

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

- Date and Time :-** Wednesday 17 November 2021 at 11.00 a.m.
- Venue:-** Rotherham Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.
- Membership:-** Councillors Clark (Chair), Barley (Vice-Chair), Baker-Rogers, Baum-Dixon, Browne, Burnett, A Carter, Cooksey, Elliott, Pitchley, Wyatt and Yasseen.

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

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

### AGENDA

**1. Apologies for Absence**

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

**2. Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

**3. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press**

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

**4. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

### Items for Pre-Decision Scrutiny

In accordance with the outcome of the Governance Review in 2016, the following items are submitted for pre-scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 22 November 2021. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are invited to comment and make recommendations on the proposals contained within the report.

**5. September 2021/22 Financial Monitoring (Pages 3 - 27)**

Cabinet Portfolio: - Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance

Strategic Directorate: - Finance and Customer Services

**6. Mid-year housing development update report (Pages 29 - 70)**

Cabinet Portfolio: - Housing

Strategic Directorate: - Adult Care, Public Health and Housing

**For Discussion/Decision:-**

**7. Annual Complaints Report (Pages 71 - 116)**

**For Information/Monitoring:-**

**8. Work Programme (Pages 117 - 134)**

To consider the Board's Work Programme.

**9. Urgent Business**

To determine any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

**10. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held on Wednesday 15 December at 11am at Rotherham Town Hall.



SHARON KEMP,  
Chief Executive.

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 22 November 2021

**Report Title**

September Financial Monitoring 2021/22

**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 report sets out the financial position as at the end of September 2021 and is based on actual costs and income for the first six months of 2021/22 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework and is essential to achievement of the objectives within the Council's Policy Agenda. To that end, this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> financial monitoring report of a series of monitoring reports for the current financial year which will continue to be brought forward to Cabinet on a regular basis.

As at September 2021, the Council currently expects to deliver the overall outturn within budget for the financial year 2021/22. Whilst the Directorates have a forecast year-end overspend of £9.8m on the General Fund, this is mitigated by the government's provision of COVID-19 emergency support grant and Sales, Fees and Charges Income Compensation. However, it should be noted that the longer term impacts of Covid-19, public health measures and the pace at which services can return to normal is unknown.

**Recommendations**

1. That the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast of a balanced budget be noted.
2. That it be noted that actions will continue to be taken to ensure that a balanced financial outturn is delivered.

3. That the Capital Programme update be noted.
4. That the updated position of the Governments Test and Trace Support Payments and Councils Local Scheme for Self-Isolation Support Payments, as per section 2.46 to 2.47 be noted.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

**Background Papers**

Budget and Council Tax 2021/22 Report to Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

May 2021/22 Financial Monitoring Report to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

July 2021/22 Financial Monitoring Report to Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## September Financial Monitoring 2021/22

### 1. Background

- 1.1 As part of its performance and control framework the Council is required to produce regular and timely reports for the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet to keep them informed of financial performance so that, where necessary, actions can be agreed and implemented to bring expenditure in line with the approved budget for the financial year.
- 1.2 Delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Capital Programme within the parameters agreed by Council is essential if the Council's objectives are to be achieved. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework.
- 1.3 This report is the third in a series of financial monitoring reports to Cabinet for 2021/22, setting out the projected year-end revenue budget financial position in light of actual costs and income for the first six months of the financial year.

### 2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Table 1 below shows, by Directorate, the summary forecast revenue outturn position.

**Table 1: Forecast Revenue Outturn 2021/22 as at September 2021**

| Directorate   | Budget<br>2020/21<br>£m | Forecast<br>Outturn<br>2020/21<br>£m | Forecast<br>Variance<br>over/und<br>er (-)<br>£m |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Children and Young People's Services                  | 63.4                    | 70.6                                 | 7.2  |
| Adult Care, Housing & Public Health                   | 87.1                    | 85.3                                 | -1.8   |
| Regeneration and Environment Services                 | 45.0                    | 49.1                                 | 4.1  |
| Finance and Customer Services                         | 19.3                    | 19.1                                 | -0.2   |
| Assistant Chief Executive                             | 7.2                     | 7.0                                  | -0.2   |
| Central Services                                      | 13.7                    | 14.4                                 | 0.7  |
| <b>Directorate Forecast Outturn</b>                   | <b>235.7</b>            | <b>245.5</b>                         | <b>9.8</b>                                       |
|   |                         |                                      |  |
| Covid-19 support grant                                |                         |                                      | -9.8   |
| Sales, Fees and Charges Income<br>Compensation Claims |                         |                                      | 0.0  |
| <b>Net Forecast Outturn</b>                           |                         |                                      | <b>0.0</b>                                       |
|   |                         |                                      |  |
| Dedicated Schools Grant                               |                         |                                      | 0.8  |
| Housing Revenue Account (HRA)                         |                         |                                      | 0.1  |

2.2 The Council's overspend position (excluding government's COVID-19 support grants) at this point is largely due to three overall issues:

- Financial implications as a result of COVID-19 and the Council's response to the pandemic.
- Delayed delivery of savings plans as a result of COVID-19.
- Placement pressures within Children and Young People's Services

As at September 2021, the Directorate forecast overspend of £9.8m is mitigated by the Government's provision of emergency funding to support the COVID-19 response. Whilst elements of the current forecast overspend aren't directly linked to Covid-19 pressures (CYPS placements), there are Covid-19 pressures/costs within budgeted services, that the Council can use Covid emergency funding to support.

2.3 Government has provided the Council with £8.3m emergency funding for the financial impacts during 2021/22. At this point it is too early to fully and accurately estimate the financial impacts of Covid-19 on 2021/22, nor estimate the longer-term financial impact on the Council. The Council also carried forward within the Covid grants reserve, £5.3m of emergency support funding from 2020/21, to be used to support the longer-term financial impacts of Covid-19. If needed, this will be used in 2021/22 or held in reserve for financial pressures over the longer term. This allows £13.6m to be used to support financial pressures in relation to Covid 19 during 2021/22. As such the Council is forecasting the use of £9.8m at present, to support the Council's forecast outturn position, leaving £3.8m to mitigate any further pressures that occur during the year.

2.4 In addition to the emergency funding support, Government has confirmed that the co-payment mechanism for irrecoverable Sales, Fees and Charges income, with the Government covering 75% of losses beyond 5% of planned income, will continue for quarter 1, 2021/22. This scheme will provide the Council with additional grant to support irrecoverable income losses on sales, fees and charges income. The Council has now submitted the claim for SFC quarter 1, 2021/22 in line with Governments deadline of the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021 (a claim of £428k).

2.5 Within previous financial monitoring reports the Council has provided an update on the Covid-19 grants available for 2021/22. These grants taken together with the specific Covid-19 Grants Reserve carried forward from 2020/21, of £27.4m, place the Council in a constructive position to manage the ongoing financial impacts of Covid-19. However, it should be noted that some of these grants are specific and targeted towards specific costs, such as the Section 31 grant to cover the impact of business rates relief. In addition, it is still too early for the Council to reliably forecast the ongoing financial implications of Covid-19, as government restrictions continue, this uncertainty will remain.

2.6 The forecast position will continue to be monitored closely and mitigations identified to ensure a balanced outturn position can be delivered. As indicated, it is anticipated at present that the Council will be able to deliver a balanced

outturn position, despite the risk of additional cost pressures that may arise as a result of continuing Covid impact.

- 2.7 As detailed within the Budget and Council Tax Report 2021/22 the Council has to deliver £18.1m of agreed savings, of which £5.6m are budgeted to be delivered in 2021/22. The table below presents the agreed savings by Directorate and indicates the budgeted profile for delivery. These values are based on agreed savings, no new savings plans have to be developed to meet these targets.

**Table 2 – Agreed Profile of Budget Savings and Cost Reductions by**

| <b>Directorate</b>      | <b>Budget Savings and Cost Reductions<br/>£m</b> | <b>Budgeted delivery in<br/>2021/22<br/>£m</b> | <b>Budgeted delivery in<br/>2022/23<br/>£m</b> | <b>Remaining shortfall<br/>after<br/>2022/23<br/>£m</b> |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| ACHPH                   | 5.8  | 0.0  | 1.4  | 4.4   |
| CYPS                    | 8.9  | 3.65   | 5.25   | 0.0   |
| R&E                     | 1.8  | 1.2  | 0.5  | 0.1   |
| Customer Services (R&E) | 1.65   | 0.8  | 0.85   | 0.0   |
|                         |  |  |  |   |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>18.15</b>                                     | <b>5.65</b>                                    | <b>8.0</b>                                     | <b>4.5</b>  |

**Directorate:**

To date £1.45m of savings have been delivered against the budgeted delivery in 2021/22 of £5.65m, with a forecast delivery of £2.1m for 2021/22. The non-delivery of savings is built into the overall Directorate forecasts and is due in the main to pressures on CYPS placements as detailed later within this report.

The following sections provide further information regarding the Councils forecast outturn of £9.8m, before taking account of the COVID grant, the key reasons for forecast under or overspends within Directorates, and the progress of savings delivery.

- 2.8 **Children and Young People Services Directorate (£7.2m forecast overspend)**
- 2.9 Children & Young People Services continue to implement the budget recovery plan with budget savings on track for staffing and therapeutic savings, but placement pressures mean only £1.5m of the £3.6m savings are currently forecast to be realised in 2021/22 and an updated action plan is being developed to enable the delivery of these savings and the £5.2m savings planned for 2022/23 as these savings are in the main linked to a reduction in placement costs.
- 2.10 The budget pressure at the end of September is a £7.2m projected overspend. In the main the pressures relate to demands on residential & emergency placement spend that is also impacting the delivery of planned savings for 2021/22. The budget position includes additional cost pressures due to the

COVID pandemic which are estimated at £1.5m (£1.2m placements and £300k reduced income) and Stovewood costs linked to CYPS, that are expected to be around £6m for 2021/22.

- 2.11 The Looked After Children number of 570 is ahead of the budget profile of 583 for this period, a reduction of 13 placements. However, the placement mix is showing higher than projected placements in high costs settings for residential (16), emergency (4), Independent Fostering Agencies (12), Parent & Baby (1), offset by in-house fostering (31) and no cost placements (15).
- 2.12 The direct employee budget is £36.2m and is a combination of general fund, traded and grant funded services. The projected overspend at the end of September is £272k, of which £105k relates to general fund.
- 2.13 The staffing general fund forecast pressure of £105k relates to staffing pressures in Children's Social Care due to use of agency staff in Locality Teams, pressures in Commissioning, Performance and Safeguarding offset by savings in the Early Help services. At the end of September there were 17.4 agency workers across children's social care to support service requirements.
- 2.14 The staffing budget reflects the work undertaken to date on delivery of the Early Help and Social Care Pathways savings proposals and other staff savings across the CYPS directorate.
- 2.15 A significant element of the CYPS non-pay budget relates to placements which has a net budget of £32.7m with a current projected spend of £39.0m, a projected overspend of £6.3m.
- 2.16 The £6.3m adverse projection relates in the main to £4.6m on residential placements and £1.9m on emergency placements, offset by savings on allowances £100k and supported accommodation £100k. In fostering there are £700k pressures on IFA placements due to numbers above the budget profile, offset by £700k savings in-house fostering due to numbers being lower than budget projections.
- 2.17 The other major budget pressures across the service relate to Transport pressures (£400k), a projected overspend on Section 17 budgets (£200k) and reduced income due to Covid for Crowden, Rockingham & fees which equates to £300k.

#### **Dedicated Schools Grant**

- 2.18 The High Needs Block (HNB) is £45.2m (including the £3.0m transfer from the schools block) and demand remains high due to rising numbers of children supported in specialist provision and the rising costs of Education Health Care (EHC) plans.
- 2.19 The High Needs Budget is based on the DSG recovery plan and includes anticipated growth on EHCs numbers and the implementation of new developments linked to the SEND Sufficiency Strategy. The latest budget position is a £755k projected overspend, with no movement since the last report. The pressures reflect growth for special school and Independent Sector

placements for the new academic year and pressures on Inclusion Services.

2.20 Both the Early Years and the Schools' Block are also expected to be broadly in line with allocations in 2021/22.

2.21 The key areas of focus to reduce High Needs Block spend are:

- A review of high cost, external education provision to reduce spend and move children back into Rotherham educational provision.
- Increase SEN provision in Rotherham linked to mainstream schools and academies, with further capacity becoming operational by the end of 2021/22.
- Work with schools and academies to maintain pupils in mainstream settings wherever possible.
- A review of inclusion services provided by the Council

### **Adult Care, Housing and Public Health (£1.8m forecast underspend)**

2.22 The overall Directorate forecast is an underspend of £1.8m on general fund services: Adult Care (£1.1m); Housing (£463k) and Public Health (£290k).

2.23 Included within the forecast is the Covid-19 impact for the service. COVID-19 is estimated to have a net cost impact of £2.2m during 2021/22. This includes: £400k for personal protective equipment; £1.3m due to delays in achieving planned cost reduction and costs of transformation; £1m of placement costs due to the extension of the NHS discharge scheme (additional demand) and £500k of staffing and other costs. Forecast additional NHS income for people discharged from hospital £1m, to support the hospital discharge process during the pandemic, reduces the net Covid-19 cost.

2.24 Excluding the cost of COVID-19, the cost of care packages is forecast to be a net £2.4m underspend. This is due to savings on transforming care £620k and reductions in the number of older people placements of £3m although Covid related placements are likely to be ongoing once temporary funding ceases. In addition, across Mental Health packages, Physical and Sensory disability services and Learning disability placements there is a net pressure of £1.2m due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases.

2.25 The overall forecast for Adult Care includes anticipated support from the Better Care Fund subject to final agreement with partners.

2.26 Neighbourhood Services' (Housing) is forecast to underspend by £463k. This is due to anticipated additional income from furnished homes and aids and adaptation fees.

2.27 Public Health is forecast to underspend by £290k in the main as the NHS Health Check programme (£250k) has been paused through the pandemic to reduce the risk from face-to-face contact and support the capacity issues in primary care.

**Regeneration and Environment Directorate (£4.1m forecast overspend)**

- 2.28 The latest outturn projection for the Directorate indicates a forecast pressure of £4.1m for this financial year, an improvement of £0.5m since the last financial monitoring report to Cabinet. This reflects a further transition between lockdown restrictions and a return to some aspects of normalised operational conditions. The improvement has mostly been in income however, it is not clear how much further progress will be made to reach the levels of the past. As the full consequence of Covid passes through it remains to be seen if underlying structural pressures remain e.g. waste services, parking. The forecast outturn projection includes the following specific budget issues:
- 2.29 Community Safety and Street Scene (CSS) is reporting an overall pressure of £2.6m. The most significant pressure continues to be in respect of Transport (£1.5m). Pressures continue in Home to School Transport (£1m), where at first, social distancing requirements have limited the ability to make savings but also the start of school in September brought a new cohort of passengers eligible for transport. Also, fewer contractors in the market have meant that prices have increased. Engagement continues with CYPS to maximise savings opportunities using improved cost data analysis to support plans to implement lower cost routes. Cost pressure amounting to £473k remain forecast in Fleet Management and Vehicle Maintenance. Plans are in place to improve the efficiency of the service but it will take time for arrangements to be reset then embed in.
- 2.30 Waste Management is forecasting an overspend of £700k. Household waste tonnages are above trend. A pressure of £382k is being reported in Parking Services, a slightly better forecast than earlier in the year, lockdown restrictions brought income down, however, the continuing impact on town centre footfall also plays a part in collecting less parking charges.
- 2.31 Culture Sport and Tourism (CST) has been significantly impacted by Covid restrictions earlier in the year, income earning services saw reduced takings and there has been slow recovery following those restrictions being lifted. As a result CST is reporting an overall pressure of £815k. Leisure sites, green spaces and country parks are key income earners for R&E but the rate of recovery in income is slow. The income shortfalls at Rother Valley Country Park, Waleswood Caravan Park and other green spaces are forecast to be £871k this year. The Theatre has a forecast net £86k loss, following the Council decision to close the facility until the Autumn, it is uncertain if sales can improve on this following the Theatre's September re-opening. Libraries costs are forecast to be less than planned (£142k) which is due to difficulty in recruiting to vacant posts.
- 2.32 Planning Regeneration and Transport (PRT) is forecasting an overall pressure of £684k, an improvement of £299k. The pressure in Transportation is £125k, there are a high number of vacancies due to difficulties recruiting, particularly to high skilled engineering roles, so fewer fee earning staff are in post consequently less than planned income is recovered.

- 2.33 A pressure of £128k is being reported in respect of Facilities Services, still due to Covid response related costs, agency costs, PPE and lost income. In Asset Management a pressure of £450k reflects a reduction in project fee turnover, a small recovery has been measured but this has been in utility savings and isn't expect to recur. A pressure of £141k continues to be forecast on Markets arising from the number of void stalls and the ongoing difficult trading conditions. However, grant income and lower than expected costs in the wider service (-£132k) has helped mitigate the Markets service pressure as has improved income in planning and building control (£28k).
- 2.34 Progress on delivering outstanding revenue budget savings within the Directorate continues into 2021/22. Revenue budget pressures currently reflect that the time taken to deliver Transport savings and demand pressures make delivering savings a challenge. However £500k has been delivered within Property Services and work continues to progress delivery across the remaining savings.

#### **Finance and Customer Services (£0.2m forecast underspend)**

- 2.35 The overall Directorate is reporting a £0.2m forecast underspend. Whilst there are financial pressures, as detailed below, the service will make savings on ICT Contracts and Legal disbursements to mitigate these financial pressures and deliver a £0.2m underspend. The current service forecast suggests potentially a greater underspend than this but there are risks within that forecast position hence a moderate forecast underspend currently being reported. These risks relate in the main to technical adjustments for bad debt provision on Housing Benefits, an area that can fluctuate significantly.
- 2.36 Within Customer, Information and Digital Services, following a review of the service provision and the loss-making position it was in, the Schools Connect Trading service was ceased. Therefore, the service holds a budget pressure of £126k reflecting the income that would have been generated when this traded service was viable. It should be noted that this is still an improved position from that prior to ceasing the service. The service also has a pressure within the corporate mail and print service following a centralisation of print services, the print service had an income shortfall of £100k. Following the changes to ways of working as a result of the pandemic, the service has seen a significant reduction in print costs that is mitigating this income shortfall. Now the budgets have been centralised the service are better placed to control print usage and implement a strategy to minimise print whilst promoting digitalised service provision.
- 2.37 Legal Services faces continued demand for legal support with child protection hearings and court case costs relating to Looked After Children. However, reduced costs of legal disbursements and difficulties in recruiting to key posts, in particular within Adult Social Care legal support, are currently resulting in a forecast £474k underspend. However, the number of cases during the year remains volatile and will continue to be monitored closely.

#### **Assistant Chief Executive (£0.2m forecast underspend)**

- 2.38 The service is currently able to forecast a £193k underspend, in the main due to carrying a number of vacant posts within the HR service, whilst a review of service requirements is finalised and wider vacancies within the directorate as a result of staff turnover. The Directorate are looking to draw up a process for services to bring forward plans as part of a transformation programme, via a business case process to run projects, to review and improve service provision and efficiency.

**Central Services (£757k forecast overspend)**

- 2.39 There are agreed savings to be delivered from Central Services as the £800k customer services saving to be delivered from Regeneration and Environment Services has been budgeted for here. It is unlikely this saving will be delivered in full this year, with a forecast delivery of £100k, however to date £43k of the saving has been delivered in the current year, with a total with a further £24k secured for 2022/23.
- 2.40 A number of general efficiencies on centrally managed budgets are anticipated to mitigate the current forecast overspend by the end of the financial year, this position will be kept under review and updated in future Financial Monitoring reports. The Council has £13.6m of emergency support funding available to support the 2021/22 financial outturn. Whilst in the table in section 2.1, an element of this grant is shown below the Directorate position, to net off the overall overspend, at the year end this grant will be applied to Central Services, as was the approach in 2020/21.
- 2.41 The Central Services budgets are made up of a number of corporate budgets for levies and charges such as the Integrated Transport Levy (ITA), PFI Financing, and Treasury Management. A list of the main budget areas within Central Services was provided as part of the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2021/22, approved at Council 3rd March 2021. The costs within this area are largely fixed costs, set out prior to the start of a financial year, not specific to a particular Directorate and are therefore not controllable by the Directorates and thus held centrally. For example, the cost of levies for 2021/22 was set at £11.8m at the outset of 2021/22.

**Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

- 2.42 The Housing Revenue Account is a statutory ring-fenced account that the Council has to maintain in respect of the income and expenditure incurred in relation to its council dwellings and associated assets. The HRA is currently forecast to overspend by £119k before transfer from reserves.
- 2.43 There is a forecast underachievement of income (£261k) which mainly relates to: the closure of Communal Facilities due to COVID-19, reduced garage rents and lower income from interest on balances. This is offset by increased fees for Aids and Adaptations (£55k) due to additional works including work delayed due to the pandemic and increased cost of sales income from RTB (£124k). There is a forecast overspend within Supervision and Management (£388k) mainly due to increased ICT costs and RTB transaction costs. Interest on loans

is forecast to be £324k underspent and the provision for bad debt is expected to reduce saving £83k. Other small variances total £56k. R&M is forecast to budget at this stage although there are potential pressures in respect of the backlog of works due to the impact of Covid 19.

- 2.44 The HRA budget includes a revenue contribution to capital expenditure of £6.5m (which is forecast to budget at this stage) plus a contribution from the HRA reserve of £2.2m to balance the overall budget. The transfer from reserve is forecast at £2.3m to reflect the forecast overspend which will bring the HRA back to a balanced position.

