

1.3.1 The application for the award of hardship relief does not meet the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in its policy.

The premises became operative in July 2020, but were not brought on to the rating list by the Valuation Office until December 2021.

The Council is unable to award the Government's business rates relief discount for the financial year, 2020/21, which would otherwise have applied as in accordance with legislation a decision must be made within six months of the end of the financial year to which it relates. This rule does not apply to decisions made regarding hardship relief.

The company has limited liquidity due to the difficult trading conditions; the resulting rates bill represents a major challenge to the company's financial position.

- 1.3.2 The ratepayer is applying for Hardship Relief with regards to their 2020/21 rates liability. The financial implication of awarding the relief is set out in section 6 of this report.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 To consider the application requesting the award of Hardship Relief.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Given the discretionary nature of the relief requested, the Council can determine either to award or not award Hardship Relief.
- 3.2 In helping Members make such a decision, the Council has put in place a specific Policy framework to consider individual applications. In accordance with that Policy, the application (including supporting documentation) for relief has been considered in line with the qualifying criteria and other considerations set out in that Policy.
- 3.3 In line with the Council's Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy, having regard to the financial cost of the proposed relief it is recommended that Hardship Relief be refused.
- 3.4 The alternative option was to award hardship relief. This has been rejected as the application does not meet the Council's Policy.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The recommendation in the report is based on the application of an existing policy. There has been no specific consultation carried out in relation to any individual organisation referred to within this report.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The applicant will be advised by letter of the outcome of their application for relief within 10 working days of the Cabinet decision.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The applicant has completed a full application for the proposed relief to ensure compliance with the Councils discretionary scheme criteria. The financial information has been fully reviewed by the Finance Team, and that information has been used as part of considering this Hardship Relief application.

- 6.2 The total cost of granting the relief for the financial year 2020/21 is set out below in paragraph 6.3 alongside the specific cost to the Council.

6.3	Year	Total Amount of Relief	Cost to RMBC
	2020/21	£74,064.66	£36,291.68

- 6.4 There are no direct Procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The statutory framework for discretionary relief is set out in the body of the report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 No direct implications from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 No direct implications from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 No direct implications from this report.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 It is anticipated that an award of relief would not change the organisations' current operational activities and therefore will not impact CO2 emissions.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 No direct implications from this report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The Government has issued guidance notes to advise authorities what criteria should be used in considering applications for Discretionary Rate Relief. Authorities have been strongly advised to treat each individual case on its own merits and to not adopt a policy or rule which allows them to not consider each case without proper consideration. In cognisance of these guidance notes, the Council has formally adopted a Policy framework for considering individual discretionary business rates relief applications with the decision to award reserved for Cabinet.

14. Accountable Officers

Graham Saxton, Assistant Director, Financial Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Named officer	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	10/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	10/03/22

Report Author: Rachel Humphries - Operational Manager, Local Taxation
01709 255159 or rachel.humphries@rotherham.gov.uk

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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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: New Application for Business Rates Hardship Relief

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services

Service area: Financial Services

Lead person: Graham Saxton

Contact number: 01709 822034

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☒

Other

If other, please specify

Cabinet Report to consider an application for the award of Business Rates Hardship Relief.

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The report presents an application for the award of a Business Rates Hardship Relief which has been considered in line with the policy agreed by Cabinet on 12 December 2016.

The policy criteria includes consideration of organisations who actively encourage membership from particular groups in the community which include, young people, women, persons with a disability and ethnic minorities.

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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		
The recommendation in the report is to refuse hardship relief to the organisation as granting relief is not in line with the Council's policy.		

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?**

(think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/reduce negative impact)

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Lead person for your Equality Analysis	N/A

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Graham Saxton	Assistant Director	09/03/2022

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	25/01/2022
Report title and date	New Applications for Error! Reference source not found.
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	25/01/2022

User guidance:

- The first section of this form guides users through considering major areas where emissions are likely to occur. If emissions are impacted in a way not covered by these categories, please identify this at the bottom of the section
- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
 - **Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions:** two sections deal respectively with emissions from the Council (including those of contractors), and emissions across Rotherham as a whole. In both sections please explain any factors that are likely to reduce or increase emissions. If **impact unknown** has been selected, then identify the area of uncertainty and outline known variables that may affect impacts.
 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
 - **Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out:** in this section outline any steps taken to monitor emission levels, or steps taken to monitor the factors that are expected to increase or reduce emission levels (for example, if waste or transport levels are being monitored this would be described here)
- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	No impact				
Emissions from transport?	No impact				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	No impact				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	No impact				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	No impact				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	No impact				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

It is anticipated that refusing relief will not change the organisation's current operational activities and therefore will not impact CO2 emissions.

Supporting information:

Completed by:
(Name, title, and service area/directorate).

Rachel Humphries, Operational Manager, Finance and Customer Services

Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].

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.

Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)

Rachel Humphries – Operational Manager, Local Taxation
01709 255159 or rachel.humphries@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To consider the applications for the award of Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham. This is in accordance with the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy (approved by Cabinet on 12th December 2016).

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Initial Equality Screening Document
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Discretionary Rate Relief Policy - Approved by Cabinet on 12th December 2016

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham

1. Background

1.1 Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1988 conveys power on local authorities to allow discretionary relief that would be additional to the mandatory relief. This is given when the property is used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes by a charity or other non-profit body whose main objects are charitable or benevolent, or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or the arts.

1.2 The Council can grant discretionary relief to:-

- Registered Charitable Organisations, including Community Amateur Sports Clubs. The relief granted is up to 20% of the rate liability as these organisations are eligible for 80% mandatory rate relief.
- Other organisations or institutions that are not established or conducted for profit and whose aims are charitable or otherwise, philanthropic, religious, concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or fine arts. Relief can be granted up to 100% of the business rates liability.
- Properties occupied by not for profit sports or social clubs, societies or other organisations for the purposes of recreation. Relief can be granted up to 100% of the business rates liability.
- Rate relief to ratepayers – Section 47 of the LGFA 1988 as amended by Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011. This amendment gives the Council the discretion to grant relief to any other body, organisation or ratepayer, having due regard to its Council Tax.

1.2.1 The Council has operated a system of awarding relief through the application of a policy that was approved by Cabinet on 12 December 2016.

1.2.2 Central Government and councils share every £1 of rates due as follows:

Central Government	50%
South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority	1%
Rotherham MBC	49%

1.3 Application 1

Treeton Community Centre, Treeton Village Community and Resource Centre, Pit Lane, Treeton, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 5UY

1.3.1 Treeton Community Centre is a registered charity whose aim is to support and benefit the residents of Treeton and the surrounding area.

1.3.2 The organisation provides a meeting place for community groups. Users include a luncheon club for elderly and disabled residents, a keep fit group,

sports groups for children/young people and support groups offering advice and training. The luncheon club aims to combat loneliness and to support anyone in the community suffering from mental health issues. Anyone in need is signposted to relevant specialists including Voluntary Action Rotherham, Macmillan etc.

- 1.3.3 Room hire is available for special functions such as family parties when bar facilities can be offered if required.
- 1.3.4 The premises are used to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare, for recreational and leisure purposes and to improve the lives of local residents.
- 1.3.5 The application meets the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in its policy.
- 1.3.6 The facilities and services are open to all and provide vital support to the residents of the area and to the wider community.
- 1.3.7 The organisation is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2021/22 and 2022.23 rates liability. The financial implications of awarding the relief are set out in Section 6 of the report.

1.4 **Application 2**

The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham, 24 Corporation Street, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 1NG

- 1.4.1 The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham is a registered charity which has set up a social supermarket which aims to provide food for those in need. It also provides support to members in tackling the issues that perpetuate the financial hardships.
- 1.4.2 The organisation specifically welcomes those in financial difficulty and their members pay £3.00 per week which covers hospitality, crafts, support and the shop from which they will receive at least two large bags of food each week.
- 1.4.3 The aim is to provide support, not dependency, and each person is assessed and offered membership for an initial three-month period. Some memberships are needed for longer but do not extend beyond five months. Some service users have gone on to become volunteers with the organisation
- 1.4.4 The organisation is a member of FareShare so receives weekly deliveries from them. They have food donated by customers via a local large supermarket chain and they also collect surplus food from other local large supermarket chains as part of their efforts to avoid food waste.

- 1.4.5 RMBC Neighbourhoods team assisted the organisation with the move to their new premises and provided support in directing them to funding sources and external/internal bodies to assist with their requirements.
- 1.4.6 The organisation receives referrals from a variety of organisations including RMBC, Shiloh, and Lighthouse Homes. They do also take some self-referrals.
- 1.4.7 The premises are used both as a shop for the distribution of food as well as for storage of the food. Other support, community and related activities operate elsewhere in Rotherham Minster and the All Saint's Centre.
- 1.4.8 The application meets the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in its policy.
- 1.4.9 The facilities and services provide vital support to the residents of the borough.
- 1.4.10 The organisation moved into the premises on 1 October 2021 becoming responsible for the business rates charge from that date and is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2021/22 and 2022/23 rates liability. The financial implications of awarding the relief are set out in Section 6 of the report.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 To consider the applications for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham requesting an award of discretionary rate relief.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Given the discretionary nature of the relief requested, the Council can determine either to award or not award relief.
- 3.2 In helping Members make such a decision, the Council has put in place a specific Policy framework to consider individual applications. In accordance with that Policy, applications (including supporting documentation) for relief have been considered in line with the qualifying criteria and other considerations set out in that Policy.
- 3.3 In line with the Council's Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy, having regard to the financial cost of the proposed relief, the charitable use of the premises and the contribution that these businesses make to the local community, it is recommended that an award for discretionary relief be granted to Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham
- 3.4 The alternative option was to decline to award relief. This has been rejected as the applications meet the Council's Policy.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The recommendations in the report are based on the application of an existing policy. There has been no specific consultation carried out in relation to any individual organisations referred to within this report.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The applicants will be advised by letter of the outcome of their applications for relief within 10 working days of the Cabinet decision.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The applicants have completed a full application for the proposed reliefs to ensure compliance with the Council's discretionary scheme criteria.
- 6.2 The total cost of granting the relief for the financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23 is set out below in paragraph 6.3 alongside the specific cost to the Council.

6.3	Year	Total Amount of Relief	Cost to RMBC
	Treeton Community Centre		
	2021/22	£1152.00	£564.48
	2022/23	£1152.00	£564.48
	The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham		
	2021/22	£255.30	£125.10
	2022/23	£455.52	£223.21

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The statutory framework for discretionary relief is set out in the body of the report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 No direct implications from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 No direct implications from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 No direct implications from this report.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 It is anticipated that an award of relief would not change the organisations' current operational activities and therefore will not impact CO2 emissions.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 No direct implications from this report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The Government has issued guidance notes to advise authorities what criteria should be used in considering applications for Discretionary Rate Relief. Authorities have been strongly advised to treat each individual case on its own merits and to not adopt a policy or rule which allows them to not consider each case without proper consideration. In cognisance of these guidance notes, the Council has formally adopted a Policy framework for considering individual discretionary business rates relief applications with the decision to award reserved for Cabinet.

14. Accountable Officers

Graham Saxton, Assistant Director, Financial Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	23/02/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	07/03/22

Report Author: Rachel Humphries – Operational Manager, Local Taxation
01709 255159 or rachel.humphries@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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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: New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Treeton Community Centre and The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Rotherham

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services

Service area: Financial Services

Lead person: Graham Saxton

Contact number: 01709 822034

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☒

Other

If other, please specify

Cabinet Report to consider applications for the award of Business Rates Discretionary Relief.

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The report presents applications for the award of Business Rates Discretionary Relief which has been considered in line with the policy agreed by Cabinet on 12 December 2016.

The policy criteria includes consideration of organisations who actively encourage membership from particular groups in the community which include, young people, women, persons with a disability and ethnic minorities.

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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓
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>		✓

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

The recommendation in the report is to award discretionary relief to the organisations which will positively impact the organisations and the service users.

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?**

(think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/reduce negative impact)

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Lead person for your Equality Analysis:	N/A

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Graham Saxton	Assistant Director	16/02/2022

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	25/01/2022
Report title and date	New Applications for Error! Reference source not found.
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	25/01/2022

User guidance:

- The first section of this form guides users through considering major areas where emissions are likely to occur. If emissions are impacted in a way not covered by these categories, please identify this at the bottom of the section
- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
 - **Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions:** two sections deal respectively with emissions from the Council (including those of contractors), and emissions across Rotherham as a whole. In both sections please explain any factors that are likely to reduce or increase emissions. If **impact unknown** has been selected, then identify the area of uncertainty and outline known variables that may affect impacts.
 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
 - **Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out:** in this section outline any steps taken to monitor emission levels, or steps taken to monitor the factors that are expected to increase or reduce emission levels (for example, if waste or transport levels are being monitored this would be described here)
- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	No impact				
Emissions from transport?	No impact				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	No impact				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	No impact				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	No impact				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	No impact				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

It is anticipated that continuing to award relief will not change the organisations current operational activities and therefore will not impact CO2 emissions.

Supporting information:

Completed by:
(Name, title, and service area/directorate).

Rachel Humphries, Operational Manager, Finance and Customer Services

Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].

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.

Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]

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Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Forge Island Delivery Update

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Tim O'Connell

tim.oconnell@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle

Report Summary

To provide an update on the positive progress towards delivery of the Forge Island Scheme which is a key regeneration priority. This report will allow successful negotiation of commercial terms for the construction of the development to start.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet notes the positive progress towards delivery of the Forge Island scheme and, to allow successful negotiation of commercial terms for construction of the development to start, it reaffirms the agreement of December 2018 to authorise the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy (subject to confirmation by the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services that the final proposal is affordable within the Budget and Financial Strategy) to agree the final proposal for the scheme to be funded through a head-lease arrangement with an investor.
2. That a provision is made from the remaining balance of the Town Centre Investment Fund to provide a potential capital contribution to the scheme, as detailed in the exempt appendix 1.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Exempt Appendix – Financial Information

Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Agenda Report Pack, Cabinet, 17 December 2018, Item 15 Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan - Forge Island Agreements (Pages 297 - 311)

Printed Minutes, Cabinet, 17 December 2018.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes

*An exemption is sought for **Appendix 1**; under paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this appendix contains sensitive commercial information with regards to costing for works and commercial agreements which could disadvantage the Council in any negotiations if the information were to be made public.*

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information, as the parties' commercial interests could be prejudiced by disclosure of commercial information.

Forge Island Delivery Update

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council agreed to enter into a development agreement with Muse Developments Ltd. in December 2018. The resolution agreed at Cabinet included a delegation to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment and Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy as follows:

That the outlined financial approach to deliver the Forge Island development be approved and the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment be authorised to approve the final proposal in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy; subject to confirmation by the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services that the final proposal is affordable within the Budget and Financial Strategy and within the following parameters:

- *The initial rents the Council is entitled to receive from occupiers are greater than the initial head lease rent and*
- *The financial modelling over the 35-year period shows that the Council's anticipated income from the development exceeds the total anticipated head lease costs*

Since that date, Muse and the Council have been working together to bring forward a viable proposal to develop a leisure hub on the site that is within these parameters.

- 1.2 Planning permission for a scheme was granted in June 2020. The Council has completed the first phase of enabling works to allow the scheme to proceed, including demolitions to provide a clear development site, the construction of a fish pass and the construction of flood mitigation measures.
- 1.3 The site has been marketed to occupiers and pre-let agreements secured with The Arc Cinema and Travelodge. Heads of terms have been agreed with two restaurants and solicitors are instructed to complete pre-let agreements with those parties.
- 1.4 Muse is currently working on detailed design in preparation for awarding a construction contract.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The level of occupier interest has reached a stage where, subject to completion of both pre-lets currently with solicitors, the completion of detailed design and the appointment of a contractor, and the completion of an agreement with a funder, works to construct the cinema, hotel and restaurants can commence on site later this year. For this to happen all these elements need to be in place and the current programme is for this to be achieved by October 2022.

- 2.2 The two restaurant deals with solicitors are progressing satisfactorily with the principal terms having been agreed. Muse is continuing to market the remaining units which are attracting interest, giving rise to an expectation that further occupiers will commit to the scheme prior to opening.
- 2.3 Construction cost estimates have been regularly updated and soft market tested with appropriate allowances for inflation and current market conditions through to a start on site. In response to current market volatility and to limit risk pricing by contractors, Muse is working to appoint a contractor to engage during the design process and reach a negotiated price. It is considered that this approach is likely to produce the best possible price and greatest level of certainty around cost but would not prevent a further tender exercise being undertaken should an acceptable negotiated price not be achieved.
- 2.4 Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) advising Muse and the Council on the process to secure an agreement with a funder, has reviewed the heads of terms set out in the Development Agreement between the Council and Muse and which provide the basis for the Overriding Head-Lease. Having regard to current market expectations and based on recent transactional evidence of the annuity market, JLL has advised that the terms continue to represent an institutional offer. However, remaining within the requirements described in 1.1 above, it may be possible to enhance the investment value of the scheme through variations on the head lease terms.
- 2.5 The first variation relates to the existing proposal for the Council to have an option to “buy out” the investor’s leasehold interest at the end of the head-lease for a nominal sum. The primary intention in the Council including this mechanism was to ensure that the Council was able to retain effective ownership and control of the site and its future use once the head-lease expired. The advice from the investment advisors is that many funds will prefer this to be a ‘put and call’ option rather than simply an option in favour of the Council i.e., it would be an obligation on the Council to inherit the site. This reflects the operating approach of the investors likely to be attracted to the scheme, which are specialist annuity funds who prefer an income stream for a fixed number of years without the residual asset to manage at the end of the annuity period.
- 2.6 The second variation relates to head-lease length. The existing proposals is for the Council to take a 35-year head-lease (subject to various pre-conditions being met). The investment advice received is that it would be advantageous to have flexibility to increase the head lease length to maximise the investment value.
- 2.7 An additional variation relates to the rent review provisions in the head-lease which is currently linked to the Retail Prices Index (RPI). It is expected that RPI will be effectively phased out by the Bank of England (BoE) as a relevant statistic from 2030. Whilst it will still technically exist, RPI will not be tracked by BoE and as a result, investors (particularly annuity funds) are viewing methodologies that move away from RPI to Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) or Consumer Prices Index including Owner Occupiers Housing Costs (CPIH)

more favourably. The advisors highlight that purchasers are likely to seek a clause in the Head Lease explicitly reverting to such alternative mechanisms post 2030. Addressing this at the outset of the lease, will provide clarity to funds and assist in maximising value.

- 2.8 The Council may have an option to adjust the head-lease rent upwards if the lettings income increases sufficiently or, alternatively, to reduce the head-lease rent by providing capital into the scheme. The former would increase the amount an investor would pay, potentially generating a development surplus after all costs, while the latter may be advantageous in that it would reduce the Council's head-lease rent, providing a greater "profit rent" (i.e., the surplus from occupier rents received over and above the head-lease rent, at the start of the development). This allows the Council to consider the relative merits of capital and revenue costs to deliver the scheme, but it must be noted that the amount of capital the Council can contribute to the scheme will be subject to applicable subsidy control law.
- 2.9 The investment advice indicates that adopting these flexibilities would provide the greatest possible opportunity to maximise the investment value, providing sufficient funds for the development to proceed as planned and potentially generating a development surplus for the Council.
- 2.10 The Council has further enabling works to complete prior to transferring the site to Muse ready for construction to start. These include survey work, break-up of the existing slab (the ground and sub-structures on the main island site), construction of a highway barrier protecting the flood wall, works to the existing vehicular bridge and the removal of the footbridge to Corporation Street. These works have been held back to keep the site in use for as long as possible prior to the main construction commencing but are now required.
- 2.11 Following commencement of this second phase of enabling works, the entire Forge Island site will not be accessible to the public and therefore the current car park and access routes over the site will be closed.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The delivery of the Forge Island scheme is a key regeneration priority and consideration has focused on how best to maximise the prospects of the scheme being delivered at the earliest possible date.
- 3.2 It is recommended that Cabinet notes the positive progress towards delivery and, to allow successful negotiation of commercial terms for construction of the development to start, reaffirm the agreement of December 2018 to authorise the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy (subject to confirmation by the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services that the final proposal is affordable within the Budget and Financial Strategy) to agree the final proposal for the scheme to be funded through a head-lease arrangement.

The principal terms for the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy to agree relate to the following the following

- i. A “put and call” arrangement at the end of the head lease.
- ii. Variation in the head-lease length.
- iii. Rent review provisions.
- iv. The level of head-lease rent (within the cap agreed in December 2018 that occupier rents must be greater than the head-lease rent).
- v. The level of capital contribution to the scheme (subject to applicable subsidy control law).
- vi. Other commercial matters that are within the parameters agreed in December 2018.

3.3 It is also proposed that, to allow flexibility to adjust the level of capital contribution to the scheme and allow the completion of the second phase enabling works, a capital budget approval is made from within the existing town centre investment fund capital approval.

3.4 An alternative option considered is not to agree any variation in the heads of terms set out in the development agreement. Evidence of investment deals since 2018 and current market expectations suggest that while funders will bid on the terms set out in 2018, offering some flexibility may successfully generate more advantageous bids for consideration. A rigid approach to the 2018 terms would not give the necessary flexibility to achieve the best deal possible in the current market and is not therefore recommended.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Consultation has also taken place with Muse Developments Ltd as the Council’s development partner on the scheme and Jones Lang Lasalle for professional advice on the current investment market.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 It is anticipated that Muse and the Council will agree heads of terms as described above with a funder during May 2022.

5.2 This will allow the Council to enter into an agreement to take the overriding head lease (as agreed by Cabinet in December 2018) to commence on practical completion of the development. This is anticipated to be in June/July 2022 subject to these commercial matters being agreed.

5.3 Subject to matters described in 5.2 (above) construction will start in October 2022 allowing practical completion and handover to tenants for fitting out by January 2024. At this point the Council’s head lease will commence.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The changes proposed in the parameters of the development appraisal will benefit the viability of the scheme to an institutional funder. Financial Services appraisal has confirmed the changes can maintain a scheme that falls within the terms set by Cabinet in 2018 though the scheme could potentially require and benefit from a capital contribution from the Council towards the capital cost of the scheme.
- 6.2 The exact details of the final head lease will be subject to commercial negotiation but agreement on the headlease is today realistically within reach. Muse has made sufficient progress such that the scheme is on the threshold of final design, is in progress to be fully costed and can be marketed to obtain full funding from institutions and therefore, subject to delegated approvals be built and let.
- 6.3 Although the final actual total cost has not yet been identified and a funder has not yet been found, this was always to be the case. However, with preparations reaching this stage, the final details being progressed can allow the Council to make final consideration of the relative merits of adjustments to deliver the scheme and also to enter into negotiations for the final scheme to be agreed and implemented.
- 6.4 The exempt Appendix 1 provides additional information on the agreement, the financial implications and modelling of different scenarios.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The legal implications have been clearly set out in the body of the report and the external solicitors acting for the Council will provide advice that ensures the terms of the development agreement with Muse are fulfilled.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 There are no direct implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable adults arising from this report.
- 9.2 Consultation has highlighted that “things to do and see” in the town centre is important to young people with a cinema high on the list of amenities that young people would like to see delivered to improve the town centre offer.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 A screening assessment and an Equality Analysis Form is attached.

- 10.2 Further consultation will be carried out with protected characteristic groups to inform the final detailed design of the scheme and to monitor the ongoing equalities impact of the development.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 A carbon impact assessment is attached.
- 11.2 The development is expected to achieve a BREEAM Very Good rating and is located on a site that is within walking distance of the bus interchange, tram train and railway station. The development will reduce the need for travel outside of the borough to access facilities which are not currently available in Rotherham.

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 Forge Island scheme is widely seen as an important catalyst in regenerating Rotherham town centre and progress towards delivery is likely to be welcomed by partners.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The Council's development partner maintains detailed risk registers with respect to development and delivery of the scheme.
- 13.2 The purpose of this report is to seek flexibility for the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy to agree the most advantageous commercial terms, balancing risk and affordability to enable the development to be delivered.

14. Accountable Officers

Tim O'Connell, Head of Rotherham Investment and Development Office

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	10/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	10/03/22

Report Author: *Tim O'Connell*
tim.oconnell@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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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: Forge Island Delivery

Directorate: Regeneration and Environment

Service area: RiDO

Lead person: Tim O'Connell

Contact number:

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☒

Other

If other, please specify

A regeneration scheme

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

A decision to allow head of terms for the Council to take an over-riding lease of the Forge Island development to be agreed. The over-riding lease will provide the basis to secure funding for the development to be delivered.

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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>	Yes	
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>	Yes	
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>	Yes	
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>	Yes	
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>		no
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>		no
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?**

(think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

The details of the funding arrangements for the scheme do not have an impact on equality and diversity. However, the completed scheme will have relevance and the scheme is being designed to provide an accessible, safe and welcoming environment that encourages use of the facilities and services provided all sections of the community including groups with protected characteristics.

The regeneration of Forge Island has been subject to consultation through the Town Centre Masterplan and there has been public engagement through the planning process.

Further information is provided in the Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

The development of Forge Island is an opportunity to improve the social fabric of Rotherham and attract new visitors to Rotherham town centre.

It is important that the development is accessible to all sections of the community including those with protected characteristics. The requirements of these groups should be built into the design of the scheme. Further consultation and engagement with a range of groups would assist this to be achieved.

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/reduce negative impact)

Further consultation will be carried out with protected characteristic groups to inform the final detailed design of the scheme and to monitor the ongoing equalities impact of the

development.	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	09/03/22 (completed)
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	09/03/22 (completed)
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Tim O'Connell, Head of RiDO

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Tim O'Connell	Head of RiDO	09/03/22
Cllr Lelliott	Cabinet Member for Jobs and Economy	09/03/22
Paul Woodcock	Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment	09/03/22

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	09/03/22
Report title and date	Forge Island Delivery
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Forge Island Update, 28 March 2022
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	09/03/22

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: Forge Island Delivery	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 28 February 2022	
Directorate: Regeneration and Environment	Service area: Planning, Regeneration and Transport
Lead Manager: Tim O'Connell	Contact number: 01709 254563
<p>Is this a:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> / Other </p> <p>If other, please specify</p> <p>A regeneration project</p>	

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)
Tim O'Connell	RiDO	Service Manager
Andrew Fairest	Muse Developments Ltd	Developer
Laura Stapleton	RMBC	Acting Corporate Improvement and Risk Officer
Tanya Lound	RMBC	Acting Corporate Improvement and Risk Manager

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, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The regeneration of Forge Island is intended to create a leisure destination in the town centre that is accessible to residents of Rotherham and visitors to the town.

To deliver the scheme the Council agreed to enter into a development agreement with Muse Developments Ltd.

Planning permission for a scheme was granted in June 2020 and the Council has completed the first phase of enabling works to allow the scheme to proceed.

The site has been marketed to occupiers and pre-let agreements secured with The Arc Cinema and Travelodge and heads of terms have been agreed with two restaurants.

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

Contextual information from a range of sources, including the 2011 Census and the Council Plan consultation, is provided below.

Population

- Rotherham has a population of 265,000 of which 2,662 are resident in the town centre (mid-2020 estimates taken from ONS)
- The population is ageing; Rotherham has 52,000 people aged 65 years or over or 19.7% of the population, above the national average of 18.4%. The population aged over 65 is projected to increase to over 21% by 2026, with the largest increase being in the number of people aged over 75.
- Rotherham's BAME population is very 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

- Rotherham had 56,588 people with a limiting long-term health problem or disability in 2011, with 11.3% saying this limits their activity a lot, compared with the average of 8.3% nationally.
- 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.
- In the consultation for the Council Plan, 45% of respondents stated there were not enough job opportunities in their area, as opposed to 19% who stated there were enough. Those with no disabilities were more likely to state there were enough job opportunities in their area (21%) than those with disabilities (15%), with female respondents more likely to be unsure about the opportunities (37%), than men (32%).

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.

Results from the Rotherham Residents Survey comprising a sample of 503 adults who were polled between 8th and 22nd June 2021 showed that 24 per cent of respondents felt 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic' about the future of Rotherham town centre (as they did about the future of the wider borough.) Forty-one per cent of respondents were not optimistic at all about the town centre, slightly more than in the previous survey. People aged 25-34 years were most likely not to be optimistic at all, whilst young people aged 18-24 years were the most optimistic. Low skilled workers were notably more optimistic than professional and managerial workers.