### **Governments Test and Trace Support Payments & Local Self-Isolation Support scheme update**

- 2.45 On 20 September 2020 Government announced that from 28 September 2020 there would be a legal duty on all those who tested positive for COVID-19 or were identified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, to self-isolate. In order to support those people required to self-isolate, Government introduce the Test and Trace Support Payments scheme, that from 28 September 2020, individuals would be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500, providing that they met the scheme criteria. The Council have been administering the scheme since this point, with the scheme expected to end September 2021. However, Government have now announced that the scheme will run until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, albeit with some amended criteria. For example, those who are double vaccinated, are not required to self-isolate if they are only identified as a contact of a person with a positive test.
- 2.46 The Council's Local Self-Isolation Support scheme, approved at Cabinet on 25th January 2021, was established to provide financial support to those people needing to self-isolate, that couldn't access Governments Test and Trace Self Isolation Support schemes. This scheme provides payments of £250 per successful applicant providing that they meet the scheme criteria.
- 2.47 As part of the June Finance Update report to Cabinet, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021, a recommendation was approved to continue the Council's local scheme for as long as the Government's schemes continue. Therefore, when the Government scheme ends, the Council's Local Self-Isolation Support Scheme will also end. Additional funding for the local scheme to continue to the end of September was approved as part of the Financial Monitoring report to Cabinet, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021, to be funded via the Control Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).
- 2.48 Following Government's extension of the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme to the end of March 2022, the Local Self-Isolation Support Scheme will also be extended to March 2022. In order to continue to fund the scheme until March 2022, the additional funding will again be provided through the COMF contingency. An officer decision has been taken by the Assistant Director of Public Health, in line with delegated authority approved within the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021 Cabinet report on COMF.

## 2.49 Capital Programme Update

2.50 The Capital Programme 2021/22 now totals £192,578m split between the General Fund £123.578m and HRA £69.000m. This is a decrease of £1.111m to the position as at the end of July reported to Cabinet on 20th September 2021, the majority of which relates to the reprofiling of schemes due to delays caused mainly from COVID-19 and the high volume of capital activity taking place nationally that is straining resources from an internal and external delivery point. The movement is based on the latest profiles of expenditure against schemes, both new and revised grant allocations £200k, new borrowing, £144k and slippage and re-profiles of (£1.455m).

The overall Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24 has increased by £3.229m, predominantly as a result of changes to grant funding available, as detailed in the following sections.

|                                     | Total Increase<br>£m | 2021/22<br>Impact<br>£m | Post 2021/22<br>Impact<br>£m |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Revised Grant and Funding Estimates | 3.085                | 0.200                   | 2.885                        |
| New borrowing                       | 0.144                | 0.144                   | 0.000                        |
| Slippage / reprofiling              | 0.000                | (1.455)                 | 1.455                        |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>3.229</b>         | <b>(1.111)</b>          | <b>4.340</b>                 |

2.51 The main re-profiles are:

- **Basingthorpe Farm**, £0.445m slippage, consultancy work has been undertaken as part of determining the way forward with the site. The work undertaken will require review and consultation prior to any revised plans being put forward, therefore it is estimated that this will slip into 2022/23.
- **Century Park Phase II**, £1.069m slippage - Business Case with SYMCA for use of GBBF and Gainshare. A project assessment of costs and project viability, building specification and funding options was undertaken, with a revised delivery plan agreed. However, due to the delays in the early part of the year whilst the deliverability of the scheme was reviewed and challenges around planning approval, the project is unlikely to complete by March 2022. This may impact the funding, which Government have indicated must be spent by March 2022 (GBBF funding for this project is £2m) The Council are also in the progress of gaining agreement from SYMCA for approval of Gainshare funding of £1m to support this new delivery model. The gainshare will support the increased costs of the re-designed scheme, covering costs to complete the scheme in the early part of 2022/23.
- **Network Equipment Refresh Programme** – £0.931m budget brought

forward. The Council ICT solution for this area has been developed and approved, with an order to be placed for £2.7m. Part of this payment will be covered by re-profiling the existing approved budgets, allowing the project to be delivered quicker than expected. The benefits of this will be that the Council can combine a number of agreements together under one cheaper contract, whilst protecting the security of the Council's digital infrastructure.

- 2.52 New grant funded schemes are added to the Capital Programme on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules. Grant schemes added or reduced since the November Cabinet report are listed below:

| <b>Directorate/Scheme</b>   | <b>2021/22<br/>£M</b> | <b>Post<br/>2021/22<br/>£m</b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Regeneration &amp; Environment</b>   |                       |                                |
| Land Release Fund – External funding secured to support the demolition of two units on Wellgate as part of the wider Town Centre Development plan.                                  | 0.200                 | 0.000                          |
| Clean Air Zone funding, Bellows Road, this covers design, development and delivery of the highway improvement at the junction of Rawmarsh High Street and Bellows Road.             | 0.000                 | 2.280                          |
| Clean Air Zone funding, Wortley Road, this covers design, development and delivery of the Wortley Road HGV prohibition.   | 0.000                 | 0.085                          |
| Clean Air Zone funding, this is the balance of Clean Air Zone funding, which will fund remaining Clean Air Zone works. This will be broken down by scheme once costs are confirmed. | 0.000                 | 0.520                          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0.200</b>          | <b>2.885</b>                   |

2.53 **MCA Approvals**

There have been no new MCA approvals since the last report submitted to cabinet on 20th September 2021.

2.54 **Proposed amendments to the use of corporate resources**

A number of Council houses, within HRA stock that were funded using Homes England grant when they were originally purchased have been sold via a Right to Buy. As part of the grant conditions, if the properties were ever purchased under the Right to Buy legislation, the Council would need to refund the grant used for the original purchase. As such a budget of £0.144m of RTB capital receipts has been added to the capital programme to fund the repayment of grant due back to Homes England from the sale of these properties.

2.55 The proposed updated Capital Programme to 2023/24 is shown by Directorate in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Proposed Updated Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24**

| <b>Directorate</b>                   | <b>2021/22<br/>Budget<br/>£m</b> | <b>2022/23<br/>Budget<br/>£m</b> | <b>2023/24<br/>Budget<br/>£m</b> | <b>Total<br/>Budget<br/>£m</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>General Fund<br/>Capital</b>      |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                |
| Children and Young People's Services | 12.868                           | 9.442                            | 5.412                            | 27.722                         |
| Assistant Chief Executive            | 0.387                            | 0.210                            | 0.210                            | 0.807                          |
| Adult Care & Housing                 | 6.840                            | 6.540                            | 14.226                           | 27.606                         |
| Finance and Customer Services        | 8.056                            | 2.902                            | 9.893                            | 20.851                         |
| Regeneration and Environment         | 93.427                           | 52.242                           | 28.089                           | 173.758                        |
| Capitalisation Direction             | 2.000                            | 1.000                            | 1.000                            | 4.000                          |
| <b>Total General Fund Capital</b>    | <b>123.578</b>                   | <b>72.336</b>                    | <b>58.830</b>                    | <b>254.744</b>                 |
| <b>Total HRA Capital</b>             |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                |
|                                      | 69.000                           | 49.042                           | 45.834                           | <b>163.876</b>                 |
| <b>Total RMBC Capital Programme</b>  |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                |
|                                      | <b>192.578</b>                   | <b>121.378</b>                   | <b>104.664</b>                   | <b>418.620</b>                 |

It should be noted that current spend against this revised profile is still low for this point in the year. The capital programme for 2021/22 is ambitious and a review of the deliverability of the capital programme will therefore be undertaken, with the potential need to delay the delivery of some programmes of work. It is therefore anticipated that the programme will reduce further due to slippage as the year progresses.

#### **Funding position of Capital Programme 2021/22**

2.56 The £192.578m of capital expenditure is funded as shown in the Table 4 below.

2.57 **Table 4: Funding of the approved Capital Programme**

| <b>Funding Stream</b>                              | <b>2021/22<br/>Budget<br/>£m</b> |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Grants and Contributions                           | 58.265                           |
| Unsupported Borrowing                              | 61.997                           |
| Capital Receipts                                   | 1.144                            |
| Capital Receipts - Flexible Use & HRA Contribution | 2.000                            |
| HRA Contribution                                   | 0.173                            |
| <b>Total Funding - General Fund</b>                | <b>123.578</b>                   |
| Grants and Contributions                           | 5.787                            |
| Unsupported Borrowing                              | 4.303                            |
| Housing Major Repairs Allowance                    | 41.148                           |
| Capital Receipts                                   | 11.244                           |
| Revenue Contribution                               | 6.519                            |
| <b>Total Funding - HRA</b>                         | <b>69.000</b>                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>192.578</b>                   |

**Capital Receipts**

2.58 The Council is continuing to undertake a comprehensive review of its assets and buildings portfolio with the aim of rationalising both its operational and non-operational asset holdings. This may contribute future capital receipts which are earmarked to support the revenue budget, in accordance with the Council's approved flexible use of capital receipts strategy.

2.59 To date General Fund useable capital receipts of £0.499m have been generated. Although loan repayments will be received during the financial year, these cannot be used to support the revenue budget as only those receipts by the disposal of property, plant and equipment can be used in that way.

| <b>Description</b>  | <b>Total as at 30<sup>th</sup><br/>September<br/>2021<br/>£m</b> |
|---|--|
| 11 Russell House  | - 0.077  |
| Copeland Lodge  | - 0.401  |
| Miscellaneous   | - 0.003  |
| <b>Total Capital Receipts<br/>(Excluding loan repayments)</b> | <b>- 0.481</b>   |
| Repayment of Loans  | - 0.018  |
| <b>Total Capital Receipts</b>                                 | <b>- 0.499</b>   |

2.60 The detailed disposal programme is currently being updated and so coupled with the COVID19 situation it is very difficult to forecast. Therefore, at this stage the forecast for useable capital receipts is between £0.6m and £1m and includes surplus property disposals which are subject to Cabinet approval. These receipts are made up of a small number of disposals and therefore any changes to these could impact on these forecasts significantly.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 With regard to the current forecast net revenue budget overspend of £9.8m, further management actions continue to be identified with the clear aim of ensuring a balanced budget position can be achieved taking into account the emergency Covid funding. This is in recognition that there are still financial implications as a result of the third national lockdown that need to be fully understood. It is nationally recognised best practice to monitor the performance against the agreed revenue budgets and the Capital Programme throughout the year.

3.2 With regards to the updated position for noting at Recommendation 4, the Council could have chosen to cease the Local Scheme when the Government funding ran out, this would have meant some claimants in need of support being rejected and would not support the wider aims of the Council to encourage people to adhere to self-isolation rules. In addition, it would also go against the Council's commitment to continue the scheme for as long as the Government's Test and Trace Support Payment schemes continue as indicated as part of the June Finance Update report to Cabinet, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

4.1 The Council consulted on the proposed budget for 2021/22, as part of producing the Budget and Council Tax Report 2021/22. Details of the consultation are set out in the Budget and Council Tax 2021/22 report approved by Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021.

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

5.1 Strategic Directors, Managers and Budget Holders will ensure ongoing tight management and close scrutiny of spend this financial year.

5.2 Financial Monitoring reports are taken to Cabinet meetings during the year. The Financial Outturn report for 2021/22 will be taken to Cabinet in July 2022.

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

6.1 The Council's overspend position is detailed within the report along with the estimated impact of COVID-19. This position continues to be monitored closely. Control over spending remains critical to both maintaining the robust Reserves Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy. All savings are being closely monitored and tracked, with all areas at risk of shortfall subject to review and the identification of alternative options.

6.2 An update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy was provided within the Budget and Council Tax Report 2021/22, approved at Council on the 3 March 2021. This indicated that a balanced budget could be maintained for 2021/22 but that there was a forecast funding gap for 2022/23. The MTFS position is being reviewed again, informed by the Government Spending Review 2021 released on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and an updated position will be reported to Cabinet in December.

6.3 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the report.

## 7. **Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 No direct legal implications.

## 8. **Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 No direct implications.

## 9. **Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 The report includes reference to the cost pressures on both Children's and Adult Social care budget.

## 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 At a time of economic difficulty and tight financial constraints, managing spend in line with the Council's budget is paramount. Careful scrutiny of expenditure and income across all services and close budget monitoring therefore remain a top priority if the Council is to deliver both its annual and medium term financial plans while sustaining its overall financial resilience

## 13. **Accountable Officers**

Graham Saxton, Assistant Director – Financial Services

Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

|  | <b>Named Officer</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| Chief Executive  | Sharon Kemp          | 07/11/21    |
| Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services<br>(S.151 Officer) | Judith Badger        | 03/11/21    |
| Head of Legal Services<br>(Monitoring Officer)                       | Bal Nahal            | 03/11/21    |

*Report Author: Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance*

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

## 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.

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Directorate: Finance and Customer Services</b> | <b>Service area: Finance</b>        |
| <b>Lead person: Rob Mahon</b>                     | <b>Contact number: 01709 254518</b> |

### 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 Council has a framework of budgetary monitoring and reporting that ensures budget management is exercised within annual cash limits.

Each month the Budget Manager receives timely information on income and expenditure to enable them to fulfil their budgetary responsibilities. Following the review of the budget information, each budget manager provides a forecast of their projected outturn position on each service. The Strategic Director subsequently provides a consolidated forecast for their directorate to the Chief Finance Officer and relevant Cabinet Member.

A budget monitoring report, which includes an up-to-date outturn forecast, information about significant variances from approved budgets and proposals for dealing with them, is submitted to Cabinet at least 6 times a year, culminating with the Councils Financial Outturn report.

Whilst the framework described above relates to revenue budgets, the capital programme is also similarly monitored and reported alongside the Council's revenue position.

The financial monitoring position report summarises the key variances for each directorate and considers the key financial pressures and risks.

This report is the final financial report in the financial year, it sets out the Council's full revenue outturn position. The report also covers off any other key items to be noted at the time.

Given that the revenue and capital budgets have been approved by Council in February each year, when equality assessments would have been considered at that time in respect of the budget proposals, there are no further issues in respect of equality and diversity.

### 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

#### 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 –<br>Finance and Customer<br>Services | 19/10/21 |
|               |  |          |
|               |  |          |

#### 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](mailto: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.  |          |
| <b>Date screening completed</b>   | 19/10/21 |
| <b>If relates to a Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, Council or a Significant Operational Decision – report date and date sent for publication</b> |          |
| <b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b><br><a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>       |          |

#### 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](mailto: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:

As this report is a financial update on previous events, updates on levels of funding moving forwards and doesn't approve anything directly to happen, it does not have any carbon implications.

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 – 22 November 2021

**Report Title**

Mid-year Housing Development Update Report – 2021/22

**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**

Anne Marie Lubanski, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

**Report Author(s)**

Jane Davies, Head of Strategic Housing and Development  
Jane.davies@rotherham.gov.uk

**Ward(s) Affected**

Various

**Report Summary**

In March 2021, Cabinet approved the 2021/22 Housing Development Programme which listed a range of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) sites to be developed for housing, along with potential strategic acquisitions. It was agreed that a half-year update report would be presented to Cabinet, setting out progress.

The Covid 19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges in terms of the availability of construction materials and labour. Despite this, coupled with the additional challenge posed by the nature of the sites in the Council's housing growth programme (typically more difficult and expensive to develop), good progress has been made with all projects, excellent quality is being achieved, and the Council continues to make a significant contribution to Rotherham's overall affordable housing requirement.

**Recommendations**

1. That progress made with the 2021/22 housing development programme be noted.

**List of Appendices Included**

- Appendix 1 Photographic Summary
- Appendix 2 Summary of Progress Against Previous Recommendations
- Appendix 3 Initial Equality Screening (Part A)

Appendix 4 Equality Analysis (Part B)  
Appendix 5 Carbon Impact Assessment

**Background Papers**

Housing Strategy 2019-22:

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/download/96/rotherham-housing-strategy>

HRA Business Plan 2021-22

Cabinet report: [Annual Housing Development Report - 2021/22](#)

The Inequality of Poverty: [The-Inequality-of-Poverty-Full-Report.pdf \(fairbydesign.com\)](#)

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## Mid-year housing development update report

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Annual Housing Development Report – 2021/22 was the second annual report on the programme to be presented to Cabinet and restated the importance of housing growth and the various approaches the Council will take. It included a list of HRA sites to be progressed in 2021/22 either through Council build or development by housing associations, and potential strategic acquisitions.
- 1.2 Housing development schemes are highly complex and naturally take time to bring forward from inception to actual delivery, often two to three years. However good progress continues to be made in a very challenging environment.
- 1.3 The Council is purposely intervening in the housing market to bring forward much needed new homes on challenging sites, whilst also aspiring to provide homes which are most needed and wanted by our residents. This includes homes that directly address local needs, are highly energy efficient and offer excellent space and quality standards.
- 1.4 This is also taking place within the wider context of the EU Exit and Covid-19 pandemic which, combined, are serving to severely constrain the supply chain; this being the availability and cost of materials and labour, resulting in an industry-wide slowdown in the rate of new housing delivery which has directly impacted on the Council's own programme and corporate delivery targets.
- 1.5 Ongoing development of the Council's Green Housing Strategy, which is a climate change focussed subsidiary of the Housing Strategy, has highlighted the need for low carbon requirements to be built into schemes which are currently in development.
- 1.6 Each of these factors increase the complexity and cost implications for the schemes under development. The programme therefore continues to be highly reliant on grant funding to ensure that schemes are affordable and continue to demonstrate value for money in the context of not just cost to the Council versus value and income generation potential, but also the broader strategic aims which the new homes achieve or contribute toward.
- 1.7 The Council is maintaining regular dialogue with Homes England following the successful delivery of the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) which helped to bring forward over 200 new homes across borough and is further enabling the delivery of over 170 in the town centre. The Council remain confident that Homes England will continue to provide significant grant funding support to the Council.
- 1.8 The Council also continues to engage with the Brownfield Housing Programme, administered by the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, and overall the Council remains in a good position to deliver

against aspirations, but retains a prudent stance in respect of expectations around delivery timescales and overall scheme costs.

1.9 The table in Appendix 2 tracks progress against the previous recommendations in the September 20, January 21 and March 21 Cabinet reports. The recommendations from the March 2021 Cabinet report were as follows:

1. That Cabinet approves the release of the Council owned sites listed in Appendix 3 for residential development, subject to written confirmation of agreement by the relevant Ward Members.
2. That Cabinet approves the programme of strategic acquisition opportunities listed in Exempt Appendix 4, and that authority is delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport to purchase homes from private developers or the open market to add to the Council's stock with the agreement of the Assistant Director of Housing, Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Housing. This is subject to the budget parameters as set out in the Council's approved Capital Programme. This delegation is proposed to apply until April 2022 when the next annual programme will be reported to Cabinet.
3. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Section 151 Officer, to enter into an Affordable Homes Programme grant funding agreement with Homes England, for all eligible sites listed in Appendix 3.

1.10 Progress on recommendation 1:

Eastwood Housing Development sites

- Commissioned Local Partnerships to undertake a "mini master-planning" exercise for the two sites which comprise this scheme – recently concluded
- Submitted an indicative bid to Sheffield City Region Brownfield Housing Fund for grant funding support to deliver the scheme – final business case to follow at a later date
- Internal Strategic Outline Business Case and Procurement Business Case drafted
- Separate Cabinet report to be presented in early 2022

Kiveton Park, Thurcroft and West Melton small site assemblies

- Additional consultation carried out with Ward Members
- Currently assessing the delivery and procurement routes
- Submitted an indicative bid to Sheffield City Region Brownfield Housing Fund for grant funding support to deliver these schemes – final business case to follow at a later date

## Miscellaneous sites

- No specific progress to report at this time.

### 1.11 Progress on recommendation 2:

The Council is continuing to progress all but one of the newly proposed acquisition opportunities as set out within Appendix 4 of the March 2021 Cabinet report. The one scheme no longer being progressed relates to the proposed acquisition of a single home and is no longer proceeding because a suitable agreement could not be reached with the owner.

### 1.12 Progress on recommendation 3:

Grant applications to Homes England are made via a 'Continuous Market Engagement' (CME) process and discussions are currently underway with Homes England regarding the Council's housing development pipeline.

### 1.13 The sites identified in the 2020/21 development programme are ongoing and a summary of progress follows:

- SOAHP Small Sites (14 bungalows on Arundel Avenue, Treeton and Braithwell Road, Ravenfield): Work commenced in February 2021 and the bungalows are expected to be completed by March 22.
- East Herringthorpe Site Assembly (estimated 13 homes): Currently working with a construction partner selected from the Efficiency North framework to work up detailed proposals and enable the Council to enter into a formal contractual agreement. Start on site is expected in Summer 22.
- Thrybergh Site Assembly (estimated four homes): Negotiations are currently underway with the Council's repairs and maintenance contractors, to build four homes on these sites. Start on site is anticipated in Summer 22.
- Wingfield Site Assembly (estimated 14 homes): Continuing dialogue with housing associations regarding delivery.
- Strategic Acquisitions: Completed the acquisition of six bungalows on the Highfield Farm development in West Melton, all of which are now allocated. Entered into contract to purchase 22 new homes from the Wentworth View development in Thorpe Hesley, the first three homes of which are due to be handed over in the near future. Negotiations are continuing on other sites previously identified.

### 1.14 Other highlights since the March 21 Cabinet report include:

- Excellent progress has been made with the town centre housing schemes and the first homes will be completed towards the end of the year.

- Started on sites at Chesterhill Avenue and Whinney Hill (Dalton and Thrybergh) for the construction of 237 new homes, with the first homes due for completion by March 22.
- Completion of Broom Hayes development (44 homes for council rent and council shared ownership).
- Completion of ten bungalows on various small sites in Wickersley and Bramley by Arches housing association, with nomination rights for the Council from the Housing Register.
- Cabinet approval in August 21 to sell the Eldertree Road garage site to enable a private development of 24 new homes on an adjacent Local Plan site.
- Successful virtual Housing Developer Summit held in June 21.