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

Information is available on the town centre and town centre masterplan but focused consultation on the specific design proposals of the Forge Island scheme have not been carried out. This is to be included in the action plan as part of this assessment

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

It is proposed to establish a feedback process for when the site has been completed 3+ months using both surveys face to face meetings with representative groups. This is to be included in the action plan as part of this assessment.

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

The concept of a leisure led redevelopment is one of the main proposals in the Town Centre Masterplan which has been the subject of consultation with business and stakeholder groups, Rotherham Together Partnership, Rotherham Older People's Forum and the Looked After Children's Council. A public event was held in All Saint's Square on 28th June 2017. Key findings from these engagements are included in the section above

Subsequently consultation on the specific scheme proposals has been carried out at Rotherham Show in both 2019 (7th & 8th Sept) and 2021 (3rd to 5th Sept) feedback was positive in support of the scheme with most people expressing a desire to see it delivered as soon as possible.

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

The development of Forge Island will have a positive impact for staff, particularly those that are Rotherham residents and those that work in the Town Centre.

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 broad range of groups of people including those with protected characteristics who will use the development for purposes outlined below to ensure that the proposed development promotes social inclusion:

- Visitors to the buildings and members of the public accessing services
- Workers/employees using the buildings
- People using the associated public realm
- People using the neighbouring commercial units
- People using the car parking facilities
- Residents accessing the proposed residential buildings

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 development:

- Creation of active public spaces that encourage the feeling of a safe and welcoming environment
- Providing level access to all buildings in the new development from a number of points around the town centre reinforcing a gold route strategy
- The decision on the location of the main entrance to the buildings - based on the proximity and visibility from the adjoining public transport and primary pedestrian routes
- Providing clear and legible routes past the development that are suitable for all pedestrians, wheelchair users and people with prams or buggies
- 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
- Providing accessible parking bays in the car park areas
- Providing wheelchair accessible lifts - with lobbies, refuges, corridor and door widths sized to ensure that they are wheelchair accessible

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 development.

The Forge Island Regeneration project will act as a landmark scheme for the wider regeneration of Rotherham town centre and other development sites. The building form and design approach seeks integrate public realm within the wider urban fabric of Rotherham, connecting the with the Town Centre and historic conservation area by making both the visual and physical relationships between these areas stronger and more direct. This will encourage residents and visitors to explore Rotherham Town Centre by creating a public realm and building design solutions which visually entices the visitor or passer-by to explore and linger. This strategy will result in improved crossflow of people resulting in improved footfall and retention of people

The uses proposed within the Forge Island Regeneration masterplan compliment, and add to, the existing offer within the town centre. This will promote new investment whilst also supporting existing businesses within the town centre and encouraging greater use by all groups within the local community.

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

The new leisure quarter on Forge Island replaces a derelict site, formerly used as a supermarket and car parking. The new facilities will reinvigorate a historically significant area in Rotherham with improved public amenities, services and landscaping.

The Rotherham Town Centre Implementation Masterplan identifies the Forge Island regeneration to address the following social objective:

'Diversification of Town Centre uses, strengthening the Town Centre offer to appeal as a family friendly destination, along side providing new attractions for younger people. The clustering of uses together will support sustainability, food and drink operators supporting the hotel and cinema uses.' (pg76)

The development of Forge Island is an opportunity to improve the social fabric of Rotherham. The creation of a major destination will not only attract new visitors to Rotherham town centre but boost local employment through retaining footfall. Key to this new leisure offer will be the provision of a new cinema, aligned with family orientated restaurants and a hotel (Site A) and a new cafe (Site B North) that will re-position Rotherham town centre as a vibrant evening and weekend destination, lengthening dwell times and creating a more active evening economy.

High quality new public space will be delivered at the heart of the development providing an area of public realm that can be used for a range of events which broaden the cultural offer of the town centre.

The Forge Island regeneration builds on is a key component in the regeneration of the town centre and supporting infrastructure and aims to further embed a sense of public pride and belonging within Rotherham.

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 be neutral in terms of community relations.

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: Forge Island Delivery Update March 2022
Directorate and service area: Regeneration and Environment, Planning Regeneration and Transport
Lead Manager: Tim O'Connell
Summary of findings:

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Further consultation with protected characteristic groups, as per the gaps identified above and ongoing conversations regarding future developments	All	Ongoing
Provide information from consultation with protected characteristic groups to the design team to inform consideration of final detailed design proposals	All	09/22
Continue to integrate accessibility considerations in the design and delivery of the Forge Island Development	D	09/22
Complete consultation with protected characteristic groups to inform the design of a customer feedback process following opening of the scheme	All	12/23
Monitor the ongoing equality implications of the Forge Island development	All	Ongoing

*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
Paul Woodcock	Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment	09/03/22
Cllr Lelliott	Cabinet Member, Jobs and Economy	09/03/22

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	07/03/22
Report title and date	Forge Island Delivery Update
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	07/03/22

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User guidance:

- The first section of this form guides users through considering major areas where emissions are likely to occur. If emissions are impacted in a way not covered by these categories, please identify this at the bottom of the section
- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
 - **Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions:** two sections deal respectively with emissions from the Council (including those of contractors), and emissions across Rotherham as a whole. In both sections please explain any factors that are likely to reduce or increase emissions. If **impact unknown** has been selected, then identify the area of uncertainty and outline known variables that may affect impacts.
 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
 - **Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out:** in this section outline any steps taken to monitor emission levels, or steps taken to monitor the factors that are expected to increase or reduce emission levels (for example, if waste or transport levels are being monitored this would be described here)
- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	No Impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact	<p>The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact but the development will result in the construction of new non-domestic buildings which will produce emissions.</p> <p>Emissions from the buildings on site are likely to be significantly less than those from the previous use as a supermarket</p> <p>The scheme is aiming to attract users who are currently travelling to other destinations to fulfil leisure needs, who currently produce greater emissions through using less efficient and less well-designed buildings. The overall impact across Rotherham may therefore reduce.</p> <p>.</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, thermal efficiency.</p> <p>Buildings will be designed to allow for plant to be installed to connect to a local heat network.</p>	

Emissions from transport?	No impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact but there will be future impacts from the use of the scheme and customer visits	<p>The site is within walking distance of the bus interchange, tram trail and railway station and the design brief for the scheme will include consideration of measures to enhance pedestrian connectivity with key arrival points including public transport nodes across the town centre.</p> <p>The site will also provide facilities within the borough that do not currently exist replacing some of the demand to travel further afield outside the borough.</p> <p>Dwell time on the scheme is expected to significantly longer than the previous use as a supermarket providing improvements in terms of air quality from reduced trip generation</p>	
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	No impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact but there will be future impacts from the operations on site		

Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	No impact				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	No impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact but there will be future impacts from construction of the scheme		Through design tender and construction process – monthly contractor reports
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	No impact	The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact			

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

The scheme is designed to include sustainable flood protection measures with buildings at podium level allowing the site to operate as temporary storage during a flooding event

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

The head lease funding agreement does not have any impact on emissions. The future scheme will have an impact on emissions which will be addressed and monitored through the output of the design process and the development and subsequent use of the scheme

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Tim O’Connell, Head of RiDO, regeneration and Environment
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	
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.	
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	

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Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Regeneration Programme: Strategic Land Assembly

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Lorna Vertigan, Strategic Regeneration Manager
Lorna.vertigan@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek the necessary approvals to enable the negotiation and subsequent acquisition by private treaty agreement of all third-party land and property rights required to deliver the Regeneration Programme.

This report also seeks a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet authorise the acquisition of the Freehold and Leasehold interests in the land and properties shown edged red for identification purposes only on the plans at Appendix 1.
2. That the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport be authorised to negotiate the acquisition by agreement of the property interests at Appendix 1, in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, and the Assistant Director of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary transactions.
3. That Cabinet grant a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers. In the event that terms cannot be agreed in relation to all or any of the property interests, or cannot be agreed

within the prescribed timeframe, a further report may be submitted to Cabinet seeking a formal resolution to acquire those property interests through the exercise of the Council's Compulsory Purchase Powers.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Red Line Boundary Plans
- Appendix 2 Riverside Residential Quarter & Mainline Station Additional Land Information
- Appendix 3 Equalities Impact Assessment
- Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Town Investment Plan](#) (redacted version)
[Rotherham Town Centre – Levelling Up Application](#)
[Cabinet Decision 3-7 Corporation Street](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

An exemption is sought for Appendix 1 & 2 under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains sensitive commercial information with regards to commercial agreements which could disadvantage the Council in any negotiations if the information were to be made public.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information, as the parties' commercial interests could be prejudiced by disclosure of commercial information.

Regeneration Programme: Strategic Land Assembly

1. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham Council is embarking on its most significant regeneration opportunity following the securing of major public sector investment. The impact of this programme will bring benefits across the entire Borough and the community of Rotherham.
- 1.2 The Council has secured over £70m from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities through the Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund. This comes in addition to the £12.6m from the Future High Streets Fund.
- 1.3 This funding will enable the Council to develop and deliver a comprehensive programme of regeneration across the town centre and the Borough as a whole.
- 1.4 This report addresses the need for the public sector intervention to acquire land and property owned by the private sector which is required for the regeneration of Rotherham by delegating powers necessary to negotiate and acquire a series of sites as detailed in Appendix 1.

Riverside Residential Quarter

- 1.5 Originally identified in the 2017 Town Centre Masterplan, the Riverside Residential Quarter lies along the spine of Sheffield Road adjacent to the River Don. The masterplan for this area focusses on bringing new life and a new future to the town centre through a new mixed-use residential community.
- 1.6 Early works are underway on Council owned sites with the remainder of the land being in private sector ownership.
- 1.7 Having secured funding from the Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund, the Council now has a comprehensive package of investment to acquire some strategic development sites as detailed in Appendix 1. Further acquisition will depend on the availability of additional funds.
- 1.8 Throughout 2022, further funding will be sought from the Brownfield fund to facilitate the remediation and redevelopment of the identified sites. A development partner for town centre residential sites will be the subject of a further Cabinet report later in 2022.

Leisure & Cultural Quarter

- 1.9 The Leisure & Cultural Quarter extends across the River Don to incorporate Forge Island, now well underway with development partner Muse, and along Corporation Street. This area falls within an ambitious masterplan which will see a revived leisure economy for the town centre and builds on the direction set by Cabinet (Jan 2017) in working towards a compulsory purchase order for key sites in Corporation Street.

- 1.10 The area is currently home to a number of vacant, abandoned and derelict buildings which now have potential for redevelopment due to Town Deal and Levelling Up funds. However, acquisition of some properties is still necessary to bring forward this masterplan.
- 1.11 Having now secured funding from both Town Deal and Levelling Up, the Council is able to bring vacant, derelict sites back into use and provide the complementary public realm and connectivity to enliven this area of the town. Early negotiation is underway with some landowners and a route to development is being explored on a phased basis.

Mainline Station

- 1.12 Rotherham has the opportunity to promote a major change in its transport connectivity by facilitating the development of a new Mainline station. Selected acquisition is required to de-risk the project. Further information is provided in Appendix 1 and 2.

Eastwood

- 1.13 Eastwood has a clear identity and the opportunity to develop and take advantage of its location on the edge of the town centre and close to Parkgate.
- 1.14 Plans are underway to bring forward a more diverse and better-quality housing offer on Council owned sites as well as plans to improve connectivity. Future development of the area will depend on the re-use and redevelopment of strategically important sites to create a quantum of public sector owned land. Specific sites are set out in Appendix 1.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Strategic acquisitions are necessary to bring privately owned land into the control of the public sector and deliver the regeneration programme. Careful consideration has been given to which acquisitions should be prioritised based on their strategic importance, state of repair and potential for the private sector to bring forward development.
- 2.2 The timescales imposed by the secured funding (set out in section 5) require the Council to move at pace and, considering the quantum of sites for acquisition, it is considered appropriate that Cabinet consider approving the overall acquisition of the Freehold and Leasehold interests in the land and properties identified, whilst the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Local Economy, negotiates the terms and conditions including the price.
- 2.3 Acquisition by agreement is the Council's preferred route and is a precursor to any potential CPO, however given the length of time and cost implications of pursuing CPO it is vital the Council prepares itself for this potential route. This report seeks a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers. It does not constitute a Formal

Resolution to make a CPO. If CPO action is deemed to be required, it will be the subject to a future report to Cabinet for authority to make a CPO.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The preferred option is to acquire all properties by agreement, Compulsory Purchase Order Powers will be exercised if it is the only way to assemble the parcels of land necessary to facilitate delivery of the programme. Negotiation is a mandatory precursor to any CPO action and therefore moving straight to CPO is not an option for consideration.
- 3.2 Consideration has been given to entering into partnership arrangements with landowners rather than taking full control of the land. In progressing negotiations this approach will be considered on a project-by-project basis, however in many cases, and as understood through early consultation, landowners do not always wish to bring forward schemes fitting with masterplan ambitions, or development is not in the core business of the landowners.
- 3.3 Do nothing is not a recommended option, considering the Council's ambitious plans for economic growth and regeneration in the Borough.
- 3.4 Acquisition of each property could be brought forward on an individual basis, however, considering the quantity of land and property for acquisition and the timeframe dictated by funding it is considered that seeking approvals on a site-by-site basis would introduce a significant risk to the programme, in terms of readiness for timely acquisitions and delivery of the programme. It is considered more appropriate and efficient to delegate acquisition as described in this report.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Where appropriate, affected landowners have been consulted and are fully aware how their land is vital to the pursuance of the regeneration of Rotherham. In most cases, the first stages of negotiation have begun.
- 4.2 Consultation and communications on the regeneration programme have taken place over the course of the development of funding bids and the programme itself. Specific consultation on project proposals will take place as schemes move forward.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Business Cases are in development for all projects. Being able to progress the status of acquisitions is fundamental to the robustness and integrity of these Business Cases.
- 5.2 Levelling Up monies are profiled for spend by March 2024 and Town Deal by March 2025.