Further detail is attached at Appendix 1 – photographic summary.

## **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 The key issues associated with the annual programme are detailed in the Cabinet report 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

## **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 N/A as this is an update report.

## **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 Residents will be consulted via the Planning process along with all statutory consultees, but the Strategic Housing and Development Service has also worked with the Neighbourhood Service to assist with disseminating information about development in localities, identifying alignment with ward priorities. Regular articles about housing development are also included in the tenants' newsletter, Home Matters.
- 4.2 Ward Members have received specific briefings on potential sites in their wards and their feedback has been taken into account.
- 4.3 Regular engagement is undertaken with developers, housing associations, Homes England and the Sheffield City Region.

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

- 5.1 The Assistant Director for Housing has overall responsibility for implementing the housing development programme.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications due to the recommendations in the report. However, issues highlighted such as supply chain pressures on the cost of materials and labour, and potential increased costs to meet low

carbon requirements, are likely to have an impact on the overall outcomes of the Housing Growth programme. The total resources available are determined by the affordability of the cost of borrowing (alongside available grant funding). If unit costs increase its likely fewer new properties will be able to be delivered.

Some of these pressures have impacted the current capital programme although most live schemes are not forecast to overspend.

6.2 Procurement activity is detailed within the main body of this report. Housing Services are engaging with the Procurement Team to ensure procurement activity is being undertaken in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

## **7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**

7.1 There are no substantive legal issues arising from this report. Legal Services recommends early engagement with them where any legal work is required, for example entering into and completing any external grant funding agreements, purchasing any properties or entering into any legal contracts.

## **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 The development programme includes two, three and four bedroom homes which will allow families with children to access high quality, affordable homes, thus contributing to improving children's health, wellbeing and opportunity.

9.2 The programme includes bungalows which will allow older and disabled people to live in safe, suitable accommodation that meets their needs and allows them to live independently for longer.

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

10.1 The current Housing Strategy was approved by Cabinet in April 2019. The Strategy outlines how the Council will increase the local supply of high quality, affordable homes to meet a wide range of needs, through the housing development programme. The Council holds a wide range of data which is used to determine the different needs and influence the types of homes being built. For example, of Rotherham's 263,400 residents, 25% are aged 60 years or over and 8.5% are aged 75 years or over and the housing development programme includes bungalows that are suitable for older people, as well as people with disabilities.

10.2 As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 there were 7,200 households on the Council's housing

register, who are likely to currently be in homes unsuitable for their needs, such as homes which are too small, affected by issues such as damp and disrepair, or inappropriate for someone who is elderly or has a disability. The Council's ambitious development programme is critical to supporting these families into high quality and affordable accommodation. Any new homes offered for rent by the Council are managed through the Council's Allocations Policy to ensure a fair and transparent approach to helping people in the greatest housing need to gain access to suitable and appropriate accommodation. A full Equality Analysis has been carried out for both the Housing Development Programme 2021/22 and the Allocations Policy which was approved by Cabinet in February 2021.

- 10.3 There is evidence to suggest that a higher proportion of people within protected characteristic groups, such as age and disability, will be reliant on welfare benefits and therefore more likely to require access to affordable housing (for example as described in "Inequality of Poverty" research report. The Programme's aim is to increase overall housing supply and in turn bring forward more affordable housing to assist such groups.
- 10.4 Surveys will be carried out with the occupants of new homes, and equality and diversity results analysed and compared with other relevant data sets such as the Housing Register. This will allow the Council to understand whether any protected characteristic groups are over or under-represented in new build homes and take appropriate action if required.

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

- 11.1 Climate change poses a significant threat to environments, individuals, communities, and economies on local, national, and international scales. In recognition of this the Council has aimed to be net carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030, and for Rotherham as a whole to achieve the same position by 2040.
- 11.2 Through its own delivery programme, the Council has the ability to ensure that the new homes are high quality, energy efficient and able to meet the challenge of climate change, irrespective of tenure. The use of modern methods of construction will be considered for all new schemes, where value for money can be demonstrated as well as carbon reduction.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1 As a blended programme with no 'one size fits all' approach to procurement and delivery, there will be opportunities for both large and small (SME) private sector construction companies and Registered Providers (housing associations) to work with the Council. This will help to both support and diversify the local construction industry.
- 12.2 Housing associations continue to play an important role in delivering affordable housing in Rotherham. The Council has a successful track record of working with housing associations to bring land forward for development and maintains strong relationships with many of the largest and most well-

established organisations through the Rotherham Strategic Housing Forum. The programme makes provision for the transfer of land to housing associations for which the Council would receive nomination rights to help address demand from the Council's Housing Register.

### 13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1. Risks and mitigation measures associated with the annual programme are detailed in the Cabinet report 22 March 2021.

### 14. Accountable Officers

Anne Marie Lubanski, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Paul Walsh, Interim Assistant Director of Housing

Jane Davies, Head of Strategic Housing and Development

David Bagnall, Housing Development Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

|  | <b>Named Officer</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| <b>Chief Executive</b>   | Sharon Kemp          | 07/11/21    |
| Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services<br>(S.151 Officer) | Judith Badger        | 04/11/21    |
| Head of Legal Services<br>(Monitoring Officer)                       | Bal Nahal            | 04/11/21    |

*Report Author: Jane Davies, Head of Strategic Housing and Development*

*Jane.davies@rotherham.gov.uk*

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

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**Appendix 1 – Photographic summary**

**Braithwell Road, Ravenfield (six new homes as part of the 14 home “SOAHP Small Sites” development across two sites)**



**Arundel Avenue, Treeton (eight new homes as part of the 14 home “SOAHP Small Sites” development across two sites)**



**Appendix 1 – Photographic summary**

**Wellgate Place, Town Centre (54 new homes)**



**Westgate Riverside, Town Centre (72 new homes)**



**Appendix 1 – Photographic summary**

**Millfold Rise, Town Centre (45 new homes)**



**Hornbeam Road, Bramley (two new homes as part of a ten home development across five sites by Arches housing association, enabled by the Council)**



Appendix 1 – Photographic summary

Broom Hayes, Broom (44 new homes)



## Appendix 2 – Schedule of previous Cabinet recommendations and progress updates

| Cabinet report | Recommendation  | Progress reported Jan 21   | Progress reported Mar 21   | Progress reported Sep 21  |
|----------------|---|--|--|---|
| Sep 20         | <p>1. That Cabinet approves the release of the Council owned sites listed in Appendix 3a for early residential development, subject to development being undertaken directly for council stock with the Council retaining ownership of the land and homes, or by a registered social landlord with the Council retaining tenancy nomination rights where this is deemed to offer better value, and subject to written confirmation of agreement by the relevant Ward Members.</p> | <p>SOAHP Small Sites: Sites redesigned to accommodate 14 bungalows, contract partner identified, start on site anticipated Jan 21, discussed additional grant for two extra units with Homes England</p> <p>East Herringthorpe Site Assembly: Established procurement strategy, identification of contract partner anticipated by end of financial year</p> <p>Thrybergh Site Assembly: Currently exploring the potential for delivery through the Council’s existing repairs and maintenance contracts with Engie and Mears</p> <p>Wingfield Site Assembly: Pre-market engagement commenced with housing associations</p> <p>(Please see Jan 21 report for more detail)</p> | <p>SOAHP Small Sites: Contract in place with O&amp;P Construction and work commenced Feb 21, slightly later than planned due to additional financial appraisal work</p> <p>East Herringthorpe Site Assembly: Procurement due to commence imminently.</p> <p>Thrybergh Site Assembly: Working with repairs and maintenance contractors to develop plans</p> <p>Wingfield Site Assembly: Concluded pre-market engagement with housing associations and received some positive feedback therefore this delivery route will continue to be explored.</p> <p>(Please see main report for more detail)</p> | <p>SOAHP Small Sites: Work commenced in February 2021 and the bungalows are expected to be completed between December 21 and March 22.</p> <p>East Herringthorpe Site Assembly: Currently working with a construction partner selected from the Efficiency North framework to work up detailed proposals and enable the Council to enter into a formal contractual agreement. Start on site is expected in Summer 22.</p> <p>Thrybergh Site Assembly: Negotiations are currently underway with the Council’s repairs and maintenance contractors, to build four homes on these sites. Start on site is anticipated in Summer 22.</p> <p>Wingfield Site Assembly: Continuing dialogue with</p> |

| Cabinet report | Recommendation  | Progress reported Jan 21   | Progress reported Mar 21  | Progress reported Sep 21                 |
|----------------|---|--|---|--|
|                |   |  |   | housing associations regarding delivery. |
| Sep 20         | 2. That Cabinet note that proposals to deliver more than ten homes on any individual site, will continue to require a separate Cabinet report.  | The 2020/21 programme does not incorporate any individual sites with an estimated capacity for greater than 10 new homes.  | A separate report will be produced for the Eastwood sites once the procurement process has been carried out.                      | No change from Mar 21 position.          |
| Sep 20         | 3. That Cabinet gives delegated authority to the Assistant Director for Housing, with agreement from the Section 151 Officer, Cabinet Member for Housing and local Ward Members, to substitute or accelerate sites from the list included as Appendix 3b (strategic pipeline), if any of the primary sites in Appendix 3a prove to be unviable or if additional resources are identified to bring forward more housing. | No sites are currently proposed for substitution or acceleration.  | The 2021/22 report does not include a list of potential sites for substitution or acceleration.                                   | No change from Mar 21 position.          |
| Sep 20         | 4. That Cabinet approve the programme of strategic acquisition opportunities listed in exempt Appendix 4, and that authority is delegated up to a maximum value of £1.118m, to the  | The Council has progressed negotiations with each of the site developers/owners and is now actively pursuing three of the four opportunities set out in the original exempt appendix. The fourth scheme is not | March 21 report includes a new recommendation regarding strategic acquisitions and Appendix 4 sets out all current opportunities. | No change from Mar 21 position.          |

| Cabinet report | Recommendation   | Progress reported Jan 21   | Progress reported Mar 21  | Progress reported Sep 21                                   |
|----------------|--|--|---|--|
|                | <p>Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport to purchase homes from private developers or the open market to add to the Council's stock, upon confirmation of support by the Assistant Director for Housing with agreement from the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Housing, and subject to the governance processes set out in section 5. This delegation is sought for a period of 12 months and subject to an annual review.</p> | <p>considered to represent a viable opportunity at this time and is therefore not progressing further, but the Council will continue to monitor the market for other opportunity acquisitions which may come forward.</p> <p>In view of the £1.118m maximum expenditure to be approved under the delegated authority granted by Cabinet, it is anticipated that one scheme will be progressed to exchange of contract by the end of this financial year. The remaining schemes will be subject to further budgetary approvals to be sought in a future report.</p> |   |  |
| Sep 20         | <p>5. That Cabinet agrees to receive a quarterly report to update on progress of delivery and any changes made as a result of these delegations.</p>   | <p>This was the first update report to be brought to Cabinet following approval of the Annual Housing Development Report – 2020/21 report in September.</p> <p>The Jan 21 report included a recommendation to move to six monthly update reports rather than quarterly.</p>  | <p>The six monthly update report is anticipated to be presented to Cabinet in Oct 21.</p> | <p>Half year update report delayed slightly to Nov 21.</p> |
| Jan 21         | <p>1. That progress made with the</p>  | <p>N/A</p>   | <p>N/A</p>  | <p>N/A</p>   |

| Cabinet report | Recommendation   | Progress reported Jan 21 | Progress reported Mar 21  | Progress reported Sep 21  |
|----------------|--|--------------------------|---|---|
|                | 2020/21 housing development programme be noted.  |                          |   |   |
| Jan 21         | 2. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Section 151 Officer, to enter into a Brownfield Housing Fund agreement with the Sheffield City Region where this will serve to increase the number of new homes delivered in Rotherham. | N/A                      | The bid has been submitted and anticipate entering into contract by the end of March 21.  | Approvals in place from SCR for the initial bids, subsequent bids submitted and awaiting outcome. |
| Jan 21         | 3. That the appropriation of Netherfield Court and York Road car park (both in Eastwood) from the General Fund to the HRA, be approved.  | N/A                      | Netherfield Court appropriation will be executed before the end of March 21. York Road will be appropriated at the point the delivery route has been confirmed. | Appropriation completed.  |
| Jan 21         | 4. That a change to six monthly rather than quarterly update reports, be approved.   | N/A                      | It is anticipated that the next update report will be presented to Cabinet in Oct 21.   | Half year update report delayed slightly to Nov 21.   |
| Mar 21         | 1. That Cabinet approves the release of the Council owned sites listed in  | N/A                      | N/A   | Eastwood Housing Development sites  |

| Cabinet report | Recommendation  | Progress reported Jan 21 | Progress reported Mar 21 | Progress reported Sep 21   |
|----------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
|                | <p>Appendix 3 for residential development, subject to written confirmation of agreement by the relevant Ward Members.</p> |                          |                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Commissioned Local Partnerships to undertake a “mini master-planning” exercise for the two sites which comprise this scheme – recently concluded</li> <li>-Submitted an indicative bid to Sheffield City Region Brownfield Housing Fund for grant funding support to deliver the scheme – final business case to follow at a later date</li> <li>-Internal Strategic Outline Business Case and Procurement Business Case drafted</li> <li>-Separate Cabinet report to be presented in early 2022</li> <li>Kiveton Park, Thurcroft and West Melton small site assemblies:</li> <li>-Additional consultation carried out with Ward Members</li> <li>-Currently assessing the delivery and procurement</li> </ul> |

| Cabinet report | Recommendation  | Progress reported Jan 21 | Progress reported Mar 21 | Progress reported Sep 21  |
|----------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
|                |   |                          |                          | <p>routes</p> <p>-Submitted an indicative bid to Sheffield City Region Brownfield Housing Fund for grant funding support to deliver these schemes – final business case to follow at a later date</p> <p>Miscellaneous sites:</p> <p>-No specific progress to report at this time.</p> <p>All Ward Members have been written to regarding the new sites for development and written or verbal confirmation of support received for each area.</p> |
| Mar 21         | 2. That Cabinet approves the programme of strategic acquisition opportunities listed in Exempt Appendix 4, and that authority is delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport to purchase homes from | N/A                      | N/A                      | The Council is continuing to progress all but one of the newly proposed acquisition opportunities as set out within Appendix 4 of the March 2021 Cabinet report. The one scheme no longer being progressed relates to the proposed acquisition of a single home and is no   |

| Cabinet report | Recommendation   | Progress reported Jan 21 | Progress reported Mar 21 | Progress reported Sep 21   |
|----------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
|                | <p>private developers or the open market to add to the Council's stock with the agreement of the Assistant Director of Housing, Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Housing. This is subject to the budget parameters as set out in the Council's approved Capital Programme. This delegation is proposed to apply until April 2022 when the next annual programme will be reported to Cabinet.</p> |                          |                          | <p>longer proceeding because a suitable agreement could not be reached with the owner.</p> <p>The process for signing off strategic acquisitions under the delegation as specified in the recommendation has been followed correctly, and formally documented.</p>   |
| Mar 21         | <p>3. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Section 151 Officer, to enter into an Affordable Homes Programme grant funding agreement with Homes England, for all eligible sites listed in Appendix 3.</p>  | N/A                      | N/A                      | <p>Grant applications to Homes England are made via a 'Continuous Market Engagement' (CME) process and discussions are currently underway with Homes England regarding the Council's housing development pipeline.</p> <p>Formal, documented approval will be sought, in accordance with the delegation as specified in the recommendation, before</p> |

| <b>Cabinet report</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> | <b>Progress reported Jan 21</b> | <b>Progress reported Mar 21</b> | <b>Progress reported Sep 21</b>         |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
|                       |                       |                                 |                                 | making an application to Homes England. |

## 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  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Title:</b> Annual Housing Development Report – 2021/22 |   |
| <b>Directorate:</b> Adult Care, Housing and Public Health | <b>Service area:</b> Strategic Housing and Development        |
| <b>Lead person:</b> Jane Davies                           | <b>Contact number:</b> 07500102498                            |
| Is this a:  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy / Policy</b>         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Service / Function</b> |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>                         |
| <b>If other, please specify</b>                           |   |

| 2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening |
|---|
| The annual programme of housing 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?<br><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?<br><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?<br><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?<br><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?<br><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?<br><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

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)*

Through the housing development programme we aim to meet a range of housing needs based on data and evidence held about local demographics and trends. The housing we will build / enable to be built will help to ensure the following groups can access good quality, affordable and well managed homes: Families, older people, people with disabilities, single person households. The programme has also been designed to ensure homes are built in a range of areas across the borough including deprived areas where the private sector is unlikely to deliver the homes needed, without public sector intervention. Improving deprived areas through housing and regeneration helps to tackle inequalities.

Council homes are let via the Allocations Policy, which has recently been reviewed and was approved by Cabinet in February 2021 - this included a full equalities assessment. This will ensure homes are allocated fairly and that no groups with protected characteristics are disadvantaged.

The Strategic Housing and Development Service has commissioned a 'new build survey' to find out more about the people who have moved into recently built council homes. The equalities and diversity information will be analysed and compared against the profile of people on the Council's Housing Register, so we can identify any potential issues i.e. certain protected characteristic groups being under or over-represented in new build properties.

- **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)*

An assessment of the programme has found that it will enable delivery of homes to meet a range of needs including people with disabilities, older people, families with children and single people.

The delegated powers being sought as part of the report will allow individual schemes to

be shaped in consideration of the different housing needs for each area.

- **Actions**

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

- Conduct new build survey and analyse equalities and diversity data – Apr 21
- For each scheme, consult with colleagues in AC and CYPS to identify any particular needs that can be met through the scheme - ongoing
- Review this equalities analysis annually, alongside future annual housing development Cabinet reports - annual

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:                          | 01/02/21   |
| Date to complete your Equality Analysis:                                | 05/02/21   |
| Lead person for your Equality Analysis<br>(Include name and job title): | Lindsey Castle<br>Housing Development Co-ordinator |

## 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

| Name        | Job title                                 | Date     |
|-------------|---|----------|
| Jane Davies | Head of Strategic Housing and Development | 01/02/21 |
|             |   |          |
|             |   |          |

## 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](mailto: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.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Date screening completed</b>                       | 01/02/21                                  |
| <b>Report title and date</b>                          | Annual Housing Development Report 2021/22 |
| <b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer</b> | 22/03/21                                  |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>                         |          |
| <b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b><br><a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a> | 05/02/21 |

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## PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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

This form:

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

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

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

| 1. Title  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Equality Analysis title:</b> Annual Housing Development Report – 2021/22 |   |
| <b>Date of Equality Analysis (EA):</b> 05/02/21                             |   |
| <b>Directorate:</b> Adult Care, Housing and Public Health                   | <b>Service area:</b> Strategic Housing and Development        |
| <b>Lead person:</b> Lindsey Castle  | <b>Contact number:</b> 07817419107                            |
| <b>Is this a:</b>   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy / Policy</b>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Service / Function</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>                                       |   |
| <b>If other, please specify</b>   |   |

## 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<br>(eg service user, managers, service specialist)           |
|----------------|-------------------|---|
| Lindsey Castle | Rotherham Council | Housing Development Coordinator                                   |
| Asim Munir     | Rotherham Council | Tenant Involvement Coordinator (service specialist)               |
| Garry Newton   | Rotherham Council | Housing Development Intelligence Coordinator (service specialist) |

## 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.)

This EA has been produced in support of an upcoming Cabinet report proposing the 2021/22 housing development programme. Cabinet reports will be produced annually and each report will identify the Council-owned sites proposed for inclusion in the annual programme, to be delivered through a combination of direct delivery by the Council, transfer of land to Registered Provider (Housing Association) partners, and sale of land on the open market.

The programme has been designed to ensure homes are built in a range of areas across the borough including deprived areas where the private sector is unlikely to deliver the homes needed, without public sector intervention. Improving deprived areas through housing and regeneration helps to tackle inequalities. The Strategic Housing and Development Service has already delivered a number of specialist homes on former garage and brownfield sites which support the diverse housing needs across the borough.

Council homes are let via the Allocations Policy, which has recently been reviewed including a full equalities assessment. This will ensure homes are allocated fairly and that no groups with protected characteristics are disadvantaged.

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

The housing development programme is underpinned by analysis of housing need and demographic data which has been gained from a variety of sources including:

- Profile of applicants on Council's Housing Register (numbers of households eligible for age restricted accommodation etc). The Housing Occupational Health team assess households to determine their need which leads to a priority of allocation under the current Housing Allocations Policy. A regular review of the profile of people on the housing register takes place in order to plan for the types of new homes needed.

- Local population demographic data
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019)
- Census 2011 (most recent Census undertaken)
- Profile of existing Council tenants (including protected characteristics)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- Intelligence from Strategic Housing Forum which has partners that represent different interests and groups e.g. homelessness and young people etc
- Ward members will receive specific briefings on potential sites in their wards and their feedback will be taken into account and including in individual scheme EAs
- The Strategic Housing and Development service has worked with the Neighbourhood Service to assist with consultation and dissemination information about development in localities, identifying alignment with ward priorities. Again, any feedback will be included in individual scheme EAs.
- Consulted with the Housing Involvement Panel which includes Council tenant volunteers.

Where possible the development programme will focus on increasing a specific housing type so homes can meet local needs. This is often where a particular group of people have been disadvantaged by the local housing market i.e. they cannot afford, or do not have choice in where/how they live. The programme aims to make housing accessible to all regardless of their income and need. This includes taking a role in increasing the supply to meet local need, as well as enabling and encouraging other stakeholders to increase supply in the private market.