- 5.3 The timetable for the implementation of a Compulsory Purchase Order is around 12-18 months.
- 5.4 Implementation of decisions to acquire property interests would see Delegated Officer Decisions being brought forward over the lifetime of the funds as agreements are reached.
- 5.5 Should officers be unable to reach agreement, or fail to reach agreement within the funding timeframes, further reports will be presented to Cabinet in line with project programmes.
- 5.6 Accountability for the implementation of the decision and negotiations will be led by the RIDO team with support from other services.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct procurement implications relating to the acquisition of sites. However, for potential demolition requirements as detailed at 2.4, the Contractor appointed to deliver the works must be selected in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended), and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.
- 6.2 The relevant funding for the Capital acquisitions is provided from government Levelling Up Fund and Towns Deal grants. The final authorisation to proceed to plan is subject to government approval following appraisal of Final Business Cases. In some cases, projects will progress alongside partners and developers and will also only progress subject to Final Business case approval.
- 6.3 After acquisition there are revenue implications for long term property holding. Where possible costs will be managed within the terms of the government grant. Existing approved land and property budgets can be utilised. Work is underway to establish the full liability.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 Other than as detailed in the body of this report, there are no material implications arising from the contents of the report.
- 7.2 It is recommended that Legal Services is involved as early as possible in respect of each acquisition to ensure that sufficient resources (whether internal or external) are available to deal with the acquisition in a timely manner.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Appendix 3 provides information of the Equalities Assessment process for all Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund projects.
- 10.2 Full assessments will be carried out in preparation for the submission of Full Business Cases.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are not considered to be direct impacts from the acquisition of properties.
- 11.2 CO2 emissions and climate change is being considered in the development of each of the related projects.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 There are no implications anticipated from these acquisitions.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Full risk registers will be developed on a project by project basis and included in project Business Cases. A programme wide Risk Register has been developed and is regularly monitored through the Regeneration Programme Board.
- 13.2 Delays and/or increased costs result in the inability to deliver regeneration due to the unwillingness of third parties to engage, including absent landlords, owners and occupiers. Early engagement with owners is now underway and the potential use of CPO is to be explored.

14. Accountable Officers

Lorna Vertigan, Strategic Regeneration Manager
Tim O'Connell, Head of RIDO

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	10/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	10/03/22

Report Author: Lorna Vertigan, Strategic Regeneration Manager
Lorna.vertigan@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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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: Regeneration Programme: Strategic Land Assembly

Directorate: R&E

Service area: RiDO

Lead person: Lorna Vertigan

Contact number: 07748 142833

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☒

Other

If other, please specify: Authorisation to negotiate and acquire land and property necessary for the pursuance of the regeneration programme, specifically those sites in relation to the delivery of the Town Deal and Levelling Up funded projects.

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

This Cabinet report is a further facilitator of the delivery of regeneration projects in particular those related to the Town Deal and Levelling Up funds. As such the Equalities Assessment reflects the process previously outlined which will see assessment being carried out as part of the development of Full Business Cases on a project by project basis.

One of the conditions in the Town Deal Heads of Terms is “*Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED) and other assessments: Rotherham Borough Council will undertake programme-wide level impact assessment, relevant project-level impact assessment to meet their Public Sector Equalities Duty as well as carry out relevant Environmental Impact Assessments.*”

Consultation and screening was previously carried out during the production of the Town Investment Plan, which was approved by Cabinet in January 2021. Further consultation will be carried out as projects develop in the run up to the Business Case development.

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		
This paper specifically addresses the acquisition of land and property for the pursuance of various regeneration projects. The answers given above specifically relate to the acquisition of property.		

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?**

Early consultation was carried out in the preparation of the Town Investment Plan and the Levelling Up fund submissions to Government and equality assessments were carried out, however further detailed consultation and communication is being planned in the run up to Business Cases.

Specifically in relation to property acquisition consultation with most land owners has already begun. There are no direct equality and diversity concerns identified with this process.

- **Key findings**

Widespread consultation and engagement with communities, including protected characteristic groups, directly informed the TIP, and equality implications were considered at this stage.

In the process of developing full business cases, equality implications will be considered in more detail, and worked into the projects.

Specifically in relation to property acquisition consultation with most land owners has already begun. There are no direct equality and diversity concerns identified with this process.

- **Actions**

As outlined above, where appropriate, detailed equality analyses will be completed for individual projects to assess the equality implications and identify mitigating actions.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	October 2021 onwards as projects developed
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	June 2022
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Lorna Vertigan – Strategic Regeneration Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	Job title	Date
Simeon Leach	Economic Strategy & Partnerships Manager	
Tim O'Connell	Head of RiDO	

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	12 th January 2022
Report title and date	Regeneration Programme: Strategic Land Assembly
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	19/01/22

User guidance:

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- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
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 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
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- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	Unknown				
Emissions from transport?	Unknown				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Unknown				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	N/A				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	Unknown				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Unknown				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

All projects will involve the construction of new buildings and infrastructure which will inherently have an impact on Carbon emissions. In the design and construction of these projects endeavours will be taken to minimise negative impacts and increase positive.

The detail of impacts is unknown at this stage but will be examined and detailed in relation to each project over the next 9 months, up to June 2022. The full impact will be conveyed on a project by project basis through an impact assessment attached to each Business Case.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

Overall the development of each project will consider how emissions can be reduced in the design, development and delivery of each project.

Supporting information:

Completed by:

(Name, title, and service area/directorate).

Lorna Vertigan, Strategic Regeneration Manager, RIDO, R&E

Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].

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.

Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Covid Recovery Fund

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)

Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance
01709 254518 or rob.mahon@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Councils Financial Outturn Report 2020/21 to Cabinet on 19 July 2021 earmarked £2m for a Covid Recovery Fund from the £6.1m underspend position, delegating to Cabinet the authority to approve its use. The fund was created to take proactive steps in order to support local residents as they emerge from the pandemic. The funding is being brought forward to support residents now, to help residents against the backdrop of growing concerns around the cost of living due to inflation and significant increases in energy and fuel bills in particular. The Citizens Advice Bureau reported a 50% increase in the use of their services for financial support, with Advocacy and Appeals reporting a 66% increase in residents seeking support in the across the year from January 2021. In addition, the relaxation of Covid rules allows the Council to consider how best it can help people back into the community.

The Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23, approved at Council on 2 March 2022 set out the first use of the Covid Recovery Fund, allocating £371k of the fund towards 3 one off revenue budget investments for 2022/23, these were.

- Women's Euro 2022
- Additional Customer Call Handling
- Customer and Digital Developments

This report sets out further proposals for use of the Covid Recovery Fund across the following areas;

- £500k Cash grant scheme to provide support for households with the rising cost of energy bills.
- £300k additional funding to top up the Councils Discretionary Housing Payments fund.
- £100k to support cultural recovery events and opportunities that will enable people to reconnect.
- £50k to facilitate the administration of these proposals.

The remaining funding of £679k will be retained within the Covid Recovery Fund so that further support can be targeted at issues that arise as the course of the borough's recovery from Covid continues.

Recommendations

1. Approve the Council's proposed use of the Covid Recovery Fund for the following purposes:
 - £500k Cash grant scheme to provide support for households with the rising cost of energy bills.
 - £300k additional funding to top up the Councils Discretionary Housing Payments fund.
 - £100k to support cultural recovery events.
 - £50k to facilitate the administration of these proposals.
2. Note that a report will be presented to a future meeting regarding the remaining funding of £679k.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Financial Outturn Report 2020/21

Budget and Council Tax 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Strategy

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Covid Recovery Fund

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Financial Outturn Report 2020/21 to Cabinet on 19 July 2021 earmarked £2m for a Covid Recovery Fund from the £6.1m underspend position, delegating to Cabinet the authority to approve its use. The funding is being brought forward to support residents now, to help residents against the backdrop of growing concerns around the cost of living due to inflation and significant increases in energy and fuel bills in particular. The Citizens Advice Bureau reported a 50% increase in the use of their services for financial support, with Advocacy and Appeals reporting a 66% increase in residents seeking support in the across the year from January 2021. In addition, the relaxation of Covid rules allows the Council to consider how best it can help people back into the community.
- 1.2 The Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23, approved at Council on 2 March 2022 set out the first use of the Covid Recovery Fund, allocating £371k of the fund towards 3 one off revenue budget investments for 2022/23, these were.
 - Women's Euro 2022 – Investment to support the Partnership Agreement with UEFA, enabling the Council to deliver its role well and deliver a lasting legacy from the tournament
 - Additional Call Handling – Continued investment in resources to have a positive impact to the number and speed of calls answered, allowing digital engagement to further increase and the need for assisted access to fall. This aims to improve the customer service and support to residents.
 - Customer and Digital - To support the delivery of the Customer & Digital programme objectives and increase the pace with which service redesign activities can be completed and digital solutions implemented. This aims to improve the customer service and support to residents.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The fund was created to take proactive steps in order to support local residents as they emerge from the pandemic. However, although the impacts of the pandemic are subsiding, there are now new significant economic pressures placing a new and significant strain on the borough's residents. The issue of rising household costs has continued to spiral, with energy bill increases continuing to increase above expectations, fuel prices continually rising and now there is also a war in Ukraine that is likely to generate further economic pressure that increases the strain on household costs. As such, it is considered that the focus of the Covid Recovery Fund should be adapted to a degree. This report sets out further proposals for use of the Covid Recovery Fund, factoring in the current economic climate that residents are facing, with support targeted across the following areas;

- £500k Cash grant scheme to provide support for households with the rising cost of energy bills.
 - £300k additional funding to top up the Councils Discretionary Housing Payments fund.
 - £100k to support cultural recovery events and opportunities that will enable people to reconnect
 - £50k to facilitate the administration of these proposals.
- 2.2 The remaining funding of £679k will be retained within the Covid Recovery Fund so that further support can be targeted at issues that arise as the course of the borough's recovery from Covid continues. Further details on each proposal are provided below.

Cash Grants for Utility Bills

- 2.3 Utility costs and debt are a major factor for many households, as household costs continue to rise above expectations and with the war in Ukraine placing further economic pressures onto household bills. The Council's existing debt management advice both within the Council through the Advocacy & Appeals Services (A & A) and in the VCS through Citizens Advice (CARD) have noted an increase in utility related debt and hardship problems since the beginning of the COVID emergency and this has been exacerbated further as energy bills in particular have increased above expectations. As such it is proposed that a cash grant is provided to households to support them with the rising costs of energy bills, where they are unable to pay their bill. The support will provide up to £250, as a one off grant, where possible paid directly to the energy provider. Households will not be entitled to multiple payments. The support will also be available to those who currently pay their bills through pre-payment meters, where the Council is assured that they are unable to pre-pay for their energy.
- 2.4 Access to the support would be via an online claims process supported via referrals from the Councils debt support packages, provided to people accessing normal debt advice provision through A & A or CARD. Support would then be provided by direct payment by the Council to the energy supplier or where not possible, to the individual. This would help people with arrears and in particular those who have found themselves in difficulty due to the most recent spikes in energy prices, to help them over what is hopefully, a shorter term financial pressure. It is not proposed to make any allocation in relation to water bills as there are existing arrangements with Yorkshire Water to help vulnerable families / people with water utility debt.
- 2.5 It is recommended that an allocation of £500k is provided to enable cash grants of up to £250 per household that submit a claim and is able to demonstrate that their rising energy bills have placed them in a financially vulnerable situation and that this support would enable them to ease that burden at a time of wider financial pressures from other rising household costs.
- 2.6 The Council will need to design a suitable online claim form to allow claimants to come forward, along with a process for residents unable to utilise the online claim form. It is proposed that the form will be made available in the early part of the 2022/23 financial year.

Additional Discretionary Housing Payments

- 2.7 It is proposed that £300k of the Covid Recovery Fund be used to top up the Council's allocation from government for 2022/23 for providing Discretionary Housing Payments. Discretionary Housing Payments are extra payments to help pay rent. They can be awarded to residents if they are already receiving Housing Benefit or get the housing element of Universal Credit but need more help with meeting housing costs. Given the wider impact of rising household costs, support with housing costs to help people to continue to live in their homes is a vital area for additional support.
- 2.8 Applicants are already able to apply for support from the Council's Government allocation of DHP via the Council's website. Applicants can potentially get support to cover costs for a rent shortfall, rent deposits or rent in advance if they need to move home. However, if the Council is able to top up the available funding it will allow more residents facing financial difficulties meeting their household costs to be supported.

Cultural Events Programme

- 2.9 A further £100k of the Covid Recovery Fund will be directed towards support for cultural recovery events and opportunities that will enable people to reconnect. The support will aim to encourage and support people to come back into the community. Some of the proposed benefits are outlined below with this fund working alongside the revenue budget investment to support the Partnership Agreement with UEFA, enabling the Council to deliver its role well and deliver a lasting legacy from the Womens Euro 2022 tournament.
- Enable participation in national programmes including beacon lighting
 - Support community groups to host their own local celebrations
 - Create a Town Centre celebration on Saturday 4th June celebrating diverse communities across the Commonwealth
 - Create a Garden Party at Clifton Park on Sunday 5th June as part of the national 'Big Lunch' programme
 - Further funding support to enhance the Queens Jubilee celebrations

The remaining funding of £679k will be retained within the Covid Recovery Fund so that further support can be targeted at issues that arise as the course of the borough's recovery from Covid continues.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The Council did consider other routes for utilising the Covid Recovery Fund, however with the recent dramatic increases in household living costs, led by the dramatic increase in energy bills for all residents, it is felt that this is where the majority of the Recovery Fund should be targeted at present along with support for housing costs. To keep in line with the original plans for the fund, the Council is also proposing events and pieces of work that promote the boroughs recovery out of Covid.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The Council has consulted with officers across the Council to ensure that the proposals are feasible and can be delivered at pace.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Cabinet approval is required to deliver the proposed schemes. Should Cabinet approve these proposals, the Council implement the schemes during the 2022/23 financial year.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The Council's earmarked the £2m Covid Recovery Fund within the Councils reserves. This reserve was created as part of the Financial Outturn position for 2020/21 and was delegated to Council to set how the fund would be utilised. As such the proposals within this report are affordable and can be contained within the available resources held within the Councils reserves.
- 6.2 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the proposals in this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The different types of expenditure referred to within the report are all lawful, reasonable and rational means of distributing the money within the Covid Recovery Fund.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 No direct implications.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The proposals will present financial support to families and vulnerable adults.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 No direct implications.

11 Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 No direct implications.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 No direct implications.