**Demographic information**

- 263,400 people live in Rotherham Borough, about half living in and around the main urban area of Rotherham. The remainder live in smaller towns such as Wath, Dinnington and Maltby, and in numerous large villages and rural communities, all of which have their own distinct identities
- Rotherham has a similar age profile to the national average and in common with the national trends, the population is ageing. Central Rotherham has a younger population than average whilst the more suburban and rural areas, mainly in the south of the borough, have older age profiles
- One in four residents (25.2%) are aged 60 years or over and 22,500 people (8.5%) are aged 75 years or over. Rotherham has 56,900 children aged 0-17 (21.6% of the population).

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

None identified following wider discussion with colleagues, and we are seeking to ensure that future housing developments are meeting the protected characteristics identified.

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

The overall progress of the 2021/22 housing development programme will be reported to Cabinet as part of the request to proceed with the subsequent year's programme. Progress will also be reported as part of the Housing Strategy update and action plan

(delivery against the four key themes)

For individual schemes, all proposals requiring a decision under delegated powers will be subject to the following at an early stage:

- Briefing to Assistant Director for Housing and Cabinet Member for Housing
- Consultation with applicable ward members

The strategic basis and financial appraisal of an individual proposal will then be subject to the development and sign-off of an appropriate business case, consisting of, as a minimum:

- Strategic Outline Case (SOC)
- Equalities Assessment (Parts A and B as applicable)
- Procurement Business Case (where procurement is required)
- Embed social value commitment through housing development contracts

Furthermore, as part of the routine monitoring of the programme and wider consultation on decisions to be taken, the following established groups and boards will be kept apprised of delivery progress:

- Housing-Growth Finance Workshop (held monthly)
- Housing Senior Management Team (held fortnightly)
- Housing and Regeneration Programme Delivery Board (held bi-monthly)
- Asset Management Board (held bi-monthly)
- Housing Involvement Panel (held bi-monthly)

Decisions will be formally recorded and published.

Surveys will be carried out with the occupants of new homes, and equality and diversity results analysed and compared with other relevant data sets such as the Housing Register. This will allow the Council to understand whether any protected characteristic groups are over or under-represented in new build homes, and take appropriate action if required.

The Strategic Housing and Development Service has also commissioned a ‘new build survey’ to find out more about the people who have moved into recently built council homes. The equalities and diversity information will be analysed and compared against the profile of people on the Council’s Housing Register, so we can identify any potential issues i.e. certain protected characteristics.

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

The Council holds a wealth of housing intelligence data which will be used to determine local housing need and prioritise areas for investment.

The refreshed Housing Strategy 2019-22 was developed in consultation with residents and tenants, officers, key partners and stakeholders. Consultation on the Strategy began in July 2018 at the annual Tenant’s Open Day, and has been a regular topic of

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>discussion for Rotherham Strategic Housing Forum members. Presentations and discussions have taken place with a wide range of organisations, community groups and through the Rotherham Together Partnership.</p> <p>Overall, the Housing Strategy evidenced that Rotherham needs more homes for older people, people with disabilities, people seeking affordable home ownership and single person households, and there is a clear need for more affordable housing, in general, across the borough. These needs will be reflected in the range of tenure, types and sizes of homes included in the programme.</p> <p>The local community will be consulted on individual schemes as part of the planning process.</p> |
| <p><b>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</b></p> | <p>The Cabinet Member for Housing has been engaged in the development of the programme from the start.</p> <p>Ward Members will receive specific briefings on potential sites in their wards.</p> <p>A number of other key services and groups (such as Strategic Housing Forum, Housing Solutions Group and Housing and Regen Programme Board) have had the opportunity to contribute to the report as part of the cabinet reporting process and their comments and concerns have been addressed within the report.</p>  |

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

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

Through the housing development programme we aim to increased choice and access to more new homes, particularly affordable homes. Allocation to housing is dealt with via the Council's Allocations Policy. The Policy sets out how priority is allocated to people who have specific needs including people with protected characteristics.

The programme will meet a range of housing needs based on data and evidence held about local demographics and trends. By understanding more about local need and by enabling and delivering a wider range of house types, the programme should support and help remove the barriers that exist for specific groups of people, particularly young and

older people who are reliant on welfare support, and those who are physically disabled or have a family member who is disabled, requiring ground floor, accessible accommodation.

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

No.

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

The new homes delivered through the housing development programme will help to improve quality of life for households who are currently living in unsuitable accommodation.

Individual schemes will be shaped in consideration of the different housing needs for each area, for example:

**Race:** Black and Minority Ethnic communities may have an increased need for larger family accommodation. The high demand for larger accommodation in the Borough is reflected in the Housing Strategy, and where possible the Council will deliver or enable the delivery of four bedroom plus homes.

**Disability:** The Housing Service will work with Adult Care Commissioning to include homes to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities, in areas of identified need.

**Age:** Older people living with mobility issues will be supported through the strategy to access the right types of accommodation. The development and enabling role will assist developers to bring forward the right types of accommodation to meet this need.

In general, there is evidence to suggest that a higher proportion of people within protected characteristic groups will be reliant on welfare benefits and therefore more likely to require access to affordable housing. The Strategy's aim is to increase overall housing supply and in turn bring forward more affordable housing to assist such groups.

**What effect 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)

No negative impacts have been identified/are anticipated.

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

|   |
|---|
| <b>Title of analysis:</b> Annual Housing Development Report – 2020/21   |
| <b>Directorate and service area:</b> Adult Care, Housing & Public Health. Strategic Housing & Development Service |
| <b>Lead Manager:</b> Jane Davies  |
| <b>Summary of findings:</b>   |
| No negative impacts have been identified/are anticipated. Therefore an action plan is not required.               |

| Action/Target | State Protected Characteristics as listed below | Target date (MM/YY) |
|---------------|---|---------------------|
|               |   |                     |
|               |   |                     |
|               |   |                     |
|               |   |                     |

\*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 |
|------------------------|---|------|
| Tom Bell               | Assistant Director of Housing                             |      |
| Anne-Marie Lubanski    | Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing & Public Health |      |
| Councillor Amy Brookes | Cabinet Member for Housing                                |      |

## 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](mailto: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.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Date Equality Analysis completed</b>   | 04/02/21  |
| <b>Report title and date</b>  | Annual Housing Development Report 2021/22 – 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2021 |
| <b>Date report sent for publication</b>   |   |
| <b>Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b><br><a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a> | 04/02/21  |

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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](mailto: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 on emissions               |   |  |   |   |
| Emissions from transport?                              | Increased emissions / impact unknown | Vehicle movements to and from sites will be generated during demolition and construction will create emissions, through the movement of building and waste materials and personnel. | While it is possible that new households will increase vehicle movements, they may also reduce them. Depending where new residents work and access services. We do not know before a development is built where new residents will move from and whether this move will increase or decrease vehicle movements. Some new properties included in the programme, i.e. the homes the Council purchases as strategic acquisitions will be built regardless of whether the Council purchases them or not. | Prospective contractors will be required to demonstrate how they will minimise and mitigate emissions from vehicle movements as part of the construction, during the tendering process. All new housing developments are subject to planning controls and the planning process at the plan and policy development and planning application stages takes into account vehicle movements. | Assessment of whether the new households increase or decrease carbon emissions through vehicle movements is not monitored at this time. |
| Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself? | Increased emissions                  | Construction will generate waste materials through demolition, exporting of materials from groundworks and waste construction materials.  | Although new households may not necessarily mean more people living in the Borough, they are likely to create a small increase in the overall volume of waste  | Prospective contractors will be required to demonstrate how they will minimise and mitigate vehicle emissions from the movement of waste,   | Unknown.  |

|   |                     |  |  |  |  |
|---|---------------------|--|--|--|--|
|   |                     |  | created and in the distance travelled by waste collection vehicles.  | during the tendering process. This will include the recycling / re use of materials on site where possible.  |  |
| Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?  | Increased emissions | No direct emissions increase for the council.  | The new properties built as part of the programme will increase emissions from the heating and lighting of the new properties. | The Council will ensure that the new homes are high quality, energy efficient and able to meet the challenge of climate change, irrespective of tenure. The use of modern methods of construction will be considered for all new schemes, where value for money can be demonstrated as well as carbon reduction. | The energy performance of new buildings will be monitored once occupied to ensure that the stated performance standards are met. |
| Emissions from construction and/or development? | Increased emissions | Emissions will be increased from on site vehicles and equipment and the lighting of the sites. Also, from the heating lighting and powering of site offices and cabins. The manufacture of construction materials will increase emissions. | Some of the building materials will be manufactured within the Borough.  | The use of modern methods of construction will be considered for all new schemes, where value for money can be demonstrated as well as carbon reduction.   | This will be monitored through the procurement process.  |
| Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?            | Unknown             | Some of the Councils own construction projects will include the planting of trees as part of any landscaping scheme  | Unknown  | N/A  | Unknown  |

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

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures: Emissions will be generated from energy use associated with construction sites, the vehicle movements associated with construction personnel, materials and waste. The manufacture of construction materials will also generate emissions. New homes will generate new emissions mainly through lighting and heating and the powering of domestic appliances. These increases will be mitigated through the requirement for prospective contractors to demonstrate how they will reduce emissions from the above and monitored through the construction period. The Council will continue to ensure that new homes are as energy efficient as possible and employ the use of modern methods of construction where value for money can be demonstrated as well as carbon reduction. The actual energy performance of new homes will be monitored to ensure that they meet expected standards.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Supporting information:   |   |
| Completed by:<br>(Name, title, and service area/directorate).   | Nick Ward,<br>Place and Quality Manager,<br>Strategic Housing and Development Service,<br>Adult Care, Housing and Public Health |
| Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].   | No relevant data or research used.  |
| 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. | No relevant data or research used.  |
| Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]  |   |

Public Report  
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 17 November 2021

**Report Title**

Annual Compliments and Complaints Report 2020-21

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

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

**Report Author(s)**

Stuart Purcell, Corporate Complaint Manager, Assistant Chief Executive Directorate, 01709 822661 or [stuart.purcell@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.purcell@rotherham.gov.uk)

Simon Dennis, Acting Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement, Assistant Chief Executive Directorate, 01709 822114, [simon.dennos@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:simon.dennos@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received in 2020/21 in line with statutory requirements.
- b) Identify key trends within complaints and compliments over a five-year period.

**Recommendations**

Members of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are asked to:

1. Note the Annual Compliments and Complaints Report for 2020/21.
2. Provide comments on areas that require further improvement regarding complaints handling and reporting.

**List of Appendices Included**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | Annual Compliments and Complaints Report, 2020/21 |
| Appendix 2 | Ombudsman Annual Review letter 2020/21            |

**Background Papers**

Corporate Complaint Policy

[Rotherham Council Rotherham Council - Complaints Policy](#)

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

N/A

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## Annual Compliments and Complaints Report 2020-21

### 1. Background

- 1.1 All councils need to provide complaint procedures to respond to customer concerns in an open and transparent way within defined timescales and in accordance with legislation. The purpose of the annual complaint report is to outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received in the period 1 April 2020 31 March 2021, highlighting key themes and longer-term trends.
- 1.2 The report also explains how the Council has performed against the required standards and includes case studies demonstrating how services have learnt from complaints received.

### 2 Key Issues

2.1 The performance headlines outlined within the report include:

- The overall number of complaints received by the Council decreased by 32%, going from 1,372 in 2019/20 to 931. This decrease was driven by the reduction of complaints in the first quarter of 2020. 349 complaints were received in the first quarter of 2019/20 compared to 135 complaints received in the first quarter of 2020/21(61% decrease).
- All Council departments saw a decrease in complaints from the previous year. It is fully expected that the number of complaints received in the current financial year, 2021-22 will be back to near average levels continuing the trends over the last five years. (Currently 261 complaint received in the first three months of 21-22 compared to 135 in the same period 20-21)
- The largest percentage decrease was in Finance and Customer services from 182 to 76, 58%, followed by Children and Young People's Services from 147 to 86, 41%. Then in line with the overall Council average decrease (32%), Housing Services decreased from 551 to 367, 33%. Adult Social Care reduced from 72 to 48, 33% and Public Health decreased from 4 to 3, 33%. The smallest percentage decrease was Regeneration and Environment Services which decreased from 411 to 346, 16% Finally, Assistant Chief Executives remained the same at 5 received.
- Overall, 86% of complaints were responded to within timescales, compared with 89% in 2019/20. This means that this is better than the five-year all council average of 84%. The response rate significantly increased in Adult Social Care (85% 2020/21 from 73% 2019/20). The response rate remained the same in Childrens and Young Peoples services (83% 2020/21 and 83% 2019/20). Response rates in other areas decreased slightly but remained over target.
- The number of compliments received decreased to 695 received in 2020/21, in comparison to 794 in 2019/20.

- The most frequent category of complaints received by the Council was again 'quality of service', accounting for 35% of all complaints (325 of 931.)
  - Fewer complaints escalated to Stage 2 of the complaint's procedure, at 25 (in contrast with 31 in 2019/20.) Of the 931 complaints that were taken through the Council's formal complaints procedures, less were upheld in 2020/21 at 235 or 26%, in contrast with 365 or 27% in 2019/20.
- 2.2 The Annual Review letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) was received on 21st July 2021, setting out their records of referred complaint investigations. In total 37 complaints and enquiries were directed to the LGSCO, of which 6 were subject to full investigation. Out of the 6, 3 were upheld and 3 were not upheld (50% upheld rate). This compares to 72 enquiries, 7 investigations with 4 upheld and 3 not upheld in 2019/20 (57% upheld rate). This review letter is attached as an appendix to the report (please see appendix two.)
- 2.3 Overall, the Annual Review letter in the main presents a positive picture of the Council's handling of formal complaints in 2020/21 despite a very challenging year. The number investigations were small and the uphold rate is below average. All requested remedies were completed and learning, and service improvement was completed. On two occasions the remedy was provided late, and the Annual Review letter is critical of this. The reason for the delays has been considered (these were specific issues relating to each case) and feedback has been provided to those Directorates and the managers who were responsible for the delays.
- 2.4 Based on a statistical comparator group of 16 other Local Authorities (see appendix one of the Annual Complaint Report), Rotherham had the joint third lowest number of complaint investigations, compared to its statistical neighbours. In addition, its upheld rate at 50%, based on the total investigated was below the average of 72% for similar Local Authorities.
- 2.5 The Council received four decisions by the Housing Ombudsman, two were part upheld and two were not upheld. This compares to two decisions, one upheld and one part upheld in 2019/20.
- 2.6 A number of service improvements have been made over the year, based on the feedback from customers and learning from complaints. Key themes of service improvements have included the reviews of policies and processes; information and advice provided; dealing with delays and improving communication. Examples of the improvements made are included within the Annual Complaints report.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 Building on the key developments in 2020/21, the Council will again apply particular focus to the following issues:

- Continue to improve the way in which the Council learns from complaints, ensuring that all learning reported is considered and the impact of service improvement is understood and recorded. This will also include a revised protocol around learning from Ombudsman complaints.
- Work to ensure that complaint investigations are more outcome-focussed. Resolving the complaint and finding solutions should be at the centre of all investigations.
- Work to improve performance to complaint procedure timescales.
- Ensure remedy requests by the Ombudsman are completed within required timescales.
- Increase the number of compliments recorded; the Complaints Team to continue to work with managers to ensure that the process for recording and reporting compliments is improved.

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 The complaint information contained in this report has been previously reported to each Directorate Leadership Team to enable key areas for improvement to be identified.
- 4.2 There has been no further consultation on this report beyond the requirements of internal processes, alongside consultation with the Cabinet member.

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

- 5.1 A simple timetable to show the stages and deadlines for implementing the proposed improvements outlined in section 3 are to be implemented in 2021/22. Progress against these actions will be reported on as part of the annual report for 2021/22.
- 5.2 The Complaints Team will be accountable for leading on these improvements and for engaging with Directorates on how the approach to handling complaints can be improved. Each Directorate will be responsible for ensuring that the improvements identified are disseminated and implemented within each area of the organisation.

#### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The provision of the compliments and complaints service is factored into the Council's budget. If a complaint about an error in a charge for a Council service is upheld, then an appropriate refund will be made in accordance with the Council's Finance and Procurement Procedure Rules.
- 6.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

## **7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**

7.1 The Council's approach to handling complaints is informed by the following key pieces of legislation:

- i. Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 (Making Experiences Count).
- ii. The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.
- iii. Localism Act 2011 (for Housing Services complaints)

## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. However, Human Resources will provide support on further developing the training offer on handling complaints for officers outside of the Complaints Team.

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 The statutory complaints procedure for Children's and Adult Social Care provides an opportunity for children and young people and vulnerable adults to have their voices heard and to improve service delivery.

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

10.1 Investigations through the complaint procedure consider all relevant policy and legislation, including those relating to equalities and human rights.

10.2 Improvements have been made to the way that complaints are recorded to ensure that information relating to equality and diversity are captured where the complainant is comfortable to disclose this information.

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

11.1 There are no direct implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change arising from this report.

11.2 However, it is possible for complaints to be made relating the Council's approach to CO2 Emissions and Climate Change and these matters can be formally considered through the Complaint Procedures.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

12.1 As outlined in the annual report, improving the way that complaints are dealt with requires a whole-Council approach, with services committing to responding to complaints in a timely fashion and using the intelligence provided by the Complaints Team to make service improvements. It is the responsibility of every service to make responding to complaints and learning from customer feedback a priority.

### 13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The Council faces pressures on services due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, as well as a continued ambition to transform services to deliver financial savings and improve customer experiences. It is vital that customer expectations around what is sustainable for the Council to deliver are properly managed.

13.2 To mitigate this, the Council is continuing to engage with the public as appropriate through regular communication, as well as where services are being proposed to be amended.

### 14. Accountable Officer(s)

Simon Dennis, Acting Head of Policy Improvement and Performance  
Stuart Purcell, Corporate Complaint Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of: -

|   | <b>Named Officer</b> | <b>Date</b>                 |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Chief Executive   | N/A                  | Click here to enter a date. |
| Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer) | Judith Badger        | 05/11/21                    |
| Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)                       | Bal Nahal            | 05/11/21                    |
| Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)            | N/A                  | Click here to enter a date. |
| Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)                          | N/A                  | Click here to enter a date. |

*Report Author: Stuart Purcell, Corporate Complaint Manager, Assistant Chief Executive Directorate, 01709 822661 or [stuart.purcell@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.purcell@rotherham.gov.uk)*

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

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# ANNUAL REPORT COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2020 - 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021



[www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints)

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# I. INTRODUCTION

Rotherham Council is committed to being open and accountable, listening to the views of residents and communities and placing them at the heart of its services. Customer feedback through formal complaints and the way that the Council responds to complaints are vital indicators of the overall performance of the organisation. When we cannot resolve a problem straight away our residents have the safety net of a formal complaint procedure through which they can find a resolution.

The way that the Council provided its services during 2020-21 was fundamentally impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic will continue to be felt across the borough for a long time, affecting the economy, the community and daily life. In terms of formal complaints, it has had the effect of reducing the numbers received; at the start of the pandemic in 2020, during the first lockdown, some Council services were reduced and residents themselves made less complaints. Numbers received returned to average levels later in 2020 and into 2021 but the information provided in this report should be understood in the wider context of an unprecedented global event impacting on both Council services and the lives of our residents.

It should be noted that the Council's complaint service was not suspended, despite the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman temporarily declining new complaints and some Council services being placed on hold.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, the Council continued to maintain a high level of performance and improved the quality of service offered to residents. There is a continued commitment to providing high quality, timely responses to formal complaints, and we continue to learn and improve based on the feedback received. Performance was again above the five-year average (84%) with 86% of complaints being resolved in time.

The purpose of this report is to outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received during 1st April 2020-31st March 2021, highlighting key themes and trends. The report also explains how the Council has performed against the required standards and includes case studies demonstrating how services have learnt from complaints received. This is arguably the most important aspect of the complaints process.

Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board continues to be considered as part of these reports, and in respect of the Council's handling of complaints throughout the year. The questions and queries raised are noted and subject to consideration.

Although customer feedback provides a valuable insight into how the Council is performing, complaints and compliments figures do not reflect the full picture. This report should, therefore, be understood within the context of the number of customers interacting with each service and key developments that occurred within 2020/21.

**Furthermore, building on the key developments in 2020/21, priority areas of focus for next year will include:**

- Continuing to improve the way in which the Council learns from complaints. That all learning reported is considered and the impact of service improvement is understood and recorded. This will also include a revised protocol around learning from Ombudsman complaints.
- Working to ensure that complaint investigations are more outcome focussed. Resolving the complaint and finding solutions should be at the centre of all investigations.
- Working to improve performance to complaint procedure timescales.
- Ensuring remedy requests by the Ombudsman are completed within required timescales.
- Increasing the number of compliments recorded, with the Complaints Team continuing to work with managers to ensure that the process for recording and reporting compliments is improved.

## 2. KEY HEADLINES – 2020/21

# 931

complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints were received.**  
(931 in 2020/21 compared with 1,372 in 2019/20, which is a decrease of 32%).