13. Accountable Officers

Graham Saxton, Assistant Director – Financial Services

Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	11/03/22
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	11/03/22

Report Author: Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A)

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.

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services	Service area: Finance
Lead person: Rob Mahon	Contact number: 01709 254518

1. Title:

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☒

Service / Function

☐

Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The Councils Financial Outturn Report 2020/21 to Cabinet on 19 July 2021 earmarked £2m for a Covid Recovery Fund from the £6.1m underspend position, delegating to Cabinet the authority to approve its use. The fund was created to take proactive steps in order to support local residents as they emerge from the pandemic. The funding is being brought forward to support residents now, to help residents against the backdrop of growing concerns around the cost of living due to inflation and significant increases in energy and fuel bills in particular. The Citizens Advice Bureau reported a 50% increase in the use of their services for financial support, with Advocacy and Appeals reporting a 66% increase in residents seeking support in the across the year from January 2021. In addition, the relaxation of Covid rules allows the Council to consider how best it can help people back into the community

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fund towards 3 one off revenue budget investments for 2022/23, these were.

- Women's Euro 2022
- Additional Call Handling
- Customer and Digital

This report sets out further proposals for use of the Covid Recovery Fund across the following areas;

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- £300k additional funding to top up the Councils Discretionary Housing Payments fund.
- £100k to support cultural recovery events and opportunities that will enable people to reconnect.
- £50k to facilitate the administration of these proposals.

The remaining funding of £0.679m will be retained within the Covid Recovery Fund so that further support can be targeted at issues that arise as the course of the boroughs recovery from Covid continues.

The Councils approach to the utility proposal will be open to all, so non-discriminatory, allowing people to apply online or over the phone, assisted if necessary. The DHP payments system is already a service that the Councils offers and is merely being topped up, this will just make support more accessible as the service will have more resources to allocate. However, both the Utility proposal and the DHP are most likely to support those people who are on lower incomes. The plans for the Events and CCOC will need to be drawn up at a later date when greater detail can be applied and any equality impacts reviewed in greater detail.

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, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?		x
Could the proposal affect service users?		x
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?		x

Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		x
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?		x

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 prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis**.

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 and use the prompts for guidance.

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

n/a

- **Key findings**

n/a

- **Actions**

n/a

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	n/a
--	-----

Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	n/a
--	-----

Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	n/a
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5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Judith Badger	Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services	11/03/2022

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	11/03/2022
If relates to a Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, Council or a Significant Operational Decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	

User guidance:

- The first section of this form guides users through considering major areas where emissions are likely to occur. If emissions are impacted in a way not covered by these categories, please identify this at the bottom of the section
- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
 - **Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions:** two sections deal respectively with emissions from the Council (including those of contractors), and emissions across Rotherham as a whole. In both sections please explain any factors that are likely to reduce or increase emissions. If **impact unknown** has been selected, then identify the area of uncertainty and outline known variables that may affect impacts.
 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
 - **Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out:** in this section outline any steps taken to monitor emission levels, or steps taken to monitor the factors that are expected to increase or reduce emission levels (for example, if waste or transport levels are being monitored this would be described here)
- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from transport?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	<i>no impact</i>				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

This report seeks approval for the Councils use of the Covid Recovery Fund, there are no direct Carbon impacts as a result of this report.

Supporting information:

Completed by:
(Name, title, and service area/directorate).

Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance, Finance and Customer Services.

Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].

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.

Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Social Value Annual Report

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive

Report Authors

Steve Eling

Policy and Equalities Manager

Assistant Chief Executive's

Steve.eling@rotherham.gov.uk

Karen Middlebrook

Head of Procurement

Corporate Procurement Service

Finance and Customer Services

Karen.Middlebrook@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

Since the Council adopted the Social Value Policy in 2019, significant progress has been made to secure social value commitments as part of the Council's contracts alongside having achieved accreditation as a "Living Wage Employer" by the Living Wage Foundation.

This 2022 annual report sets out the key achievements over the year to end of November 2021 and identifies priority areas of work for 2022. These priorities will further embed social value to secure the best possible outcomes and returns for the people of Rotherham.

Recommendations

1. That the annual report is received noting the increased social value commitments along with outcomes achieved.
2. That the key priorities for 2022 include:
 - a. Launch of the Social Value Commissioning Toolkit to be held in May.
 - b. Further embedding Social Value across the Council.
 - c. Focus on increasing social value commitments for skills and employment.
 - d. Engagement with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority in development and delivery of social value in the sub-region.
 - e. Building on anchor network development as part of the Rotherham Together Partnership Social Value Charter.
 - f. Further research to build local market intelligence.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Initial Equality Screening Assessment

Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessments

Background Papers

Cabinet Report – Social Value Policy, 21st October 2019

<http://modgov-p-db/documents/s123000/Social%20Value%20Policy.pdf>

Cabinet Report – Social Value Annual Report, 15th February 2021

<http://modgov-p-db/documents/s129696/Social%20Value%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Social Value Annual Report

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 15 February 2021 Cabinet received the first social value annual report since adoption of the Social Value Policy in 2019. The report set out the achievement to date, which at that time was securing social value commitments through contract procurement at just over 10% of the contract values let.
- 1.2 As part of the report, Cabinet agreed commitments for the coming year to advance the social value agenda. These were:
 - The strategic approach to “Social Value by Design” to embed existing best practice within the Council including the production of a Social Value Commissioning Toolkit.
 - Support the approach to Community Wealth Building with priority actions for the year ahead taking forward:
 - Real Living Wage accreditation.
 - Achieving Social Value aligned to working towards “Excellent” under the Equality Framework for Local Government.
 - Progressing the Rotherham Together Partnership Social Value Charter into the development of Anchor Networks.
 - Work with the Mayoral Combined Authority to promote and develop Social Value for the Sheffield City Region.
 - Holding a workshop event in the summer of 2021 to explore further Community Wealth Building options.
 - Engagement in the CLES Community Wealth Building Centre of Excellence.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on progress made towards realising social value and sets out direction for priority actions and action over the coming year.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 To further Social Value in Rotherham, the Council resolved in October 2019 to adopt a Social Value Policy together with a toolkit for its delivery.
- 2.2 The aim of the Social Value Policy is to maximise the local impact of the Council’s spend, with key elements taking forward:
 - Raising the living standards of Rotherham residents and commitment to working towards the Living Wage Foundation Living Wage.
 - Increasing the proportion of the Council’s expenditure which goes to local businesses and providers.
 - Building social value into all council contracts and maximise the impact gained from every pound spent, through the introduction of a rigorous system for assessing and measuring social value.
 - Commit to the principle of co-designing services wherever possible.

2.3 Major achievements

- 2.4 The Council has either achieved or made progress against all of the commitments agreed in February 2021. Significantly, these include:
- The Social Value Commissioning Toolkit is in the final stages of development and about to be rolled out.
 - Accreditation as a “Living Wage Employer” was awarded in September.
 - Anchor networks development is underway with key partners building on the commitments from the partnership Social Value Charter.
 - The Council is positively engaged in the development of social value policy and practice in the MCA
 - A workshop was held to explore further community wealth building opportunities.
 - An event has been held to engage with suppliers. This provided real examples of good practice in social value. The event will be repeated on an annual basis.

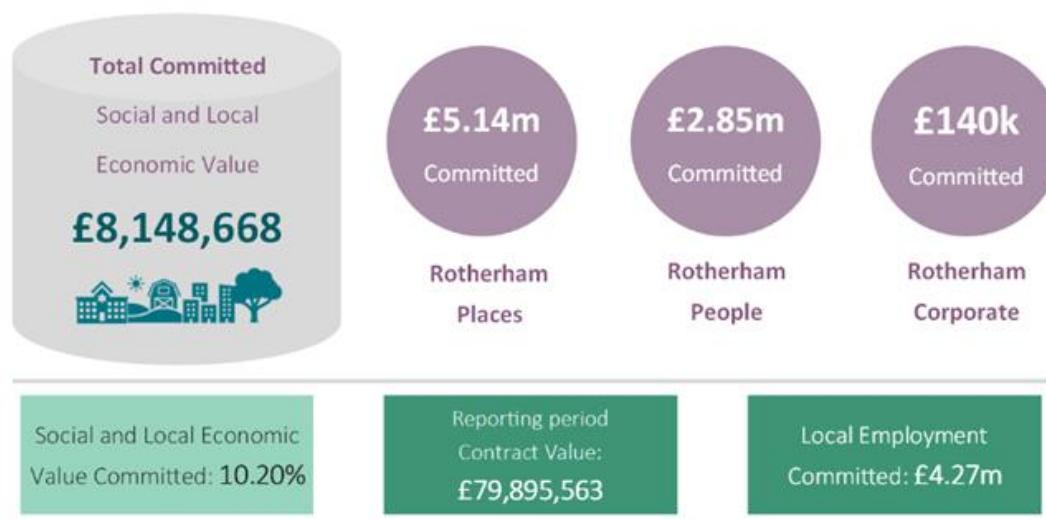
2.5 Procurement update – Social Value Portal

Under the Council’s adopted policy, social value is determined and measured using the national “themes outcomes measures” (TOMS) framework. This enables a monetary calculation of how much social value has been secured in contracts, with the delivery of this closely monitored throughout the life of the contract. This approach ensures that where contracts are multi-year that social value is delivered over the lifetime of the contract, rather than in single action or contribution.

- 2.6 The National TOMs Framework (2021) is a measurement framework that was developed by the National Social Value Task Force, a cross-sector organisation combining both public and private sector organisations. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has developed its own bespoke measurement framework comprising 36 measures, across 5 themes, derived from the National TOMs (2021), designed to have a positive impact on the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the Rotherham community:
- Jobs: Promote Local Skills and Employment.
 - Growth: Supporting Growth of Local and Small Business.
 - Social: Healthier, Safer and more Resilient Communities.
 - Environment: Protecting and Improving Our Environment.
 - Innovation: Promoting Social Innovation.

- 2.7 The table below sets out the key KPI measures that the Council’s suppliers have committed and delivered against on contracts that have been procured and awarded since the implementation of the Social Value Policy up to 30th November 2021. Most current contracts were awarded prior the implementation of the Policy, so are not reflected in the table. Consequently, the values should not be considered to be exhaustive.

Ref	Measure	Committed & Delivered Social and Local Economic Value					
		Unit	Proxy Value	Committed Number	Committed £SLEV	Delivered Number	Delivered £SLEV
NT1 / NT1a / NT1c	No. of local employees hired or retained	No. People FTE	Localised by project	158.58	£4,279,573	31.01	£814,725
NT3	No. of employees hired who are long term unemployed.	No. People FTE	£19,145.88	5	£96,720	1.5	£28,447
NT4	No. of employees who are NEETs	No. People FTE	£13,889.49	1.5	£20,454	3	£40,908
NT4a	No. of 16-25 y.o. care leavers	No. People FTE	£13,956.88	0.99	£13,499	0	£0
NT5a	No. of 18-24 y.o. rehabilitating young offenders	No. People FTE	£22,480.36	2.37	£52,523	0	£0
NT6	No. of disabled employees	No. People FTE	£15,387.93	1.01	£15,317	0	£0
NT7	No. of hours dedicated to support people into work (over 24 y.o.)	No. hrs (total session duration)*no. attendees	£118.87	576	£70,738	36	£4,552
NT9	No. of weeks training opportunities	No. weeks	£265.17	397	£105,508	20	£5,168
NT10	No. of weeks of apprenticeships	No. weeks	£210.07	424	£89,438	43	£8,917
NT11	No. of hours dedicated to support people into work (under 24 y.o.)	No. hrs (total session duration)*no. attendees	£118.87	3,595	£410,145	221.75	£27,856
NT12	No. of weeks spent on meaning work placements or pre-employment course	No. weeks	£160.47	135	£21,605	69.6	£11,012
NT13	Meaningful work placements that pay Minimum or National Living Wage	No. weeks	£160.47	106	£16,771	36	£5,696
NT15	Provision of expert business advice to VCSE's or MSME's	No. staff expert hours	£97.03	177	£16,548	10	£961
NT16	Equipment or resources donated to VCSEs	£	£1	63,396	£63,396	5,268	£5,268
NT18	Total amount (£) spent in LOCAL supply chain	£	£0.46	5,054,048	£2,662,862	982,756	£518,895
NT28	Monetary donation or equipment/resource in lieu to VCSEs	£	£1	14,000	£14,000	0	£0
NT58	No. of employees FTE to have a pay raise to Real living wage or higher	No. People FTE	£1,396	1.15	£1,605	0	£0
NT31	Savings in Co2 emissions through decarbonisation	tCo2e	£69.50	2,558.04	£178,263	883.8	£61,291
		Total	*2021 TOMS		£8,148,668		£1,533,671



- 2.8 The total Social and Local Economic Value (SLEV) committed shows an increase from £1.4 million in the first year to £8.14 million in year two, a net increase of £6.74 million over the year. The total contract value attracting social value shows an increase from £14.10 million in the first year to £79.89m in year two, a net increase of £65.79 million over the first year. This continues to represent 10.2% social value outcomes committed.
- 2.9 Of the three categories, “places” has seen the largest increase of £4.5 million over the year with “people” achieving £2.04 million increase and the “corporate” increase at £107k.

Promote Local Skills and Employment



5 FTE of long term unemployment individuals to be hired on contracts.



397 weeks of training opportunities to be offered on contracts (BTEC, City & guilds, NVQ, HNC)



£410k to be delivered in dedicated hours to support young people into work.

Protecting and Improving our environment

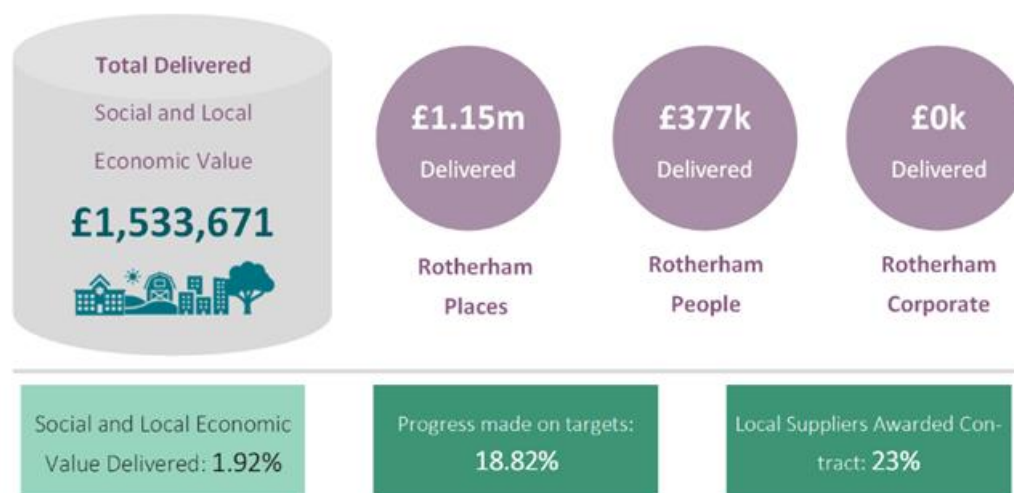
2558 tonnes CO2e to be saved on contract.



- 2.10 Key commitments for “promoting local skills and employment” include training weeks committed increasing from 53 to 397 and supporting young people increasing from £40k to £410k. It should be noted that the five “long term unemployed” is a specific commitment under the TOMs and not the number of “local employees” which is included in commitment NT1.
- 2.11 Tonnes of CO2e saved have increased from 4.04 to 2,558 marking a significant improvement in moving towards the Council’s “net zero” commitments and target.



- 2.12 Increases in support and value for local VCSE and community groups has seen increases in equipment and resources from £28.5k to £63.3k and local economic value from the supply chain increasing from £239k to £2.6m. The latter is driven by the increased value of contracts awarded in the last year.



- 2.13 The November 2021 report from the Social Value Portal is the first to include outcomes and outputs delivered. Whilst reported as percentages of the overall commitments, the outcomes will relate more to the first-year commitments than the second. Reflecting the value of commitments, “places” has delivered the largest outcomes at £1.15 million. “Corporate” is yet to achieve any returns, however, this is against a small commitment of £140k, of which only £33k was committed through contracts awarded in the first year. Delivery against commitments in the “Corporate” category will commence in the coming year.
- 2.14 Progress on commitments up to November 2021 shows 18.82% of total targets delivered and that local suppliers have been awarded 23% of contracts.

Promote Local Skills and Employment



£814k of local economic value delivered on contracts through local employment in Rotherham



43 weeks of apprenticeships delivered on contracts Level 2,3, or 4+



£4.5k delivered in social value for support to assist unemployed individuals (over 24 y.o.) into work.

Protecting and Improving our environment

£61k of social value generated by saving tonnes of CO2e on contracts.



- 2.15 Achievements of note in “promoting local skills and employment” are the local economic value of contracts through local employment; apprenticeships; and support to young people. This includes £814k value through contracts with 43 weeks of apprenticeships and £4.5k of social value supporting unemployed into work.

Supporting VCSE's & Community Groups



Local Spend in Rotherham

£518k of local economic value has been delivered as a result of local supply chain on contracts.



2.16 Case Studies

- 2.17 Case studies have also been produced to demonstrate social value outcomes against contract commitments. Whilst the reporting of social value using the TOMS demonstrates calculated contract percentage values, these case studies seek to demonstrate the outcomes in tangible terms of benefit to numbers of local people etc.

2.18 Repairs and Maintenance Contractor Mears' Social Value Highlights since Contract Commencement

- 2.19 Apprentices - a total of eleven apprentices have been recruited between Mears and regular subcontractors. These include two electricians, two joiners and a multi-trade working directly for Mears; together with two Quantity Surveyors, three Roofers and an electrician working for two major subcontractors. There are two Quantity Surveyor trainees employed by Mears who are continuing with their studies and undertaking a degree qualification in this field. They are also in the process of recruiting on a Traineeship for a Commercial Assistant role with a view to progressing to an apprenticeship vacancy. Plans are in the early stages for hosting an

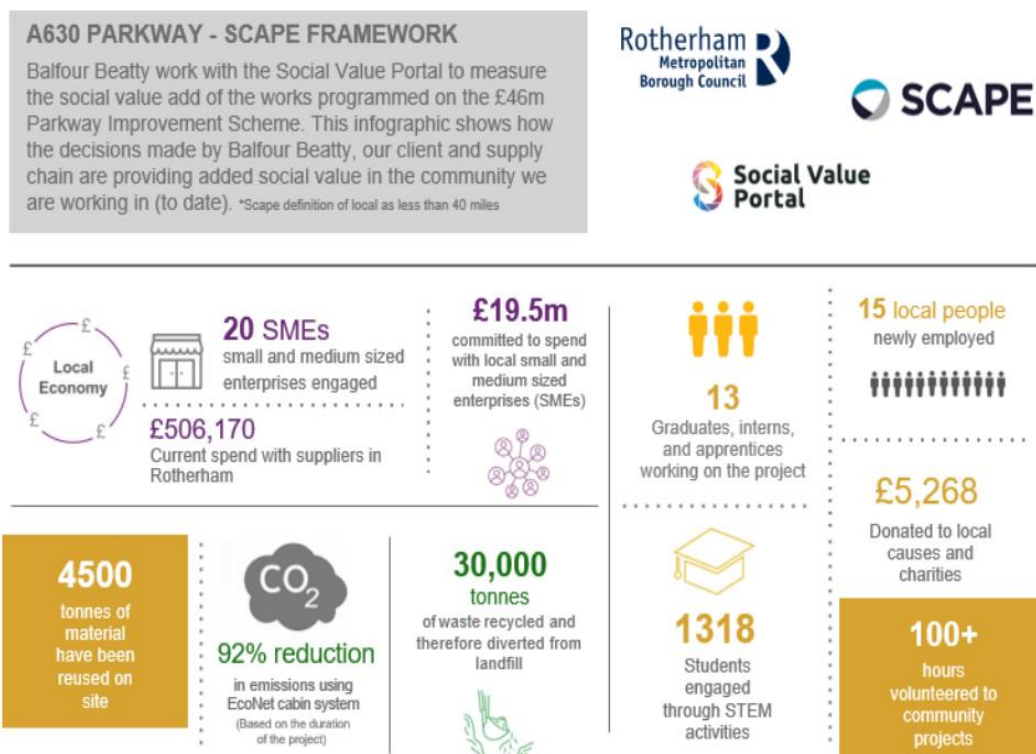
Apprentice Open Day in March 2022 in preparation for a new intake in Sep 2022.

- 2.20 New Job Opportunities - since the start of the contract, Mears have provided eighteen new permanent opportunities with two current live vacancies. They have also recruited two people on the Kickstart programme who it is hoped to progress to permanent roles.
- 2.21 Schools Engagement - a number of virtual mock interview sessions have been hosted with both St Pius and St Bernard's schools. Overall, a total of 115 students have undertaken a mock virtual interview which supports their development in the Careers & Enterprise arena. Mears have also carried out careers events with RNN Group, RUCST, Wales High School.
- 2.22 Mears Foundation – Mears have been fortunate to secure funding for Age UK Rotherham for two projects in 2021, an autumn garden party for local elderly residents held at Clifton Park, the annual Christmas Lunch for Age UK service users and the gifts for delivery to those unable to attend the lunch, and also funding to enable them to secure Cold Weather Packs for a second year for vulnerable local tenants. Mears Foundation have also provided a bench which was recently installed at Swinburne Place and a quantity of unbranded clothing from our supplier which was recently donated to Shiloh.
- 2.23 Repairs and Maintenance Contractor Engie's Social Value Highlights since Contract Commencement
- 2.24 Overview:
 - £1.3 million of Social Value delivered from the commencement of the Engie contract in April 2020. £955k of this being delivered January '21 – October 2021 following the significant easing of lockdown.
 - 18 individuals progressed into employment.
 - 20 new apprenticeships.
 - 11 safeguarded apprenticeships.
 - 6 Site Visits.
 - 56 School / College workshops.
 - 12 Work Experience placements.
 - 2497 Short Courses undertaken.
- 2.25 Investing in the future:
 - 11 Apprenticeships Safeguarded following TUPE transfer.
 - 12 Apprentices recruited to work directly for ENGIE since April 2020.
 - Trade Based apprentices recruited following a 2-day recruitment event held in conjunction with RNN College.
 - An apprentice Gas Engineer awarded both the Rotherham Apprentice of the Year as well as the G4C Yorkshire Apprentice of the Year award
 - Commitment remains to providing ten apprenticeship opportunities for each year of the contract.
 - Planning to take place in early 2022 for next year's Apprentice Recruitment event.

2.26 The A630 upgrade is also reporting significant social value:

SOCIAL VALUE ADD | FEBRUARY 2022 UPDATE

Balfour Beatty



2.27 Target Housing Rough Sleeper Initiative funded Queen Street service

2.28 The contracted provision is an eight unit accommodation service, comprising of a seven bed emergency accommodation and assessment hub with scope to provide one additional bed space as an interim emergency night bed, for single people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping, provided by Target Housing.

2.29 The number of local direct employees (FTE) hired or retained is currently at 66.67% of target and all staff are paid above living wage. When setting up the service the provider advertised through local channels, including Voluntary Action Rotherham, and a team of three people were appointed, who were residents of Rotherham. One team member had been long-term unemployed and had experienced a period of homelessness prior to being appointed by Target Housing. Following their experience and support they received working on the team, they have since been successful in applying for another role within the organisation, supporting the Housing First provision (which is also commissioned by the Council).

2.30 Although there have been limitations in the ability to source meaningful work placements and pre-employment courses throughout the pandemic, the provider has engaged all service users with weekly dedicated sessions to look at work aspirations and options and has achieved 90% of this target. This client group includes people who are furthest from the jobs market, with

complex needs and a history of rough sleeping. By dedicating time to deliver this support, the provider is able to give them the tools and resources to take their first steps into employment. Where applicable some service users have enrolled onto ESOL courses and one service user had also been appointed on a voluntary basis as a cleaner for the hostel, widening his experience for his CV and future employment opportunities.

2.31 **Other learning from experience**

2.32 The Council is also seeking to learn from its own experiences across Directorates. This year, each Directorate has been asked to provide a brief update on its activities. Key learning experience gained and learning points include:

- The council's first social value event celebrating the achievements from the council and its partners. This event showcased how social value helps our local economy thrive by creating employment opportunities for local people and championing local businesses.
- Collaboration with CLES in 2020 helped produce a report breaking down 3rd party spend before and after our social policy was active. The Council having a social value policy grew local 3rd party spend in 2019/20 with further growth expected in 2020/21 showcasing the positive effect social value has in our borough.
- The approach has brought additional value to the core contract requirements and supported the Council's strategic ambitions in delivering the Year Ahead Plan in a range of areas.
- Through the social value portal, there are three housing contracts in place where circa £590k of social value has been committed as targets, with £229k achieved so far. These include the organisation having worked with the Council's own Pathways Rotherham scheme and employed 3 individuals who had previously been NEET. In addition, through the same Pathways Rotherham, the organisation spent 9 hours interviewing candidates at Riverside House, Rotherham and coaching them afterwards on their technique. Including full feedback in written form on their performance.
- Although the Housing Repairs and Maintenance contracts were procured prior to the Social Value Policy being adopted social value is still captured.
- For transport spend, many of the mechanisms for Social Value are designed by supply chain partners either regionally or nationally. The Council has begun work with suppliers to encourage them to deliver outcomes in the Rotherham area. Although this does pose challenges, there has generally been a positive response and work continues to increase local social value.

2.33 **Key actions / developments going forward**

2.34 **Social Value Commissioning Toolkit**

2.35 The Social Value Commissioning Toolkit is in the final stages of development and it will support the economic, environmental, and social benefits to be considered throughout the commissioning and procurement process.

- 2.36 The toolkit will encourage commissioners to be creative and discover how benefits can be realised when a new commissioning activity/need is identified. It aims to drive the ethos of “social value by design” which is emphasised in service plans throughout the organisation.
- 2.37 The Social Value Commissioning Toolkit has a particular focus when commissioners consider:
- Business Case - Establish the business case in line with wider strategic priorities where social value outcomes can be achieved.
 - Equality Analysis to support commissioning and procurement to evidence meeting the needs of Rotherham’s citizens and identify areas where Social Value can be added.
 - Resources - The use of resources by targeting by securing the best possible outcomes within the resources available.
 - Mechanism - Choose the right mechanism to procure – to best achieve Social Value traditional procurement, grants, service level agreements, etc.
 - Partnering opportunities i.e., the Public Sector and VCS or collaborative commissioning and procurement.
 - Outcomes-based commissioning including engaging people accessing services.
 - Techniques of co-production and resource mobilisation.
 - Optimising social capital.
 - Market supplier development and capacity building.
- 2.38 The Social Value Commissioning Toolkit will be presented in a digital format available on the website to allow easy revision and to ensure it remains contemporary. It is planned to be live by April 2022.
- 2.39 Support and guidance will be produced to assist commissioners in their role and build expertise in the Council as part of the roll-out of the toolkit.
- 2.40 Further embedding Social Value across the Council
- 2.41 As the approach to delivering social value moves forward, there is the need to further embed the processes into management and reporting on contracts to give confidence in securing the social value outcomes. Support for further embedding will be a priority for the coming year.
- 2.42 Anchor networks
- 2.43 During the last year, a procurement anchor network has been developed with representation from the Council, The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, the Yorkshire & Humber Police Forces, Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) and the Mayoral Combined Authority Executive. The group has spent much of this year sharing knowledge and best practice with an aim to ensure a common approach and understanding of Social Value is achieved across the borough. Work is actively ongoing to baseline spend information across all

partners so that there is a common metric to measure impact of future work and activity the group seeks to take forward.

2.44 Living wage

2.45 Following award of accreditation as a Living Wage Employer, the Council now needs to ensure that all contracts are and remain compliant. To progress this further, work is now being undertaken to assess the level of compliance within current contracts. A survey of contractors is being undertaken. This will provide the necessary information to identify where forward action is required to secure compliance.

2.46 The Council is able to promote its living wage accreditation and use “Living Wage” branded materials. A plaque has been unveiled to publicise the Council’s Living Wage status.

2.47 Social Value communications and webpage

2.48 A dedicated Social Value webpage has been created and continues to develop as the Council’s knowledge, understanding and application of Social Value grows. The content provides a range of information to support organisations in submitting social value proposals through the tender process. As such much of the website is heavily procurement focussed therefore inclusion of the content from the commissioning toolkit will be a positive addition.