**Fewer compliments were received.**  
(695 in 2020/21 compared with 794 in 2019/20, which is a decrease of 12%).



**Fewer complaints were upheld; at 235 or 26%.**  
(365 or 27% upheld 2019/20).

**Fewer complaints were responded to within timescales.**  
(86% in 2020/21 compared with 89% in 2019/20).



**Six complaints were investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.**  
(Seven in 2019/20 in comparison).

**Fewer complaints around quality of service.**  
(325 compared to 632 in 2019/20, a decrease of 49%).



**Fewer complaints regarding actions of staff.**  
(134 compared to 199 in 2019/20, a decrease of 33%).

**More complaints were responded to in time in Adult Social Care.**  
(85% in 2020/21 compared to 73% in 2019/20) **and CYPS maintained performance at 83%.**



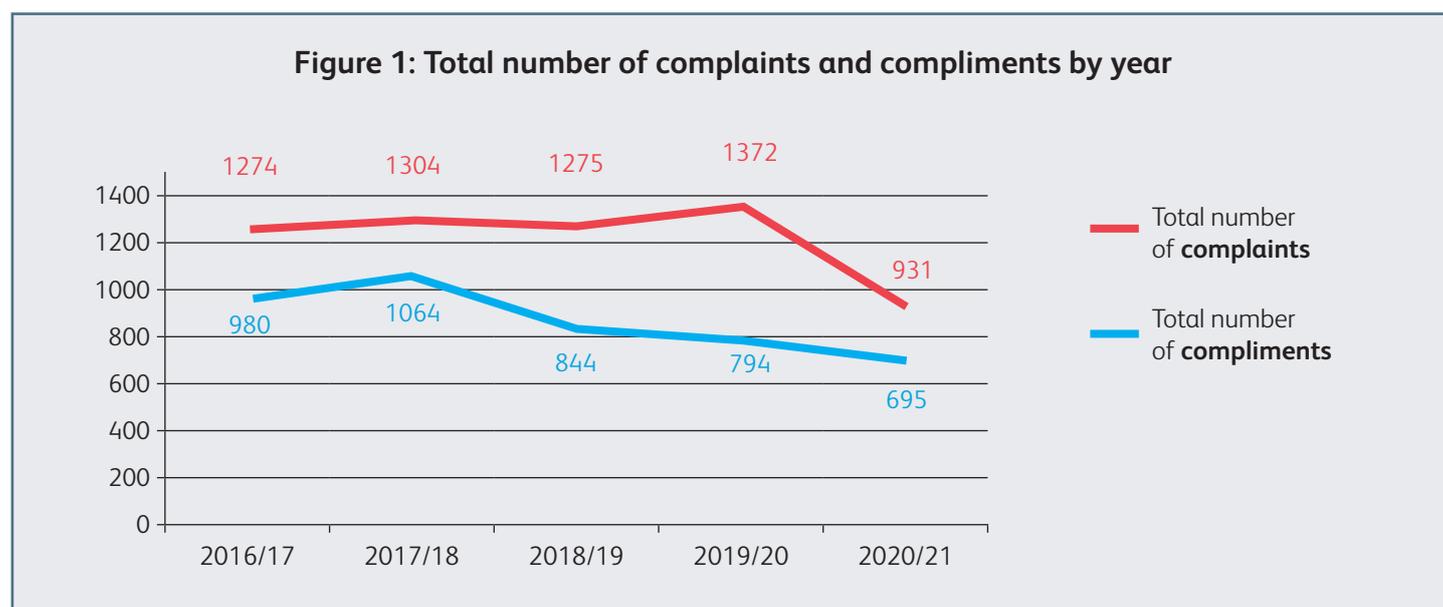
**Fewer complaints were responded to in time in Housing Services (88% from 92%), Regeneration & Environment (84% from 88%) and Finance and Customer Services (89% from 94%).**

**Fewer escalations through the complaint procedure.**  
(25 or 3% compared to 35 or 3% in 2019/20).



## 3. OVERVIEW

### 3.1 Summary



In 2020/21, the overall number of complaints received by the Council decreased by 32%, going from 1,372 in 2019/20 to 931. As advised in the introduction of this report, this decrease is due to the reduction of complaints in the first quarter of 2020. 349 complaints were received in the first quarter (April – June) of 2019/20 compared to 135 complaints received in the first quarter of 2020-21 (61% decrease). Complaints then began to increase to average levels throughout the rest of the year. This is the lowest number of complaints in five years; a decrease of 441 complaints following an increase the previous year.

The Council provides a wide variety of services to over 264,984 residents. In this context, 931 complaints are only a fraction of the number of customer interactions occurring each year (for example, the Council received 1,146,218 unique web visitors in 2020/21).

The number of compliments recorded by the Council also decreased, from 794 in 2019/20 to 695 (a decrease of 12%). It is not considered that the decrease in numbers received is indicative of a reduction in customer satisfaction in Council services, rather it is evidence of a lack of engagement of staff in the process of recording the compliments they received. It may be that, although compliments continue to be received, they are not being passed on to be recorded. In response, staff will be reminded of the process to make sure that as many compliments are recorded as possible.

It is recognised that both compliments and complaints procedures need to be easy and accessible for customers to allow them to provide valuable feedback.

As explained, all Council departments saw a decrease in complaints from the previous year. It is fully expected that the number of complaints received in the current financial year, 2021/22, will be back to near average levels continuing the trends over the last five years. (Currently 261 complaints were received in the first three months of 2021/22 compared to 135 in the same period 2020/21).

**A breakdown on the numbers received and how much they decreased, by department is as follow:**

- The largest percentage decrease was in Finance and Customer services from 182 to 76, a reduction of 58%.
- Children and Young People's Services reduced from 147 to 86, a decrease of 41%.

- In line with the Council average decrease (32%), Housing Services decreased from 551 to 367, a decrease of 33%.
- Adult Social Care reduced from 72 to 48 and Public Health decreased from 4 to 3, both seeing a 33% reduction in complaints.
- The smallest percentage decrease was Regeneration and Environment Services decreased from 411 to 346, a decrease of 16%.
- Finally, Assistant Chief Executives remained the same at five received.

The following diagrams show the breakdown of complaints and compliments by Directorate in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

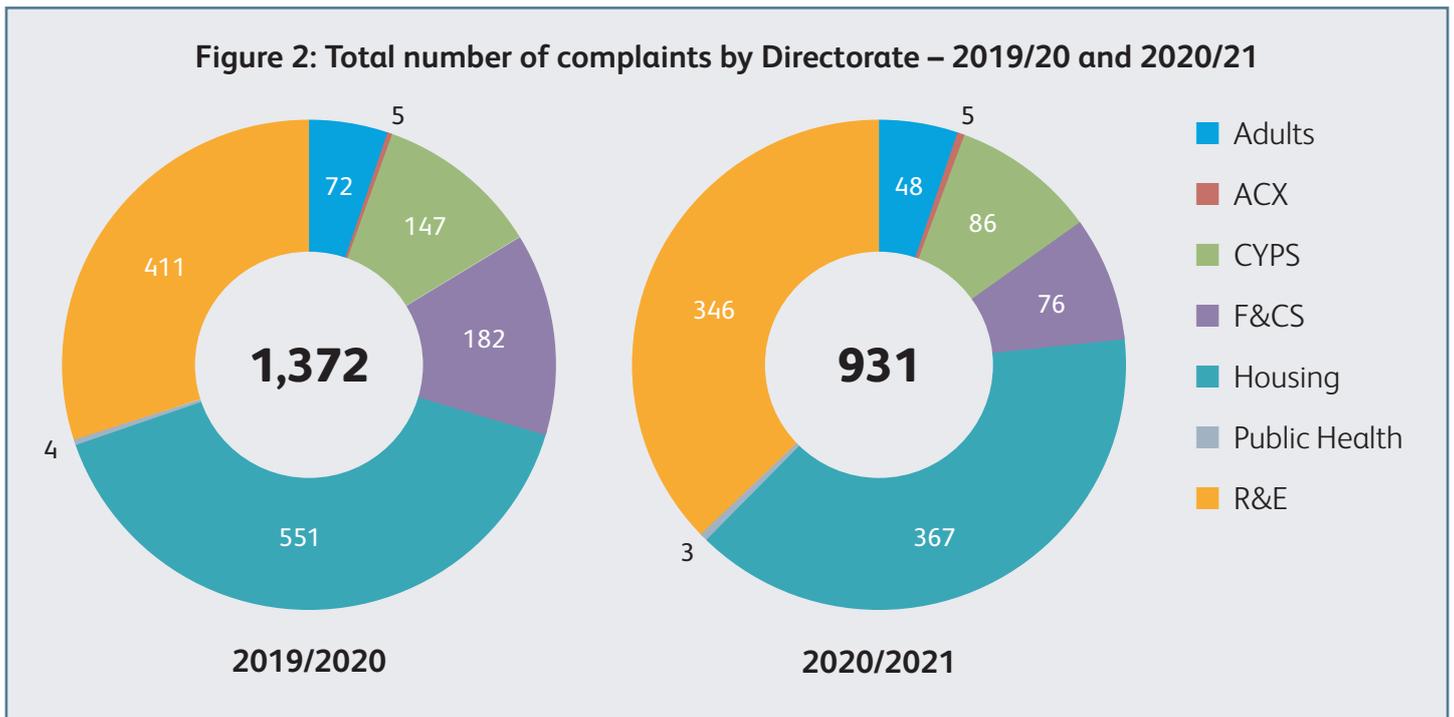
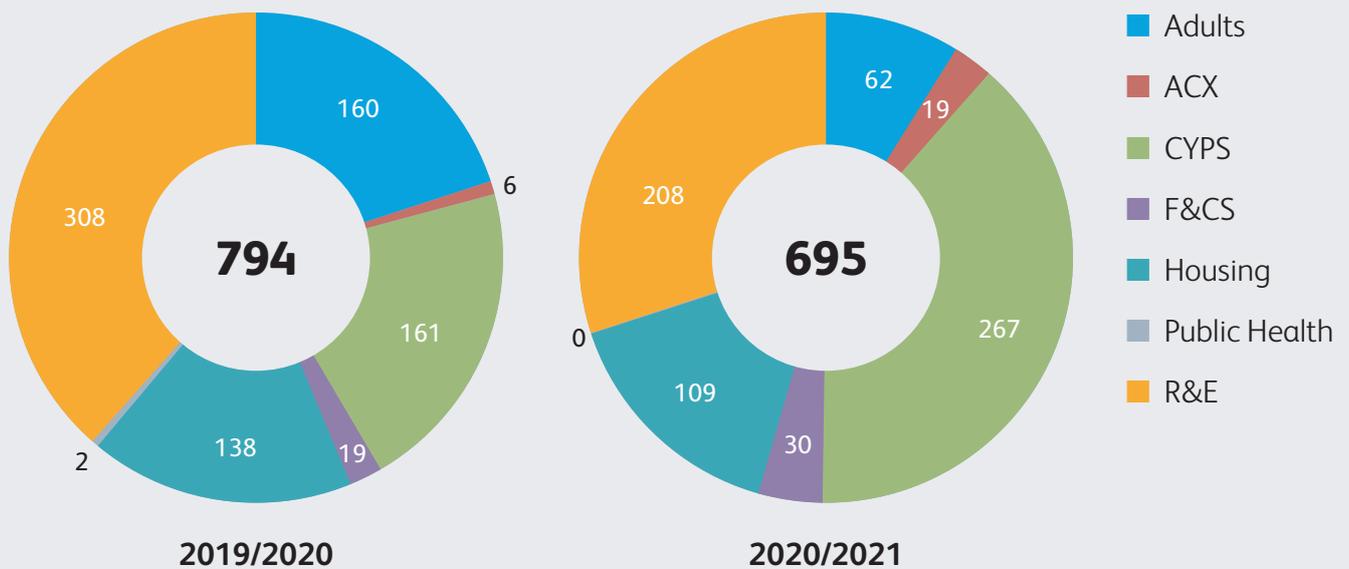


Figure 2 shows that the two highest areas for complaints were Housing and Regeneration and Environment Services. This is consistent with previous years' figures, as these areas typically receive the highest volume of complaints. They deal with the largest number of customers and are responsible for a high number of service transactions over the year.

The number of complaints received tends to correlate to the number of customers that are served by the directorate. Therefore, a directorate receiving a higher volume of complaints is not necessarily reflective of poor performance and should be understood within the context of services provided.

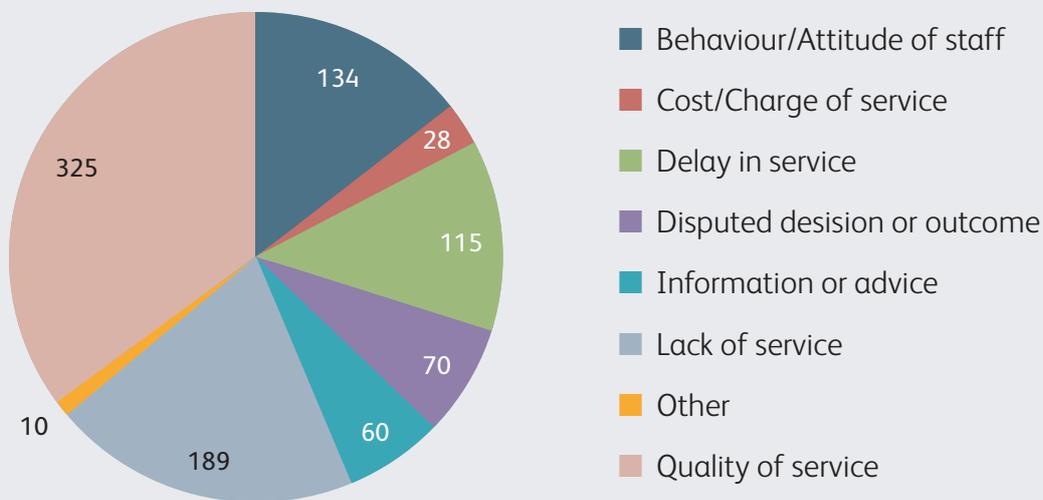
As explained, the number of compliments has decreased by 12%, however, the number received in Childrens and Young Peoples Services and Assistant Chief Executives increased. In Childrens and Young Peoples Services this is due to a better engagement in the compliment process by staff, making sure that all positive feedback is captured including feedback from satisfaction surveys. Compliments increased in Assistant Chief Executive because of the Councils Community Hub Service which was set up in response to the global pandemic and provided direct services to residents.

Figure 3: Total number of compliments by Directorate – 2019/20 and 2020/21



As part of the process of monitoring and handling customer feedback, the Complaints Team is responsible for categorising complaints based on the subject matter. The following diagram outlines the categories of complaints received in 2020/21:

Figure 4: Total number of complaints by category – 2020/21



325 (35%) of all complaints were categorised as quality of service. Complaints within this category have decreased from 632 (46%) in 2019/20 (a decrease of 11%).

Lack of service accounted for the second highest category of complaints, with 189 complaints (or 20%) falling into this category. It should also be noted that in 2019/20 the second highest category of complaints was delay in service, but in 2020/21 this category was the third highest at 134 (14%) received.

Although the numbers of complaints in the categories of quality of service and lack of service were significant across all directorates, the majority of the complaints categorised as lack of service were within Regeneration and Environment Services, with 143 (106 in the Street Scene department and of these 81 were in Waste and Recycling) of the 189 complaints in this category (see section 7).

In addition to reporting against general subject areas there is a need to report complaints in more detail to directorate and service management teams. To assist with this level of reporting additional complaint classifications were developed, reviewed at year end, and updated. These are service specific and more accurately reflect the types of complaints received.

**Examples of the most common complaint types recorded by this classification are as follows:**

- Quality of Service Provided
- Standard of Work
- Behaviour/Attitude of Staff
- No service provided /Action Taken
- Delay in Service Being Provided
- Missed Appointment/Service
- Lack of Information/Advice
- Disputed Decision or Outcome
- Appeal/Inappropriate Enforcement Action
- Cost/Charge for Service
- Incorrect/Inaccurate written or verbal advice
- Application/Assessment Outcome or Decision
- Damage to Property

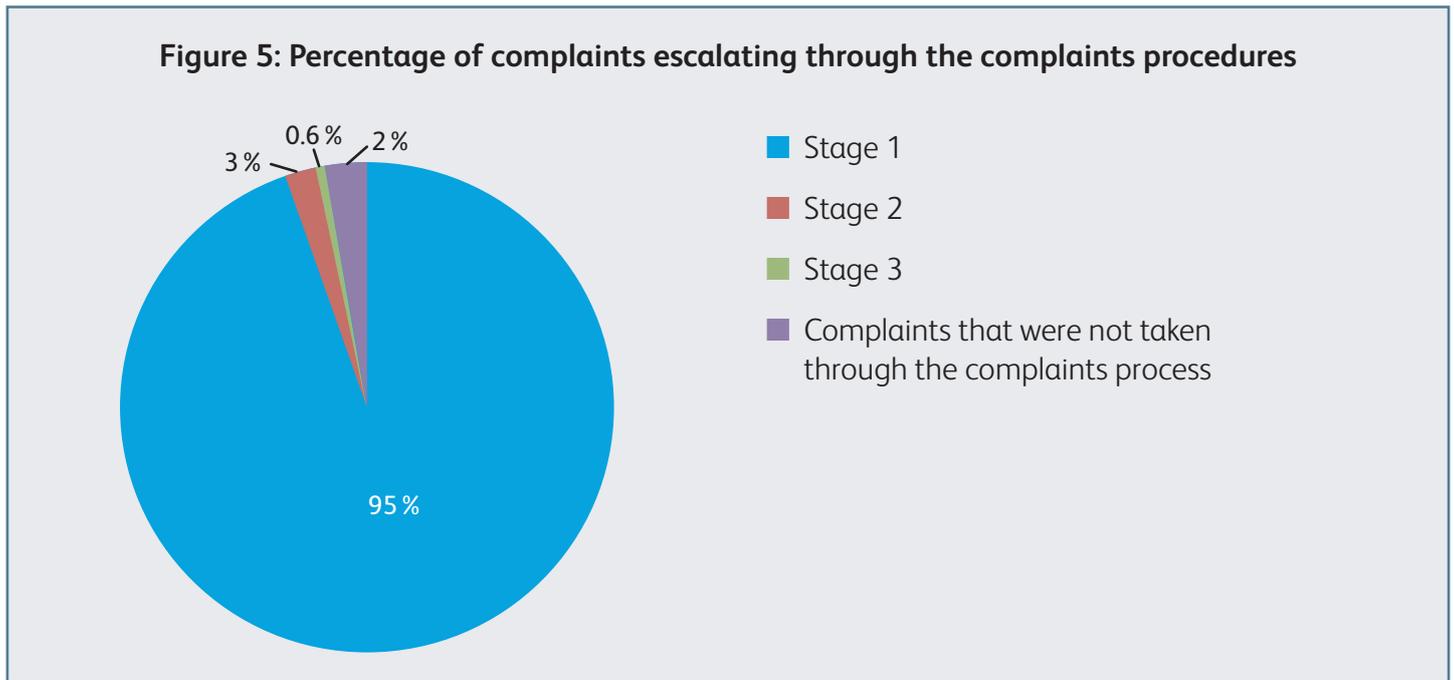
For further detail around directorate complaint trends please see sections 5 to 11 of the report.

It should also be noted that slightly less complaints were upheld in terms of the percentage of all formal complaints responded to. This is where we have investigated and found a problem with the service we have provided with 235 or 26 % upheld (365 or 27 % upheld 2019/20 and 305 or 25 % upheld 2018/19) of all complaints. Again, please see sections 5 to 11 for more detail of upheld complaints by directorate and how we have learnt from upheld complaints.

### 3.2 Dealing with Complaints

The Council follows three different complaints procedures: children's social care, adult social care and the corporate complaints procedure. The social care complaints procedures are legislative and have individual statutory requirements about how complaints are dealt with.

A relatively small proportion of complaints are not taken through the formal complaints procedure (referred to as informal complaints). These are complaints that are in relation to council policy or decisions that have been formally approved in Cabinet. In these cases, the complaint is not taken through the formal procedure as it cannot be upheld, however all complainants receive a formal (written) response. This report includes these complaints in the overall total figures. In 2020/21, this amounted to only 20 (2%) out of a total of 931 complaints (in 2019/20 it was 40 (3%) out of a total of 1,372 complaints).

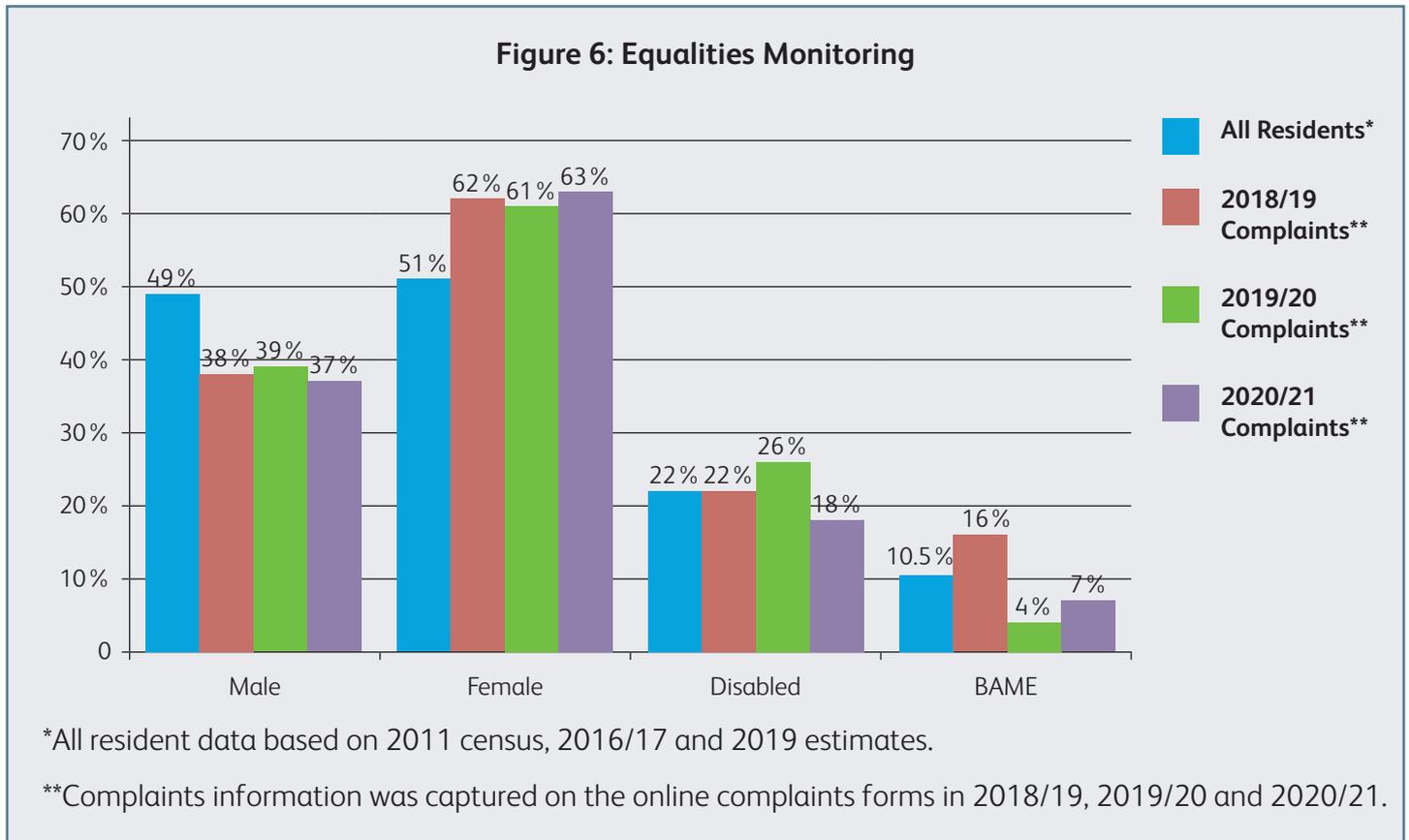


The diagram above outlines the number of complaints that reached the various stages of the complaint's procedures.