2.49 Subregional including MCA

2.50 The Social value ‘contract’ for South Yorkshire is being developed as part of a wider work programme around inclusion; the contract being the first practical element of this work to be brought forward (most recently discussed at the November Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) board).

2.51 The contract would require any organisation seeking funds from the MCA to make a number of social value commitments.

2.52 The draft contract builds on work carried out by the Centre for Decent Work at Sheffield Management School. It groups potential commitments into eight focus areas:

- Local supply chains.
- Community.
- Rewards and contracts.
- Environment.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Employee voice and participation.
- Inclusion and diversity.
- Education, training and progression.

2.53 Following discussion at the LEP board, further work is being undertaken to refine the proposals. When completed, approval will be sought from the Mayoral Combined Authority. No date has yet been provided.

2.54 Business engagement - suppliers

2.55 The Council's procurement team is engaged with Business Support and Mayoral Combined Authority to connect opportunities with local businesses. A sub-regional "supplying the public sector event" has been undertaken with representatives from each of the local authorities in attendance, alongside the Social Value Portal to demonstrate the importance Social Value now plays in procurement activity.

2.56 Further business engagement and supplier events will be held alongside ongoing research into local markets and where spend is lost to the Rotherham economy.

2.57 Employment and Skills

2.58 The Council is keen to ensure it maximises the opportunity for local employment and skills. With the increase in procurement activity related to Capital projects there will be an increased focus on the thematic outcome measures predominantly local employment, new employment for disadvantaged individuals and apprenticeships. For these town centre projects, progression will be made within the Themes Outcomes Measures (TOMs) framework to prioritise measures for commitments and delivery against, predominantly:

- Local employment
- New employment for disadvantaged individuals; and
- Apprenticeships.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The options available are those set out as "key actions and developments going forward".

3.2 Whilst it would be possible to prioritise a smaller number of actions, this is not recommended because the actions form an integral overall programme of activity to deliver the strategic outcomes of the social value policy.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Consultation was conducted both internally and externally as part of developing the Social Value policy and framework.

4.2 The next stages focus on engagement, this will continue to include public service partners, VCS and business.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 This report presents “work in progress”, a point in time along a developmental journey. It sets out what has been achieved since adoption of the policy but also the “what next” on a number of potential options for development, each of which will have their own timescales. Timescales of detailed options and recommendations will be set out in relevant reports as appropriate.
- 5.2 The Council maintains a detailed action plan for social value development and delivery.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report, as such this report does not have a direct financial impact on the Councils revenue or capital budgets. The report provides an update on the progress and impact of the Social Value Policy that the Council has adopted into the Councils procurement procedures. The impact that this policy has on any current or future procurement exercises will need to be factored into the decision-making process on those specific procurements.
- 6.2 All associated procurement implications are contained in the main body of this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 allows for the consideration of added value, such as social, economic and environmental benefits, that may be secured in addition to the normal delivery of a contract. The policy, including the Social Value Toolkit, must comply with procurement law, particularly the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The Council must ensure its contractual and procurement documentation reflects the requirements described in this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 A key component of the policy will be ensuring that officers have the necessary training and knowledge to successfully implement it. Training, including workshops, will be required. The approach for embedding social value meets this requirement. For 2022 this will primarily relate to introduction of the Social Value Toolkit.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The outcomes within the Social Value Framework support the Council's priorities: “Every child able to fulfil their potential” and “People are safe, healthy, and live well” by including support for education and employment for these groups as key Social Value outcomes.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The Social Value Policy, approved in October 2019, received an Initial Equalities Screening Assessment. This is still relevant to this report and is attached as an appendix
- 10.2 The Social Value Framework allows for annual reporting on several key equalities' issues such as the number of people with disabilities that have gained employment. The policy has a positive impact with each individual procurement and commissioning activity including assessment of the impact on equality outcomes.
- 10.3 Further equalities screening and assessment will be undertaken on specific developments, especially when options for community wealth building are considered.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 NT 31 provides a social value outcome through savings in CO2 emissions on contracts achieved through decarbonisation, measured in tonnes of CO2.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 Partners have already signed up to and made commitments to take forward social value in Rotherham. Partners are engaged in direct development and delivery of social value outcomes, especially in relation to Community Wealth Building and Anchor networks.

The Council is promoting social value through its engagement with the MCA, seeking to gain added value through the Devo Deal and levelling up agenda.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 In the summer of 2021, a sample audit was undertaken to ensure the Council was complying with Social Value Policy requirements for the procurement of contracts valued at £25,000 and above. As part of the audit there was a specific focus on those contracts £100,000 and above to ensure social value commitments were secured as part of the award of the contract. The results of the audit found that the requirement has been successfully applied and provided substantial assurance that the controls in place to manage this activity are operating effectively.

14. Accountable Officers

Steve Eling
Policy and Equalities Manager
Assistant Chief Executive's
Steve.eling@rotherham.gov.uk

Karen Middlebrook
 Head of Procurement
 Corporate Procurement Service
 Finance and Customer Services
Karen.Middlebrook@rotherham.gov.uk

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	10/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	09/03/22

Report Author: *Steve Eling*
 Policy and Equalities Manager
 Assistant Chief Executive's
 Steve.eling@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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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: Social Value Policy

Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive's

Service area: Performance, Intelligence and Improvement

Lead person:
Steve Eling

Contact number:
01709 823618

Is this a:

☒ **Strategy / Policy**
☐ **Service / Function**
☐ **Other**

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The Policy sets out how the council measures the added Social Value secured through the council's procurement and commission activity. As part of the development of the policy a set of Social Value outcomes were identified based on the Council Plan and 6 Social Value objectives. The Policy introduces a mandatory 10% consideration for Social Value for all contracts with a total value above £100,000.

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>		No
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>		No
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>		No
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>		No
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>	Yes	
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>		No

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

The Social Value Framework allows for annual reporting on several key equalities issues such as the number of people with disabilities that have gained employment. The Framework has identified several key disadvantaged groups that should be supported through Social Value outcomes. As such the policy is having a positive impact regarding equalities. For each individual procurement and commissioning activity there is full consideration of the impact on equality outcomes. This is carried out by the officers involved in the procurement and commissioning activities.

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?**

A consideration of equality and diversity was a key element in the development of the Social Value Policy. The policy's central aim is to support the employment (and education and training) of several disadvantaged groups including disabled people who are currently disadvantaged in the labour market.

- **Key findings**

Supporting these groups is central to the Social Value outcomes that have been identified – these include a wide range of groups who will be supported through increased training, school visits, employment, apprenticeships, and other training opportunities. In addition, the policy is also about changing the way the council commissions – adopting new principles will place new emphasis on co-designing services and involving service users throughout the process. This will increase the role and voice and seldom heard groups.

- **Actions**

The policy is being monitored on an annual basis. Individual officers will be responsible for considering the impacts and outcomes of each individual procurement or commissioning process. Further actions are being developed to embed Social Value in the working of the Council and develop forward looking actions. For 2021/22, specific actions have been including taken:

- Real Living Wage accreditation.
- Social Value aligned to working towards “Excellent” under the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- Progressing the Rotherham Together Partnership Social Value Charter into the development of Anchor Networks.
- Working with the Mayoral Combined Authority to promote and develop Social Value for the Sheffield City Region.

The actions are further developed in 2022/23 to build on progress to date including community wealth building that will work towards reducing inequalities through neighbourhood working.

The social value toolkit, being introduced in 2022/23 provides for “Social Value by Design” through commissioning and linked directly to services which now include specific equalities detail.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	The Social Value Policy is being reviewed and monitored on an annual basis. This will capture the impacts of the policy.
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	To be completed by officers for individual procurement and commissioning processes.
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Individual officers are responsible for each procurement and relevant priority developments. The officer responsible for the overall analysis of the impact of Social Value will be Steve Eling, Policy and Equalities Manager.

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Steve Eling	Policy and Equalities Manager	7 th January 2022
Karen Middlebrook	Head of Procurement	7 th January 2022

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	7 th January 2022
Report title and date	Social Value Annual Report
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	7 th January 2022

User guidance:

- The first section of this form guides users through considering major areas where emissions are likely to occur. If emissions are impacted in a way not covered by these categories, please identify this at the bottom of the section
- The first section should be filled as such:
 - **Impact:** identify, in relation to each area, whether the decision of the proposal does the following: *reduces emissions*, *increases emissions*, or has *no impact on emissions*. If it is uncertain this section can be labelled *impact unknown*
 - If **no impact on emissions** is identified: no further detail is needed for this area, but can be added if relevant (e.g. if efforts have been made to mitigate emissions in this area.)
 - **Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions:** two sections deal respectively with emissions from the Council (including those of contractors), and emissions across Rotherham as a whole. In both sections please explain any factors that are likely to reduce or increase emissions. If **impact unknown** has been selected, then identify the area of uncertainty and outline known variables that may affect impacts.
 - In most cases there is no need to quantify the emission impact of an area after outlining the factors that may reduce or increase emissions. In some cases, however, this may be desirable if factors can be reduced to a small number of known variables (e.g. if an emission impact is attached to a known or estimated quantity of fuel consumed).
 - **Describe any measures to mitigate emission impact:** regardless of the emission impact, in many cases steps should be taken in order to reduce mitigate all emissions associated with each area as far as possible; these steps can be outlined here (For example: if a proposal is likely to increase emissions but practices or materials have been adopted in order to reduce this overall impact, this would be described here).
 - **Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out:** in this section outline any steps taken to monitor emission levels, or steps taken to monitor the factors that are expected to increase or reduce emission levels (for example, if waste or transport levels are being monitored this would be described here)
- A **summary paragraph** outlining the likely overall impacts of the proposal/decision on emissions should then be completed - this is not required if the proposal/decision has no impact across all areas.
- The supporting information section should be filled as followed:
 - Author/completing officer
 - **Research, data, or information** may refer to datasets, background documents, literature, consultations, or other data-gathering exercise. These should also be added to the **supporting documents** section of the cabinet report

-
- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
 - Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
 - Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

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 Rotherham 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?	N/A				
Emissions from transport?	N/A				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	N/A	.			
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	N/A				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	N/A				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	N/A				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

Whilst the report does not address specific emissions / CO2 impacts actions directly, the TOMs framework at TM31 does identify savings in CO2 emissions on contracts as a social value outcome. This is measured in tonnes CO2e and given a proxy value of £69.50. Committed to date is shown as £178,263 with delivery to date at £61,291.

The report shows figures from the Social Value Portal including 2558 tonnes of CO2e committed to be saved on contracts.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

N/A

Supporting information:

Completed by:
(Name, title, and service area/directorate).

Steve Eling
Policy and Equalities Manager
Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate

Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].

Data provided by the Social Value Portal.

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

Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]

Sam Blakeborough
Policy Officer
Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Rotherham Community Hub

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
katherine.harclerode@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report summarises findings and recommendations from the Health Select Commission spotlight review held on 13 September 2021, which focussed on the befriending service and support for loneliness and isolation provided by the Rotherham Community Hub during the pandemic. These recommendations were agreed by Health Select Commission on 25 November 2021, and by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 19 January 2022.

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet are requested to respond formally to the recommendations and indicate agreement or otherwise and what action will be taken to implement the recommendations, together with details of timescales and accountabilities.

Recommendations

1. That the following recommendations from the review be received:
 - a) That the excellent work of Rotherham Community Hub be commended, especially in respect of the befriending service which helped relieve loneliness and isolation throughout the pandemic.
 - b) That Members be encouraged to add the Community Hub to their ward priorities and e-bulletins to better support vulnerable residents and families.

- c) Whereas the current Community Hub model is due to end in March 2022, should there be a further evolution of the Community Hub model, that an update be brought in 12 months' time.
2. That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Minutes of Health Select Commission – 25 November 2021

Findings from Spotlight Review on Rotherham Community Hub – Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Findings from Spotlight Review on Rotherham Community Hub – Health Select Commission – 25 November 2021

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Health Select Commission – 25 November 2021

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Rotherham Community Hub

1. Background

- 1.1 To fulfil a statutory requirement, the Community Hub was rapidly mobilised during March 2020 to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, which left many vulnerable people without a way to get food, medicine, or emotional support during isolation. Coinciding with the launch of the Food Bank, the new Community Hub offered a simple route to request support or to volunteer. From the outset, Hub staff identified a trend of isolation and loneliness among people who were shielding or isolating during COVID-19. The Community Hub coordinated the joint response of Council services and the voluntary and community organisations sector (VCS).
- 1.2 The Rotherham Community Hub continues to provide support, and as of September 2021, 522 people had received loneliness and wellbeing support through the Hub. Many more people had received assistance in other ways, such as financial hardship support, business support grants, emergency food parcels, and emergency accommodation to prevent homelessness and for PPE distribution. At the time of reporting, a total of 6,679 requests for help had been received and 1,286 people volunteered to help their neighbours through the Rotherham Community Hub.
- 1.3 Members of Health Select Commission undertook this spotlight review with a view to understanding and highlighting the role of the Community Hub within the suite of interventions in loneliness and provision of mental health support which has been an agreed primary focus of health scrutiny for 2021-22. All members of Health Select Commission undertook the review.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The Hub has transitioned since March 2020 from the purely COVID-focussed service into a broader model that has led to strong, efficient partner working. This asset-based, collaborative approach means residents with complex needs can get the right support even pertaining to multiple areas of their lives. The Hub brings a variety of resources within reach, which can help Members in their ward work as well. When Members encounter constituents with complex needs, the Hub can be an efficient pathway to help. Members are invited to include the Hub in their ward priorities and in e-bulletins, which directs targeted activities to those wards.
- 2.2 Financial sustainability is a significant challenge moving forward from the pandemic because the Hub is currently funded from time-limited grants. The main grants that support the hub are the Practical Support Grant and the Contain Outbreak Management Funds, both of which are due to end soon. The Community Hub model will therefore continue to evolve as the pandemic enters recovery phase. This will require political direction, and an evidence base is being amassed in order to support next steps.
- 2.3 The Hub work has also emphasised what we can all do to be a good neighbour and make an impact to reduce isolation and loneliness in the lives of people

around us. Much of the most compelling evidence of the success of the Community Hub is rooted in soft intelligence, the qualitative feedback received from service users, but the effectiveness of this work has been measured also by required Public Health assessments designed to measure their journey at the beginning and end of each intervention. Reviews have also taken place in November 2020 and June 2021.