The extent to which complaints escalate through the complaint's procedure is an important measure, as it is preferable to find resolutions for customers at the earliest possible stage. As shown in figure 5, the majority of complaints (95%) were resolved at stage 1 (only 25, 3% of all complaints, were escalated to stage 2, compared with 31, 2%, in 2019/20).

### 3.3 Equalities Monitoring

Following the Council’s Equalities and Diversity Peer Review in October 2017, it was agreed to start recording the demographics of customers making formal complaints. This information will be used to ensure that the complaints process is fair and accessible for all customers.



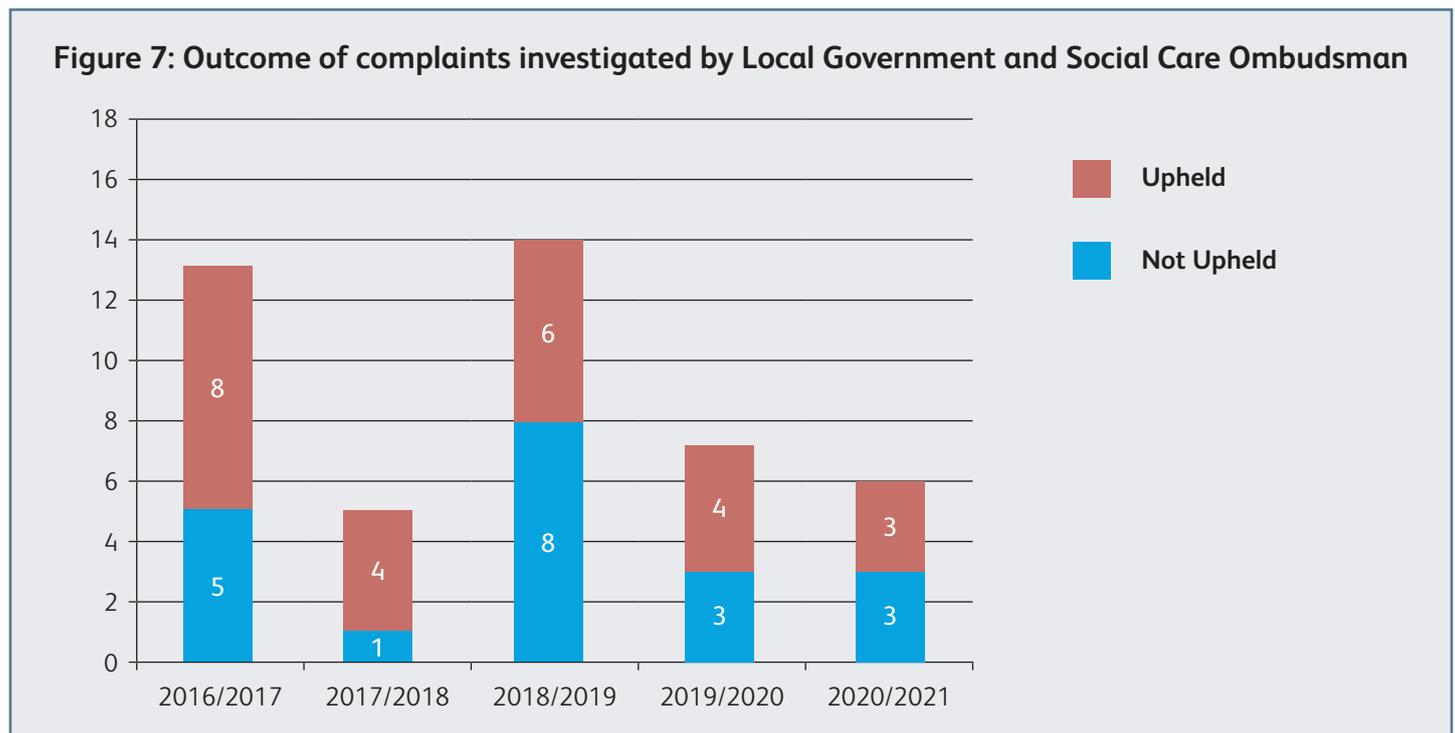
The information received indicates that significantly more female customers complained about Council services in 2020/21 and this is a consistent trend over the last three years. All directorates apart from Children and Young Peoples Services recorded a higher number of female complainants. For example, in Housing Services the percentage of female complainants was 65 % and Regeneration and Environment Services it was 58 %.

It is also noted that numbers have decreased for those customers who are disabled, and it is now below the average for all residents. In addition, the number of BAME customers who have made a complaint has increased but it is still lower than the average all residents figure (Please note the actual numbers recorded for BAME complainants are low, only 11 in total, one complainant recorded for Children and Young Peoples Services and five each for Regeneration and Environment Services and Housing Services).

### 3.4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

If complainants are not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint as investigated through the Council's complaints procedures, they can escalate their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). 37 complaints enquiries were directed to the LGSCO in 2020/21 (72 received in 2019/20), and of these, the LGSCO investigated six (seven investigated in 2019/20). It should be noted that the LGSCO completely suspended their services during the first part of the year 2020/21 in response to the global pandemic. This has had the effect of reducing the number of enquiries overall but the number of investigations were not similarly affected, serious cases, those that the LGSCO considered they needed to investigate, were still actioned.

Figure 7 (see below) provides some context; on average, approximately 11 complaints were investigated by the LGSCO per year between the financial years of 2016/17 and 2020/21.



In 2020/21 less complaints were investigated and less complaints were upheld by the LGSCO than in the previous year. As explained, the global pandemic did suppress the number of contacts but the number of investigations was not reduced by the same rate. So bearing in mind the context, the number investigated is less than the five-year average of 11 and is the lowest since 2017/18. It is positive that the number investigated and upheld has reduced, as this would still indicate a successful complaint resolution by the Council overall and that the majority of complaints are responded to through the complaint stages.

Appendix One outlines the LGSCO decisions for the Council for 2020/21 and how these compare with 16 statistical neighbour councils. In 2020/21, the Council had the joint third lowest number of complaint investigations compared to its statistical neighbours, 16 other local authorities. In addition, its upheld rate at 50%, based on the total investigated, was below the average of 72% for similar local authorities.

Furthermore, it shows that the majority of complaints that were brought to the LGSCO (36 decided) were deemed invalid or incomplete, referred back for local resolution or closed after initial enquiries. This along with the relatively low number of investigations reflects positively that the Council's complaints procedures are working effectively to find fair and appropriate local resolutions.

Of the three complaints that were investigated and upheld by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, two were in Children and Young People's Services, and one was in Adult Social Care.

### 3.5 Housing Ombudsman

From April 2013, the Housing Ombudsman has dealt with all complaints from tenants regarding social housing. There were four decisions made by the Housing Ombudsman in 2020/21, two were not upheld and two were upheld in part (two decisions in 2019/20, one upheld and one part upheld).

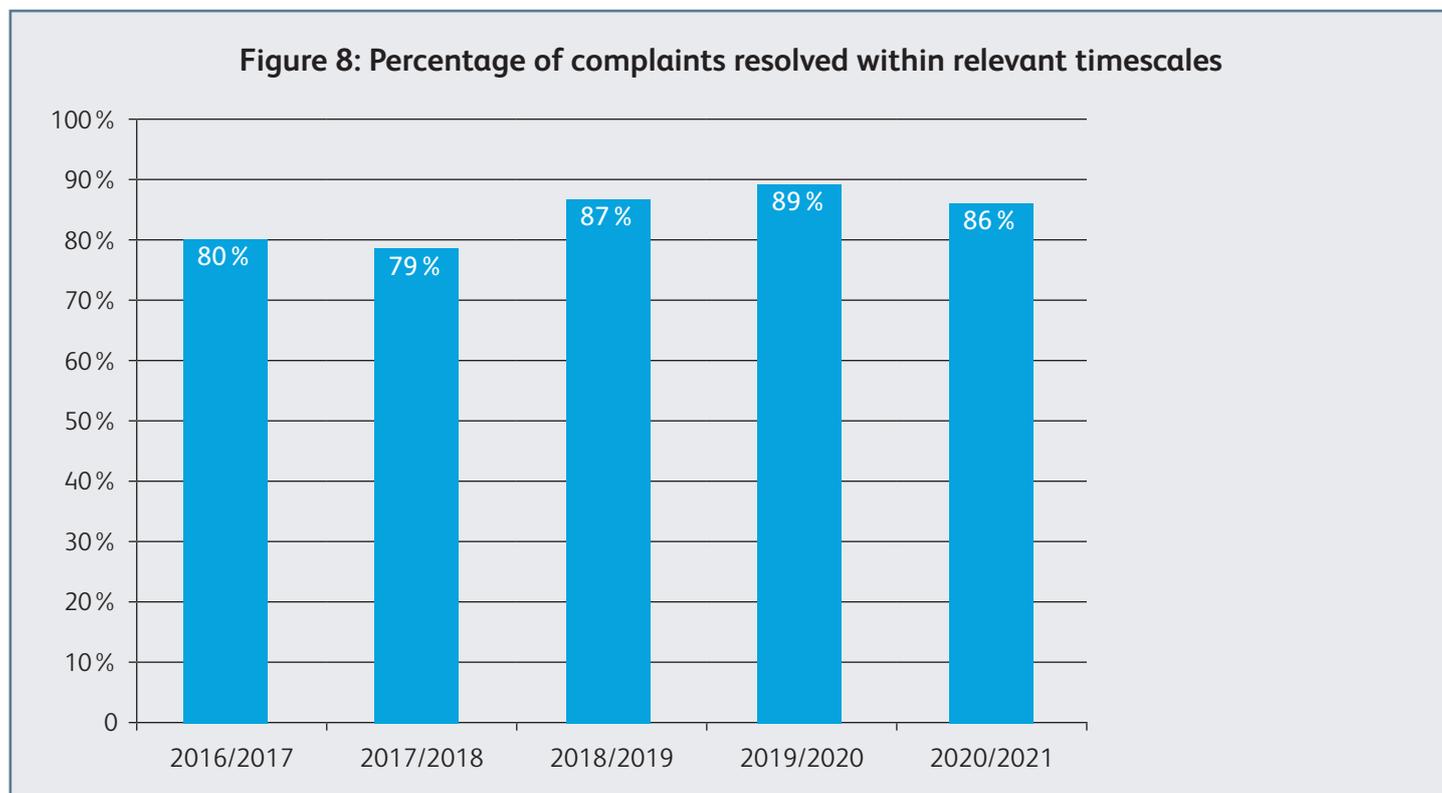
The partially upheld complaints were regarding the timeliness of repairs to a council property, the Council was asked to apologise and pay £200 in compensation and delays in responding to reports of ASB and damage to a property, the Council was asked to apologise and also pay £200 in compensation.

## 4. PERFORMANCE

### 4.1 Performance Overview

Performance against the time allowed by the formal complaint procedure is monitored through regular (weekly, monthly, and quarterly) performance reports presented to Council Directorate Leadership Team meetings and Service Management Team meetings.

The following graph compares the overall Council performance against timescales for the past five years:



Performance has decreased slightly at 86% of complaint responses within target timescale. Although a reduction on the previous year's performance, it is still above the Council's five year average of 84% and maintains the higher than average performance seen over the last three years. There has been a continued effort made across all council services to improve performance to timescales, and the improvements in children's safeguarding and waste management have been maintained. For the first time in five years Adult Social Care have achieved higher than the Council average at 85%.

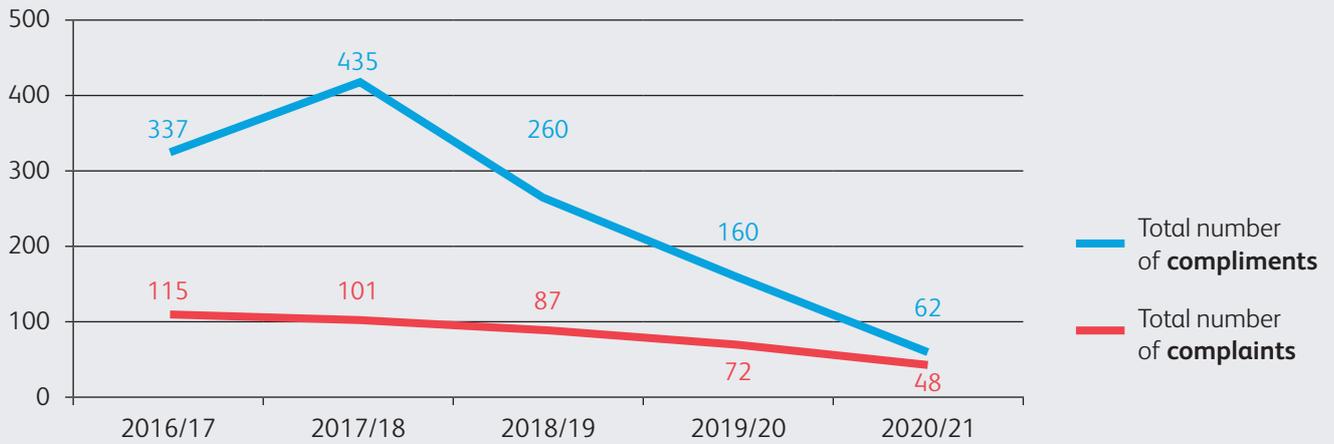
### 4.2 How we are improving

Improving the way that complaints are dealt with requires a whole council approach, with services prioritising complaints and making improvements based on the feedback from customers. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every service to make responding to complaints and learning from customer feedback a priority.

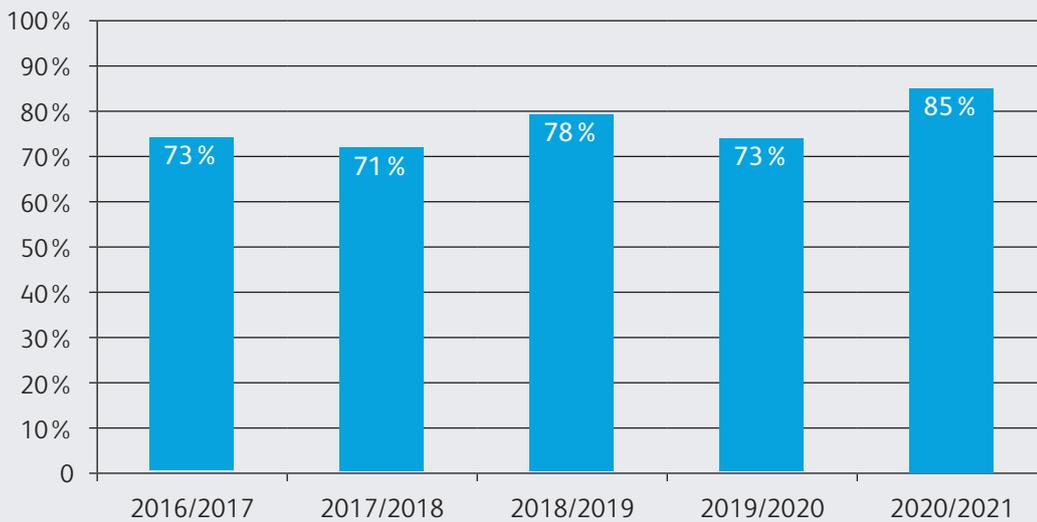
A number of service improvements have been made over the year based on feedback from our customers. Key themes of service improvements have included the training and performance management of staff; reviews of processes and policies; and the revision of communication materials. Examples of case studies where service improvements have been made based on complaints are outlined within each Directorate section.

# 5. ADULT SERVICES

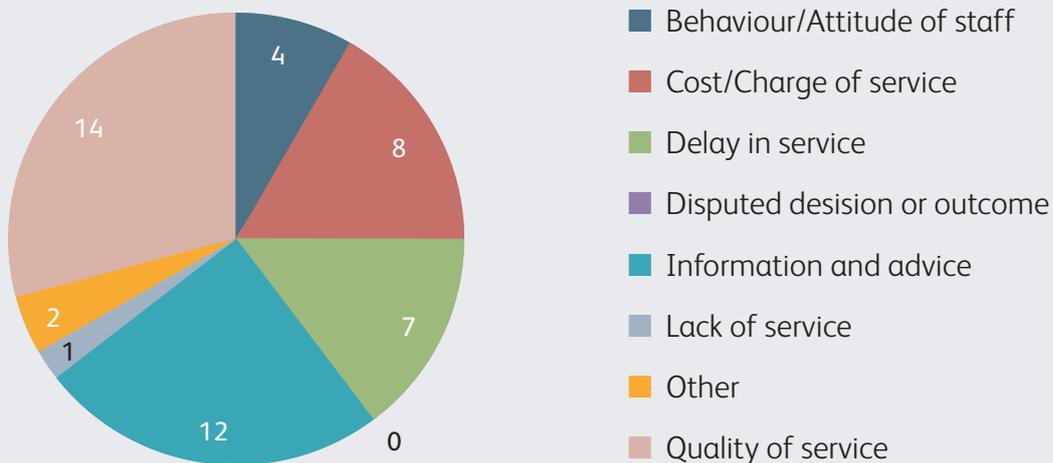
**Figure 9: Total number of complaints and compliments relating to Adult Social Care**



**Figure 10: Percentage of complaints about Adult Care Services closed in timescales**



**Figure 11: Complaints about Adult Services by category – 2020/21**



## 5.1 Key Headlines

33%

fewer  
complaints  
received**Fewer complaints  
about Adult Services  
were received.**(48 in 2020/21  
compared with  
72 in 2019/20).**Fewer compliments  
were received about  
Adult Services.**(62 in 2020/21  
compared with  
160 in 2019/20).

61%

fewer  
compliments  
received**Less complaints  
were upheld.**(14 in 2020/21  
compared with  
15 in 2019/20.)**85% of complaints were  
responded to within  
timescales.**This is above the  
Council's five year  
average of 84% and  
more than 2019/20,  
73%.**One Ombudsman  
complaint decision  
was received.**

It was upheld.

**14 of 48 complaints  
were regarding quality  
of service and 12 were  
regarding information  
and advice.****Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Adult Services complaints were:**

- Cost or charges for care
- Delays in assessments / reviews / request for contact
- Assessment Outcome or Decision
- Lack of information or advice / communication

In addition, the significant reduction in formal complaints is in line with the Council average reduction of 32%. The largest reduction was in the Locality Social Work Teams, they reduced from 37 to 21. However, in other service areas the reductions were not as large, and some areas did not decrease. For example, in the council's Access service the number of complaints remained the same, at 10 complaints, this was because the number of complaints for the Integrated Discharge Team (Hospital Social Work Team) which is part of this service area increased, from 4 to 7.

**Examples of some of the compliments received for adult services in 2020/21:**

“Many thanks for providing the (Enabling) service to me, it has been really helpful, and I am very appreciative of everyone’s help and support to get me back to being independent again.”

“I’d like to say a big thank you to ..... who has helped us navigate the process to acquire respite, they have been a brilliant help & we are very grateful. It’s been a lifeline even in a time of lockdown.”

“I have found her to be absolutely fantastic, so helpful, pleasant and kind whilst being professional and extremely competent at her job.”

## 5.2 Lessons Learned

**Adult Services made several service improvements based on customer feedback in 2020/21. An example of these improvements is outlined in the case study below:**

### The Complaint

A customer’s complaint was considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, who considered that the Council was at fault in how it had dealt with its requirement to complete a financial assessment and then process a refund of care charges.

### What did we do?

The Council worked with the customer and Local Government and Social care Ombudsman, fully accepting their decision and have agreed to the following improvements to service.

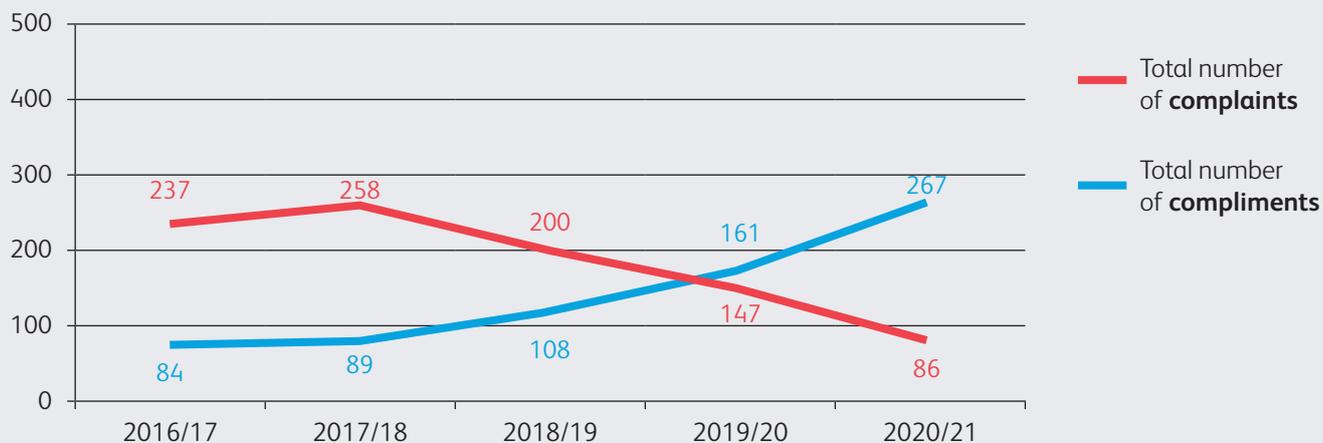
- Completed a review of our policies and procedures relating to charging for care.
- We will now follow up any refund payment made via a care home within a month to ensure it has been paid on time, taking action as necessary if it has not.
- We will not make any residential care placement that is in a person’s best interest subject to a third-party top-up fee.
- We have arranged training for relevant staff to ensure correct practice is embedded.

### Who is better off?

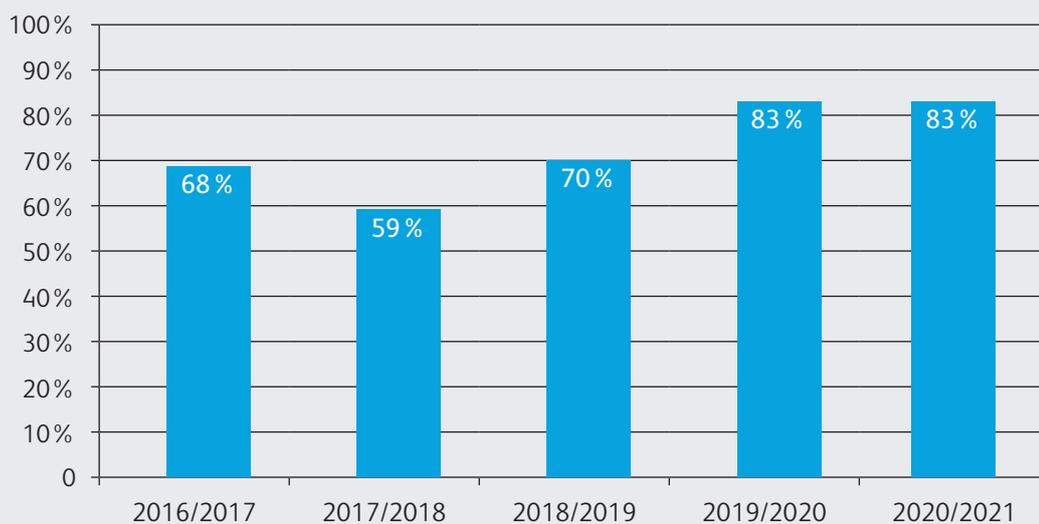
Improvements to the Council’s Financial Assessment policies and procedures relating to the charges of care will benefit all current and future users of adult social services in Rotherham. Through better, timely and more customer focussed financial assessments and the procedures in respect of care charges, the Council will ensure that problems experienced in this complaint will not reoccur and that services have been improved for all residents.

# 6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICES

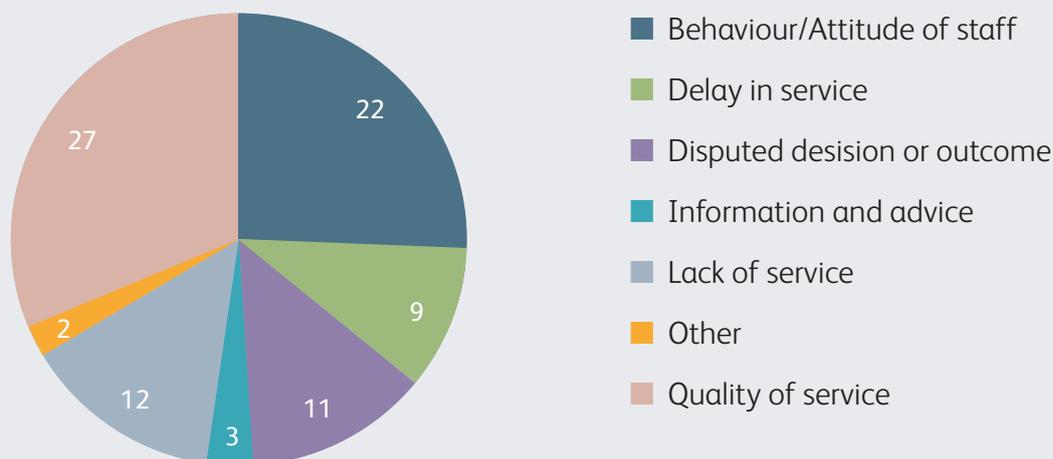
**Figure 12: Total number of complaints and compliments about Children and Young People’s Services**



**Figure 13: Percentage of complaints about Children and Young People’s Services closed within timescales**



**Figure 14: Complaints about Children and Young People’s Services by category – 2020/21**



## 6.1 Key Headlines

49%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints about Children and Young People's services were received.**  
(86 in 2020/21 compared with 147 in 2019/20)

**More compliments were received about Children's and Young People's services (267 in 2020/21 compared with 161 in 2019/20)**

39%

more  
compliments  
received

**More complaints were upheld.**  
(45 in 2020/21 compared with 25 in 2019/20)

**83% of complaints were responded to within timescales.**

This is the same as 2019/20 and maintains best ever performance.



Four Ombudsman complaint decisions were received. **Two were upheld and two were not upheld.**

**Most complaints were regarding quality of service, 27 of 86.**

Followed by actions of staff, 22 of 86.



**Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Children and Young People's Services complaints were:**

- Disagreements with decisions made and the outcome of assessment
- Delays in preparing reports or assessments
- Delays/difficulties with communication

In addition, the reduction in complaints can be attributed to the way in which managers have been encouraged and supported to address concerns at the earliest opportunity, so that any problems can be resolved before they enter into the formal complaint procedure. This is the second year where we have had a large decrease in the number of formal complaints.

**Some key messages that have been shared with colleagues as a result of complaints this year:**

- Using clear non-jargon explanations of processes and next steps
- Thinking carefully about sharing personal information even if between a couple and recording discussions and rationale carefully where information is shared
- Working more closely with settings around collecting and transporting children's belongings between placements
- Ensuring young people have bank accounts, ID and passports in a timely manner

**Examples of some of the compliments received for Children & Young People's Services in 2020/21:**

"She is a massive help, she's a 'godsend'. She's bubbly but relaxing, she tells me how it is in a friendly way, I trust her, she's like a rock, like a family member. It's good to talk to someone who isn't family, she deserves a medal."

"Communication has been good throughout. I like to see her, and she speaks to me and my child. I'm not afraid to tell her anything which is worrying me, and I feel she listens to me."

"The Social Worker listens and takes my views into account in a non-judgmental way which means I can open up to her. She is the best social worker we have had."

## 6.2 Lessons Learned

**Children and Young People's Services made several service improvements in 2020/21 following the feedback from customers. An example of this is outlined in the case study below:**

### The Complaint

A complaint was made by an adopter about the quality and timeliness of life story work for their child.

### What did we do?

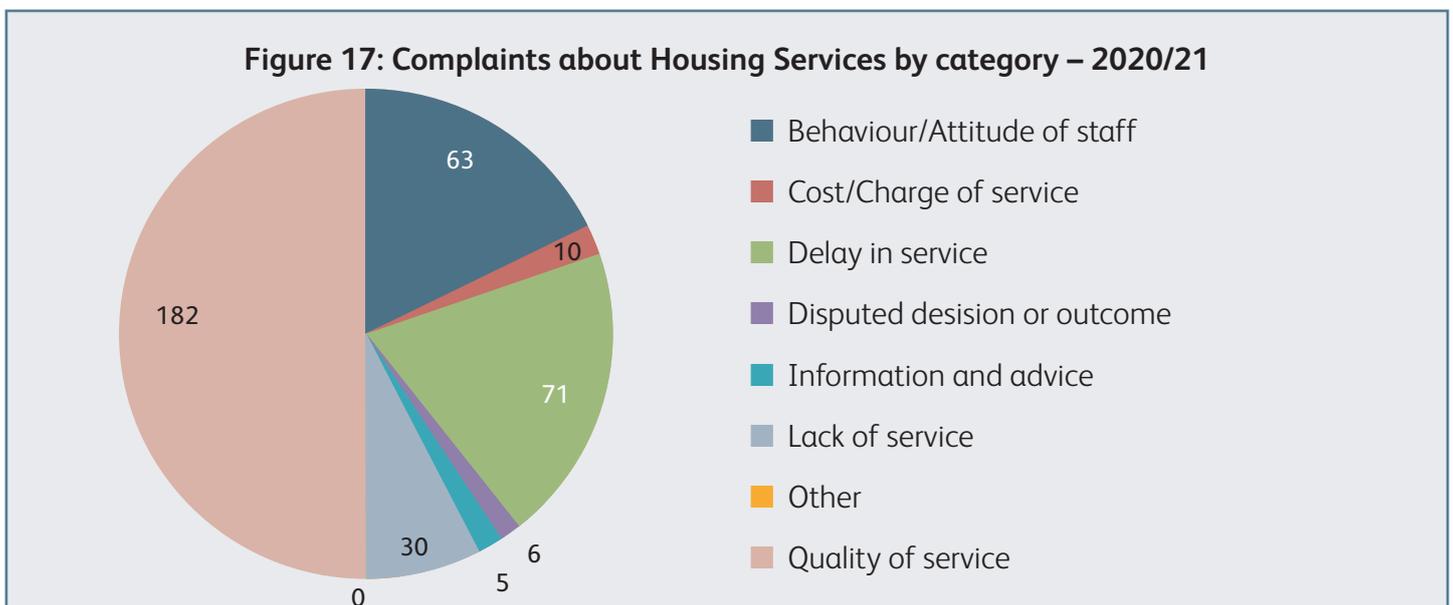
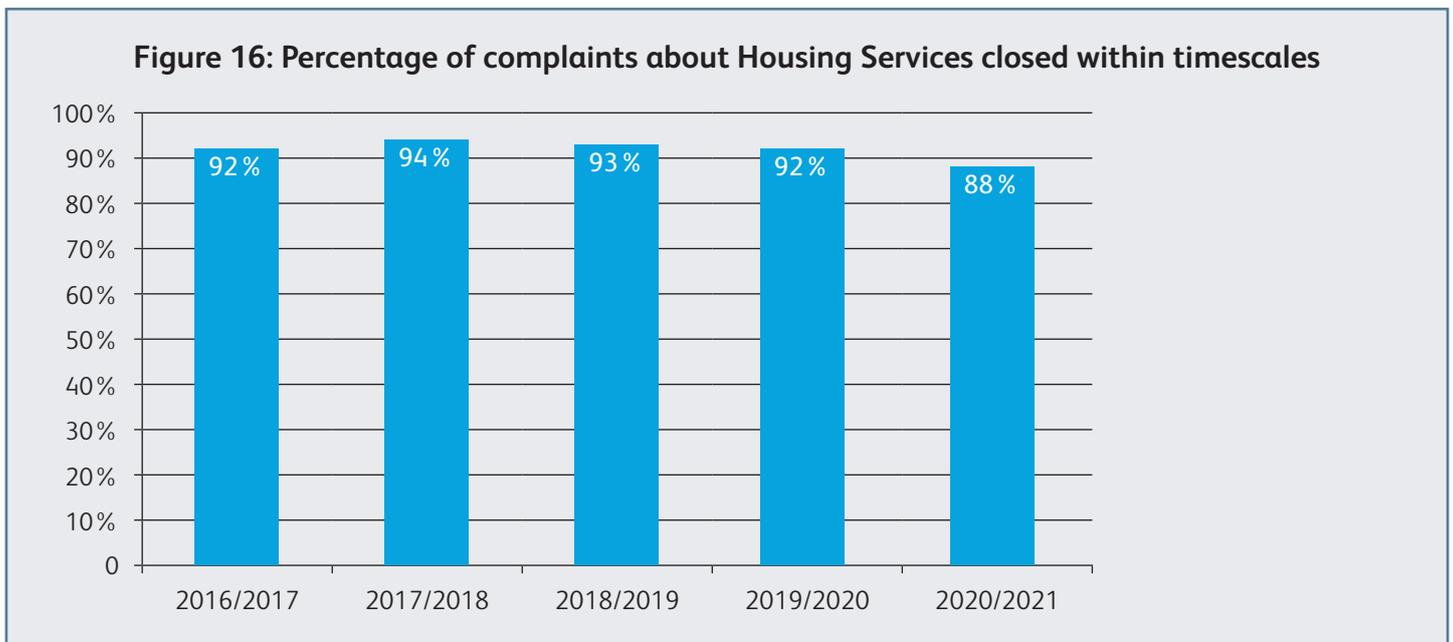
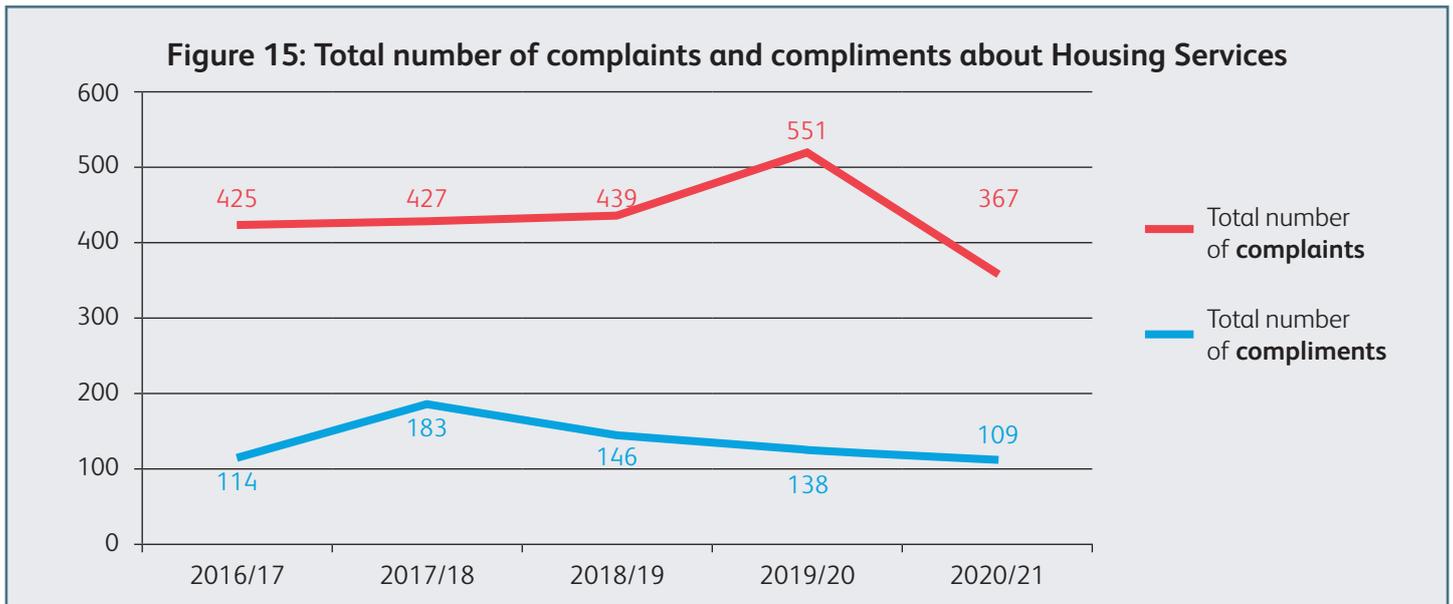
Alongside the formal complaint response, the Service Manager and Complaints Officer met with the parent to listen to their concerns and view the document they had received.

It was acknowledged that there had been delays in completing the piece of work due to capacity. As well as providing a corrected life story, there were focussed discussions at Team Manager Forums to discuss the learning from this complaint and to ensure that all staff were aware of the impact of inaccurate information being recorded.

### Who is better off?

Both children and carers will benefit from better quality life story work. For every child who enters our care, or moves to live with an extended family member, words and pictures will be completed, explaining decision making in a way the children can understand. Also, a later in life letter from the social worker who carried out that piece of work will be completed. The letter may be brief but will capture decision making as well as some of the anecdotal information, that for some of our children can be lost along the way. This can then be stored and will form part of a series of later in life letters which in time will ensure our young people have a sound understanding of decisions made that influenced their lives.

# 7. HOUSING SERVICES



## 7.1 Key Headlines

33%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints about Housing Services were received.**  
(367 in 2020/21 compared with 551 in 2019/20)

**Fewer compliments were received about Housing Services.**  
(109 in 2020/21 compared with 138 in 2019/20)

21%

fewer  
compliments  
received

**Less complaints were upheld.**  
(84, 23 %, in 2020/21 compared with 169, 31 %, in 2019/20)

**88% of complaints were responded to within timescales.**

This is above the five year council average of 84 % but is lower than 2019/20, 92 %.



Four Ombudsman complaint decisions were received.  
**Two were not upheld and two were partially upheld.**

**Half of complaints were regarding quality of service.**

182 of 367 complaints. 71 complaints were regarding delay in service.



**Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for housing services complaints were:**

- The Covid-19 Lockdown at the beginning of the year had a significant impact on reducing complaints as services were tailored to the pandemic, home visits, in all but emergencies, ceased during the first months of the pandemic. This particularly affected the repair services with non-emergency repairs being put on hold. Complaint levels were managed by contacting all those who had registered repairs and by an effective communication strategy advising customers of the change. The Income Recovery Team, a primarily telephone-based service experienced the lowest reduction of complaints.
- Communication remains the main cause of complaints particularly in relation to individual repair issues where customer expectation could be managed better.
- Delays in service, most specifically concerning repair delays and missed appointments.

**Examples of some of the compliments received for housing services in 2020/21:**

"I can't explain how amazing it's going to be to finally get my own place with the kids. It's going to do wonders for my mental health and fitness, and for the kids. Thank you so much."

"At a point in my life when I needed to be safe and secure RMBC and especially... ..were there and gave me the confidence to stay in my home. I cannot praise you all enough. Thank you so very much."

"Thank you once again for helping me with this stairlift .It's fitted and we are well chuffed I wouldn't have got this far without your help. The guys from prism company were excellent so if you can pass this on to them very friendly and explained everything. Thank you once again on behalf of my family too."

## 7.2 Lessons Learned

**Housing Services made several service improvements based on customer feedback in 2020/21.**

**An example of these improvements is outlined in the case study below:**

### The Complaint

When fencing was erected around a bungalow complex a complaint was received advising that complainant's disability made it difficult to open the gate to their footpath. The protective fencing had been erected following a bid for Ward Housing Hub funding to create a protective space around the bungalows.

### What did we do?

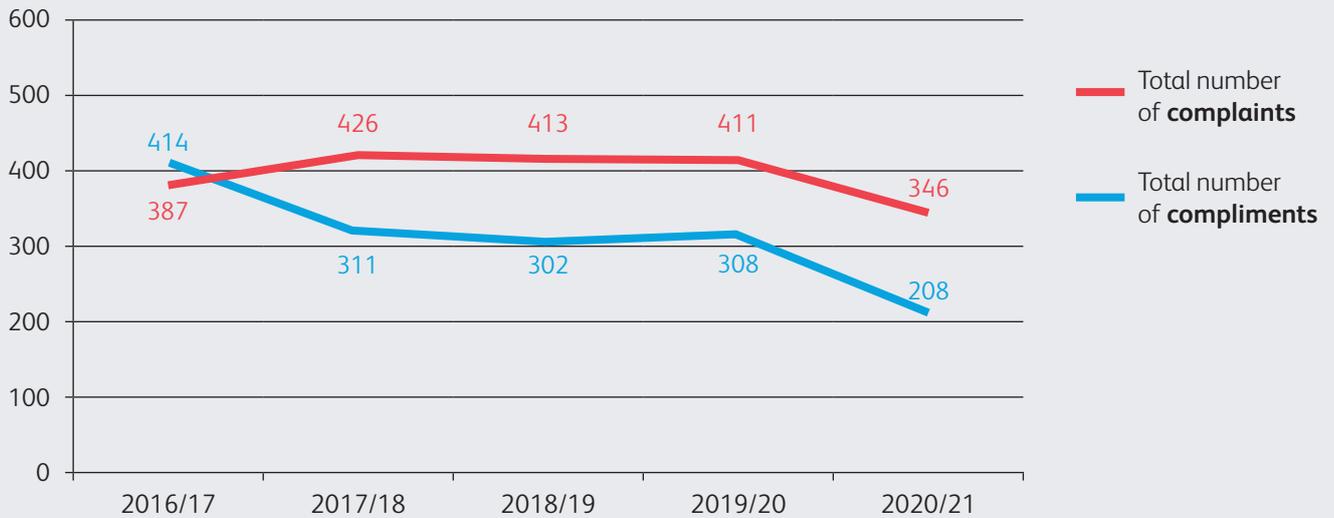
An apology was given, and the contractor returned to change the gate mechanism to a type that was suitable to the resident's disability. The consultation process reviewed, and the Ward Housing Hub application was changed to include two mandatory questions to prevent this happening again, including the question; Will this project have a positive or negative impact on someone with a disability? We have also improved the communication process around projects of this nature, so we will be able address any concerns much earlier.