- 2.4 The partnership takes referrals from anywhere in the Borough, as currently funding allows for intensive, face-to-face loneliness support to help people who have been isolated transition back into social activity.
- 2.5 Potential volunteers are welcome and can be directed to sign up with Rotherfed or Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR). Volunteer numbers have dipped slightly, as some opportunities have closed; however, numbers are beginning to climb again.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Recommendations were generated by Members and derived from discussion during the Q&A session with service leads.
- 3.2 Recommendation 2 is that Cabinet consider the recommendations from the review. There is no alternative option as this is in line with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Members have regard to the expressed views of their constituents in their formulation of scrutiny priorities and lines of inquiry. Recommendations from scrutiny are produced as outcomes of consultation of officers and partners providing the service with Members in their role as elected representatives of Rotherham residents.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The accountability for implementing recommendations arising from this report will sit with Cabinet and relevant officers.
- 5.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules require Cabinet to consider and respond to recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Select Commissions in no more two months from the date that Cabinet receives this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 No financial implications arise directly from this report, although the response to the review will need to take account of any such implications arising from consideration of the scrutiny recommendations.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications directly arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Implications for Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults are set out in the main sections of the report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Furthering equalities and human rights is an objective of scrutiny; therefore, Members give consideration to equalities in the development of scrutiny work programmes, lines of inquiry and in their derivation of recommendations designed to improve the delivery of council services for residents.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no climate or emissions implications directly associated with this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. Implications for partners are set out in the main section of the report outlining the Commission's findings. Cabinet will need to consider the implications for partners in its response to the recommendations from scrutiny.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Members have regard to the risks and mitigation factors associated with the services under scrutiny and have made recommendations accordingly.

14. Accountable Officers

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	07/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	07/03/22

Report Author: Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Scrutiny Review Recommendations - Support for Young Carers

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report summarises the findings and recommendations from the 22 October 2021 spotlight review in respect of support for young carers. These recommendations were agreed by Health Select Commission on 25 November 2021, and by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 19 January 2022.

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet are requested to respond formally to the recommendations and indicate agreement or otherwise and what action will be taken to implement the recommendations, together with details of timescales and accountabilities.

Recommendations

1. That the following recommendations from the review be received:
 - a) That action plans and performance matrix be supplied as part of the next update in 6 months' time.
 - b) That a plan be developed to address the current data gap in respect of young carers who mature into adult carers, with a view to providing the best preparation possible and making this transition as seamless as possible for young carers who may continue to have caring responsibilities into adulthood.

- c) That consideration be given to how best to provide additional support to young carers seeking to access employment skills, education and training.
- 2. That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Minutes of Health Select Commission – 25 November 2021

Findings from Spotlight Review of Support for Young Carers – Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Findings from Spotlight Review of Support for Young Carers – Health Select Commission – 25 November 2021

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Health Select Commission – 25 November 2021

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Support for Young Carers

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the discussions of the Adult Carer's Strategy at the 8 July meeting of Health Select Commission, a spotlight review was undertaken in tandem with Improving Lives Select Commission to examine the support available for young carers both during the pandemic and entering the recovery phase. Members met with service leads from the Council's Early Help Service and partner organisation Barnardo's on 22 October 2021. The spotlight review was undertaken by Councillors Baum-Dixon, Pitchley, Thompson, and Yasseen.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Members sought assurances that robust and proactive efforts are made to identify young carers in need of support. Members also expressed concerns around unmet needs in the Borough and expressed interest in the outcomes of the targeted engagement programme. The response from service leads in the Council and Barnardo's provided assurances that young carers are proactively sought out. The family support elements of Early Help are robustly assessed, and it was noted that not all young carers who are supported through Early Help and other partners are necessarily known to Barnardo's. It was also noted that Housing Officers, for example, can be important eyes and ears to identify a need early, which is everyone's shared responsibility. Members requested to be kept informed of high-level action plans and recommended that these as well as a framework by which the service will assess its effectiveness be included in the next scrutiny update.
- 2.2 Members also requested clarification around the allocation of moneys to help young carers. The Covid Outbreak Management Funds (COMF) grants are time-limited and have been made available for the delivery of a specific programme for young carers. For that reason, the impact of that piece of work will be assessed separately. All of the money allocated for this work goes directly to the service.
- 2.3 Assurances were sought around support in place for young carers who may not self-identify or make themselves known to the service. The service leads acknowledged that sometimes there might be a fear that the child will be removed from the home, so there can be hesitation to engage; therefore, the service does not take initial refusal at face value. Very skilled workers in the service persist and try different methods to engage, considering it the responsibility of the service to find the right way to engage the child and family. If the service identifies a need, but the child does not want to engage, the service must respect that decision but also make sure that the child's school and other professionals in their lives keep an eye out to monitor. Sometimes a child might not want to do specific "young carer" activities but might be happy to come to a youth event hosted by Early Help. Examples were cited in which young carers who did not engage at first began to show interest after their siblings became familiar with the service and the community. The young carers service at Barnardo's is often pulled into the wraparound Early Help plan for a family, where appropriate.

- 2.4 Members expressed hopes that training and good practice is available to contractors to help them recognise a young carer who may need help. The response from leads confirmed that trainings have been delivered to various Council contractors such as Mears, to spread the message that safeguarding is everyone's business. Following on from these trainings, several situations where concerns were flagged early resulted in significant positive outcomes.
- 2.5 Members also further inquired around the plan for young carers who age out of the service age group as they become adults. The response from leads acknowledged that the best time to help a young person prepare for what will happen when they turn 18 is when they are 16 or 17. Assurances were provided that a pathway exists for the most vulnerable young people as they turn 18, but there remains a gap in data around the journey of young carers who become young adults. Without a cohort of young people who have agreed to contribute to this research, this will continue be an area of unknowns. Members therefore recommended that, insofar as data in respect of young carers transitioning to adulthood would be helpful in designing provision of support to ease this transition, this work should be undertaken.
- 2.6 Members sought assurances around support available to help young carers be able to access employment skills, training, and higher education. Whilst the response described positive liaison with local universities, particularly Rotherham and Sheffield Hallam campuses, which has offered focus group weekends available to the young people to familiarise them with the environment and introduce them to other carers who are university students and prospective students, Members recommended that more work be done in the area of access to education, skills and training, as limitations remain for young people who wish to pursue education but within only a short radius from home because of their caring responsibilities. For example, a young person wishing to pursue a particular career path may with support be able to pursue their desired vocation; whereas without support, they may feel that various pressures limit them from having an open future. Working to understand and reduce these limitations where possible, and to expand access to opportunities near home could help many young carers for whom options further afield would currently be out of reach.
- 2.7 Assurances were requested that teachers and other professionals such as GPs are trained and supported to identify a need. The response noted that the service liaises with link workers in schools according to each school's unique framework. This supports teachers and safeguarding leads in schools to be able to receive information. As COVID-19 restrictions have eased, professionals are spending more time with young people, and referrals are rising.
- 2.8 Assurances were sought around the provision of face-to-face support during COVID-19. The response noted the impact of restrictions on face-to-face activities, such as only one child being allowed to be transported per car journey. These precautions were especially important because many of the young people have a vulnerable family member. Home visits were conducted

during the pandemic, although some young carers chose to suspend these, and community events were held but not in the large numbers as in the past.

- 2.9 Clarification was requested around the process for getting support when a mental health need has been identified. The response indicated that Barnardo's does not attempt to tackle significant mental health problems themselves, but they do coordinate the referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to give the right support. On a day-to-day basis, mental health and wellbeing work focusses on issues like self-esteem, stress, anger, and relaxation. These activities are tailored to the needs of the individual child based on feedback from the young people on what works for them, and these sessions are not time limited.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Recommendations were generated by Members and derived from discussion during the Q&A session with service leads.
- 3.2 Recommendation 2 is that Cabinet consider the recommendations from the review. There is no alternative option as this is in line with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Members have regard to the expressed views of their constituents in their formulation of scrutiny priorities and lines of inquiry. Recommendations from scrutiny are produced as outcomes of consultation of officers and partners providing support for young carers with Members in their role as elected representatives of Rotherham residents.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The accountability for implementing recommendations arising from this report will sit with Cabinet and relevant officers.
- 5.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules require Cabinet to consider and respond to recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Select Commissions in no more two months from the date that Cabinet receives this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 No financial implications arise directly from this report, although the response to the review will need to take account of any such implications arising from consideration of the scrutiny recommendations.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications directly arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Implications for Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults are set out in the main sections of the report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Furthering equalities and human rights is an objective of scrutiny; therefore, Members give consideration to equalities in the development of scrutiny work programmes, lines of inquiry and in their derivation of recommendations designed to improve the delivery of council services for residents.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no climate or emissions implications directly associated with this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Implications for partners are set out in the main sections of the report. Cabinet will need to consider the implications for partners in its response to the recommendations from scrutiny.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Members have regard to the risks and mitigation factors associated with the services under scrutiny and have made recommendations accordingly.

14. Accountable Officers

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	07/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	07/03/22

Report Author: Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – External Funding

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report summarises findings and recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission spotlight review held on 12 November 2021, which examined external funding sources to fund regeneration and transformation projects around the Borough. Several bids have been successful, while others have been unsuccessful. Improving Places Select Commission received a presentation illustrating the status of the bids and funding packages and outlining the project that will be delivered. These recommendations were agreed by Improving Places Select Commission on 14 December 2021, and were endorsed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 19 January 2022.

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet are requested to respond formally to the recommendations and indicate agreement or otherwise and what action will be taken to implement the recommendations, together with details of timescales and accountabilities.

Recommendations

1. That the following recommendations from the review be received:
 - a) That the ambition of the service in submitting bids be commended.
 - b) That the feedback from the government regarding the Dinnington and Wath bids for Levelling Up Funds be circulated when available.

- c) That the Governance Advisor liaise with the Regeneration Strategy team to coordinate upcoming scrutiny work on markets with a view to feeding into future bids involving markets.
 - d) That efforts to ensure Rotherham receives its fair portion of gainshare or “single pot” funds from the Mayoral Combined Authority be noted.
2. That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Minutes of Improving Places Select Commission – 14 December 2021

Findings from Spotlight Review on External Funding – Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Findings from Spotlight Review on External Funding – Improving Places Select Commission – 14 December 2021

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Improving Places Select Commission – 14 December 2021

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – External Funding

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has submitted various bids for funding from a variety of sources to fund regeneration and transformation projects around the Borough. Several bids have been successful, while others have been unsuccessful. A presentation was requested by the Improving Places Select Commission to illustrate the status of bids and funding packages and the relevant projects that will be delivered. This has then led to the development of recommendations which are summarised in this report. The spotlight was undertaken by Councillors Wyatt, Burnett, Havard, Miro, and Tinsley.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Clarification was requested around Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) funding and assurances were requested that Rotherham receive its fair share of the money in these Sheffield City Region pots.
- 2.2 Clarification around plans for a new mainline station was also requested. Discussions were currently underway around a new station that would directly connect to places like Birmingham, making this a completely different offer than that which was currently available. Current conversations around transport are in motion to enable this station, and the Government has given assent.
- 2.3 Regarding the Levelling Up Fund, it was wondered if there were additional projects going on in the background which were also considered for bids. The service was continuing to do master-planning work in Dinnington and Wath so that when future funding is secured, these plans will be ready. The Maltby project had been deemed lower value, which meant it was not chosen in the end to receive this funding, and some projects were not quite ready in time for this funding envelope. Gainshare bids and lining up local priorities will be crucial for those projects that have not been able to pull down funds from national government. The term in use for these plans is “blueprint,” and it was noted that the local blueprint planning will be prepared. “Gainshare” is the term for the single pot of funds designated for the Sheffield City Region.
- 2.4 Although it was not possible to speculate around the Dinnington and Wath projects at the time of scrutiny, as far as deliverability, Members requested more information around bid suitability. In other words, were these projects ever likely to be successful Government bids, or were they likely to have to rely on Gainshare and local funds from the outset? Officers provided more information around the history of the projects, having been started from an early stage and prepared for submission via sustained and ambitious effort by officers. The desire to submit by June 2021 three bids from standing start was acknowledged a risk, but with sufficient ambition and drive, the view was that it was worth trying. The initial round had used Gainshare funds, but the government was going to allocate £125,000 for the second round, which had not been available in the first round.

2.5 Officers provided details of an upcoming feedback session that had been agreed, which affords until the springtime to respond to the feedback and prepare the projects further. With the feedback, it was hoped that a strong bid will result in round two. The feedback which will be delivered to the service was not available in time to be appended to this report but was requested to be provided to Members when it became available.

2.6 Members observed that physical infrastructure alone will not bring about “levelling up”; rather, real advancement and growth requires an array of factors linking together to achieve this, including for example, education and connectivity.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The discussion included some possible ways to strengthen bids in the next round including sharing with the service the outcome of upcoming spotlight review on markets. Recommendations were developed by Members and derived from discussion during the Q&A session with service leads.

3.2 Recommendation 2 is that Cabinet consider the recommendations from the review. There is no alternative option as this is in line with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Members have regard to the expressed views of their constituents in their formulation of scrutiny priorities and lines of enquiry. Recommendations from scrutiny are produced as outcomes of consultation of officers and partners providing the service with Members in their role as elected representatives of Rotherham residents.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The accountability for implementing recommendations arising from this report will sit with Cabinet and relevant officers.

5.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules require Cabinet to consider and respond to recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Select Commissions in no more two months from the date that Cabinet receives this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 No financial implications arise directly from this report, although the response to the review will take account of any such implications.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults arising from the report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Furthering equalities and human rights are key objectives in undertaking scrutiny activity; therefore, Members have considered equalities implications in the development of scrutiny work programmes, lines of enquiry and in their derivation of recommendations designed to improve the delivery of council services for residents.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no climate or emissions implications directly associated with this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no implications for partners directly arising from the report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Members have regard to the risks and mitigation factors associated with the services under scrutiny and have made recommendations accordingly.

14. Accountable Officers

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	07/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	07/03/22

Report Author: Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
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