### Who is better off?

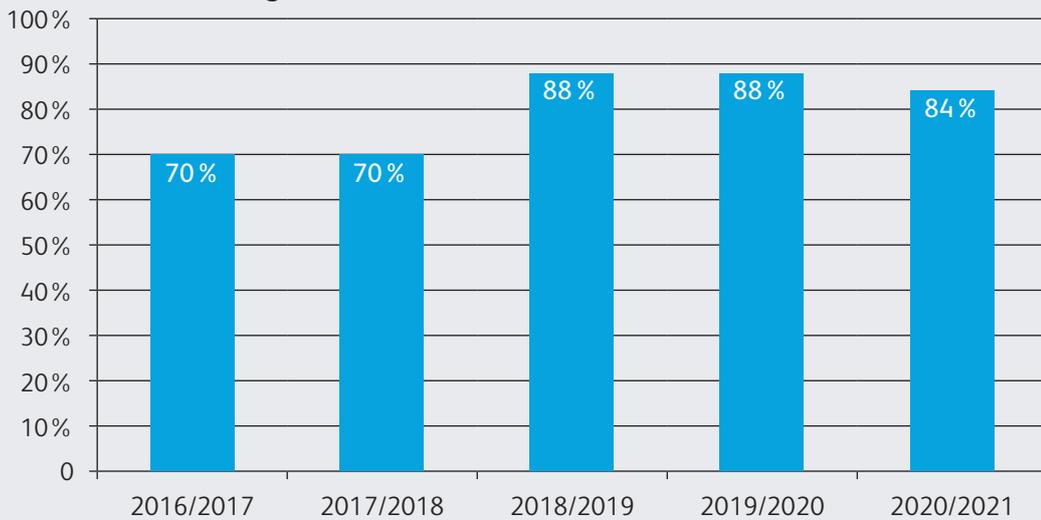
Similar future ward hub and security works will be beneficial to all, taking into account residents individual needs and requirements.

# 8. REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

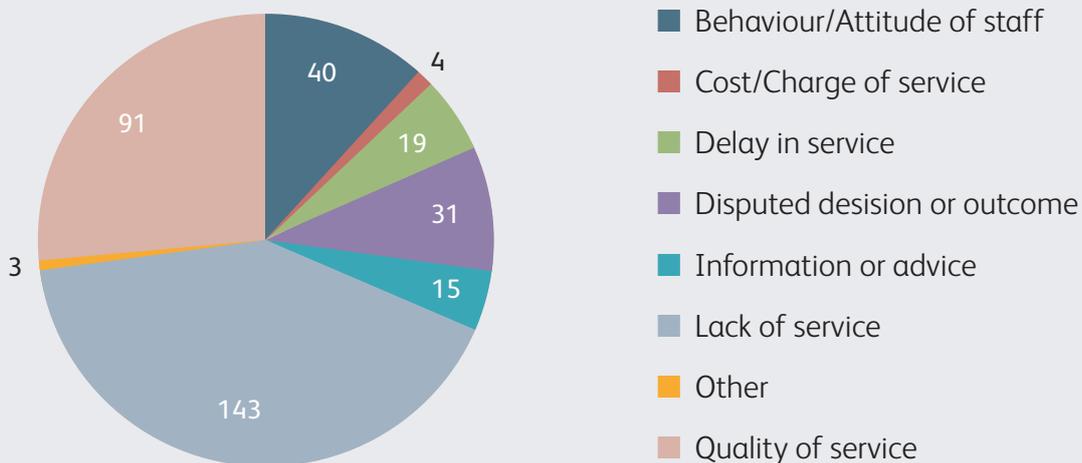
**Figure 18: Total number of compliments and complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services**



**Figure 19: Percentage of complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services closed within timescales**



**Figure 20: Complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services by category – 2020/21**



## 8.1 Key Headlines

16%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services were received.**  
(346 in 2020/21 compared with 411 in 2019/20).

**Fewer compliments were received about Regeneration and Environment Services.**  
(208 in 2020/21 compared with 308 in 2019/20).

32%

fewer  
compliments  
received

**Fewer complaints were upheld.**  
(113 in 2020/21 compared with 122 in 2019/20).

**Fewer complaints responded to within timescales.**  
(84% in 2020/21 compared with 88% in 2019/20).



Two Ombudsman complaint decisions were received.  
**Both were closed after initial enquiries with no further action.**

**41% of complaints were regarding lack of service** (143 of 346 complaints).  
91 complaints were regarding the quality of service.



**Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Regeneration and Environment Services were:**

- Missed bin collections and complaints about bins not being returned to the correct location.
- Delay in delivery of new and replacement bins.
- Restrictions, opening times and traffic management at Household Waste Recycling Centres as a result of Covid-19 pandemic.
- Planning decisions, planning process and lack of planning enforcement action.

In addition, the number of complaints decreased from previous years. The largest number of complaints were regarding domestic waste and recycling collections in the Waste Management service, with 142 received. In context, the next highest numbers of complaints received were in Household Waste Recycling Centres with 35 and Planning Development Control with 21.

### Examples of some of the compliments received for Regeneration and Environment Services in 2020/21:

“Stayed with Nan, got her inside, got her warm and phoned for an ambulance for her. They stayed with her too until the paramedics arrived. Me and my family want them to know how grateful we are for what they have done, especially in the current circumstances.”

“Please pass on our thanks to the team of workers who have almost completed the work. Working in the current environment is difficult but is appreciated by our residents.”

“Please pass on our thanks and gratitude to the RMBC Highways team for the work recently completed. The roads are now much better, and the work was completed speedily and with the minimum disruption.”

“I thought I would take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for the service and dedication shown by yourself and Team through the period of lockdown. I have always thought highly of Rotherham School Catering services generally but have seen the best of humanity recently by all members of the team.”

## 8.2 Lessons Learned

Regeneration and Environment Services made several service improvements based on customer feedback in 2020/21. An example of these improvements is outlined in the case study below:

### The Complaint

Complaints were received regarding the delays in accessing Household Waste Recycling Centres and centres closing earlier than advertised.

### What did we do?

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in an increased demand for use of Household Waste Recycling Centres and restrictions in respect of the number of vehicles able to access the site at a time.

The Council introduced traffic management measures in response to vehicles queueing to access Household Waste Recycling Centres to ensure that this was done safely and provided staff to advise customers when queueing of the likely waiting times. The Council encouraged customers via communications to visit the Household Waste Recycling Centres at off-peak times.

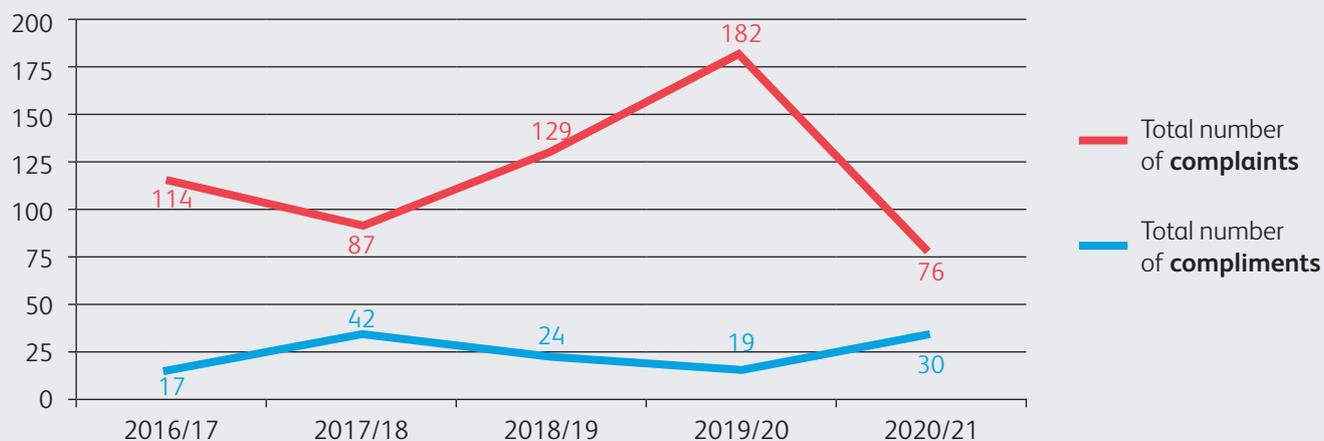
The Council improved its published information regarding opening times to advise of the early closure of sites prior to the advertised closing time to enable the site to be prepared for closure. Queueing customers were also advised of closure times when queueing to access the sites.

### Who is better off?

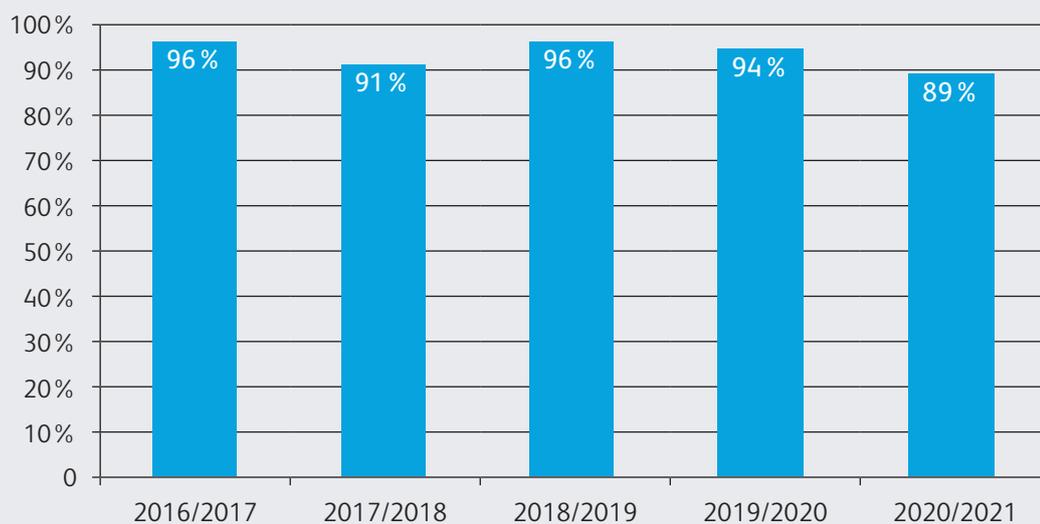
Customers were able to safely access Household Waste Recycling Centres and were informed about waiting and closure times, which resulted in fewer complaints regarding these matters.

# 9. FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

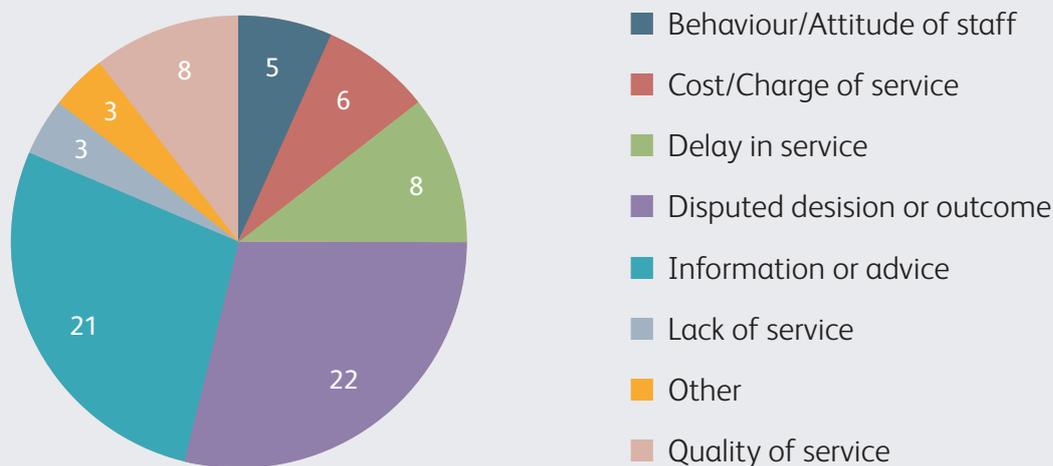
**Figure 21: Total number of complaints and compliments about Finance and Customer Services**



**Figure 22: Percentage of complaints about Finance and Customer Services closed within timescales**



**Figure 23: Complaints about Finance and Customer Services by category – 2020/21**



## 9.1 Key Headlines

58%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints about Finance and Customer Services were received.**  
(76 in 2020/21 compared with 182 in 2019/20).

**More compliments were received about Finance and Customer Services.**

(30 in 2020/21 compared with 19 in 2019/20).

36%

more  
compliments  
received

**Fewer complaints were upheld.**  
(10 in 2020/21 compared with 33 in 2019/20).

**90% of complaints were responded to within timescales.**

This is above the five year council average of 84% but is slightly lower than 2019/20, 94%.



**No Ombudsman complaint decisions were received.**

**29% of complaints were regarding a disputed decision or outcome** (22 out of 76) and 28% were **regarding information and advice** (21 of 76 complaints).



**Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Finance and Customer Services were:**

- Complaint about reported delays in applications for Disabled Persons Parking Permits including delays.
- Complaints about provision of advice and information in relation to Council Tax

The overall decrease in complaints for the directorate can be primarily attributed to a significant reduction of 71% in complaints received for Customer Services. Where in previous years call waiting times and delays in the blue badge application process had been prevalent themes; these two issues have both substantially reduced. This has been driven by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which saw a reduction in call volumes and also by an increase in both staff numbers and the number of services available online.

In addition, complaints in relation to Council Tax have also reduced by 30% from the previous year reflecting the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the additional financial support to some customers in receipt of Council Tax Support, the deferral scheme offered to customers whose income had been reduced; and delay in the collection of overdue Council Tax which in previous years has been a feature of complaints received.

**Examples of some of the compliments received for Finance and Customer Services in 2020/21:**

“Just want to say a massive thank you, we received our grant today you don’t know how much this will help keep our business afloat whilst we are closed, it’s a massive weight lifted, I might be able to get a full night’s sleep tonight knowing we can now pay our staff and our rent. Thank you to all the staff at Rotherham Council who are still working processing all the grant applications, payments, and enquiries to help all our local businesses it means so much to us all. Thank you.”

“All of you need a medal and recognition for all that we have done for customers during the covid 19 and working through the difficult times and how we have kept everyone going with everything whilst the pandemic has been happening, can’t thank you enough.”

“The call was answered immediately and the woman who dealt with my enquiry was excellent and very helpful. Everything was well explained and straight forward. I felt very assured that the bill was being sorted and I was given options to pay in particular ways.”

## 9.2 Lessons Learned

**Finance and Customer Services made several service improvements in 2020/21 following the feedback from customers. An example of these is outlined in the case study below:**

### The Complaint

A customer complained about the usability of the online application form for blue badges and the lack of accessibility, clarity and transparency in the application and assessment process:

### What did we do?

The Council now uses the online form provided by the Department for Transport so that applicants can now complete an application under each relevant criteria and guidance for the applicant is provided alongside each question. The form also provides the facility for supporting evidence to be uploaded.

### Who is better off?

The application process is now easier for customers who are able to apply against all relevant criteria and upload evidence at the time of application. This has led to a significant reduction in complaints received in 2020/21.

## 10. ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE

The directorate is mainly comprised of services internally supporting the Council, the largest service area being Human Resources. The majority of services within the directorate only have limited contact with external customers and due to the nature of services they provide they will not generate a lot of complaints or compliments.

**As such, information on what was received in 2020/21 is provided in summary below.**

### 10.1 Key Headlines

- Five complaints were received. (Five in 2019/20 )
- 19 compliments were recorded. (Six in 2019/20)
- All five were stage 1 complaints. No Stage 2 complaints.
- One complaint was upheld. (None upheld in 2019/20)
- One Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decision. (closed after initial enquiries)
- 100% of complaints were resolved within statutory timescales. (100%, in 2019/20)

### 10.2 Complaints

The subject matter of each complaint received is listed below:

#### Communications

- Concerns about the accuracy of the information on a recent briefing in respect of the Covid-19 crisis. Regarding the clinically vulnerable residents.

#### Human Resources

- Unhappy with how we have dealt with the enquiries regarding a request for a deferred SYPA pension to be put into payment.

#### Democratic Services

- The Planning Board meeting on 5th November 2020 is being held without it being open to the public.
- Unhappy with the scheduling of the appeal, feels it should be as soon as possible due to their child's circumstances.
- Was not able to access the Planning Board meeting.

## 10.3 Compliments

Examples include:

### Six received

#### Complaints Team

- “phoned today to say thank you she’s not sure what you have done but the graffiti has finally gone.”

#### Community Hub

- “Thank you for the information about how to access supermarket delivery slots.”
- “Thank you so much for this information. I have been able to register them with Sainsburys and they are allowing one priority delivery per week — which is marvellous.”
- “RMBC seems to have stepped up to the mark admirably during this Covid-19 crisis. I know this is the general feeling here in Firbeck and I would just like to ensure that thanks go to those responsible.”
- “the Council have performed above and beyond... It’s not just the front line it’s the people in the back office as well.”
- “Many thanks for the information and for arranging for our medication to be collected, we are very grateful for the excellent service.”
- “What a nice polite gentleman delivering my prescription- thank you.”

## II. PUBLIC HEALTH

It is a statutory requirement to report annually on the complaints received for Public Health services. Please note that the Public Health department predominately commission services and it is the commissioned service providers who will respond to any formal complaints via their own complaint procedures. The information below relates to compliments and to complaints responded to by the Public Health services directly under the council's complaint procedure.

### 11.1 Key Headlines

- Three complaints were received. (Four in 2019/20)
- No compliments were recorded. (One in 2019/20)
- Two complaints were upheld. (Two upheld in 2019/20)
- No complaints were investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
- 100% of complaints were resolved within statutory timescales. (100%, Four out of four in 2019/20)

### 11.2 Complaints

The subject matter of each complaint received is listed below:

#### Health Care Public Health/Public Health Intelligence

- Concerns around testing in schools and the scheduling of testing. Information and advice provided.
- Concerns around the accuracy of information in the "This is What a Community Champion Looks Like" booklet
- Concerns around the accuracy of information in the "This is What a Community Champion Looks Like" booklet.

### 11.3 Compliments

None received. Two received in 2019/20

## 12. NEXT STEPS, 2021/22

During 2020/21 the numbers of complaints decreased significantly due to the global pandemic. However, despite the decrease in numbers of complaints the challenges that the Council has faced over the last few years remain.

The need to manage budget savings continues to change the way services are delivered and this can have a negative impact on residents on how they view the services being provided to them. Therefore, it is vital that complaints are responded to in a timely manner and the complaints procedures work effectively for both customers and staff.

The following were the planned actions in 2021/22 to ensure that the way the Council deals with complaints and responds to customer feedback continues to improve.

### **Key actions include:**

- Continuing review of all customer complaint literature, including website information, easy read guidance and information for children and young people.
- Ongoing complaints training for staff. Continue to seek ways to deliver training to front line staff to allow them to understand the role and purpose of the complaint procedures.
- Work with management meetings in all departments to create a learning from complaints programme. That all learning reported is considered and the impact of service improvement is understood and recorded. This will also include a revised protocol around learning from Ombudsman complaints.
- Ensure remedy requests by the Ombudsman are completed within required timescales.
- Work to improve performance to complaint procedure timescales.
- Working to ensure that complaint investigations are more outcome focussed. Resolving the complaint and finding solutions should be at the centre of all investigations.
- Increase the number of compliments recorded, Complaints Team to continue to work with managers to ensure that the process for recording and reporting compliments is improved.

# APPENDIX ONE

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decisions 2020/21, Rotherham Council and statistical neighbours

| Authority Name                         | Invalid or Incomplete | Advice Given | Referred Back for Local Resolution | Closed after Initial Enquiries | Not Upheld | Upheld   | Total Investigated | Total     | Uphold Rate (%) | Average uphold rate (%) of similar authorities |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------|--|
| Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council     | 3                     | 3            | 15                                 | 13                             | 1          | 3        | 4                  | 38        | 75%             | 72%  |
| St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council | 3                     | 0            | 9                                  | 5                              | 1          | 4        | 5                  | 22        | 80%             | 72%  |
| Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council  | 2                     | 0            | 9                                  | 4                              | 1          | 5        | 6                  | 21        | 83%             | 72%  |
| Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council  | 2                     | 2            | 7                                  | 14                             | 0          | 6        | 6                  | 31        | 100%            | 72%  |
| <b>Rotherham Council</b>               | <b>3</b>              | <b>3</b>     | <b>10</b>                          | <b>14</b>                      | <b>3</b>   | <b>3</b> | <b>6</b>           | <b>36</b> | <b>50%</b>      | <b>72%</b>                                     |
| Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council | 6                     | 1            | 13                                 | 24                             | 5          | 3        | 8                  | 52        | 38%             | 72%  |
| Halton Borough Council                 | 0                     | 1            | 4                                  | 5                              | 2          | 6        | 8                  | 18        | 75%             | 63%  |
| Wakefield City Council                 | 0                     | 3            | 13                                 | 14                             | 2          | 6        | 8                  | 38        | 75%             | 72%  |
| Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council       | 2                     | 1            | 10                                 | 6                              | 5          | 4        | 9                  | 28        | 44%             | 63%  |
| Telford & Wrekin Council               | 0                     | 0            | 6                                  | 17                             | 1          | 8        | 9                  | 32        | 89%             | 63%  |
| Stoke-on-Trent City Council            | 2                     | 6            | 16                                 | 19                             | 2          | 8        | 10                 | 53        | 80%             | 63%  |
| Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council    | 5                     | 1            | 12                                 | 7                              | 6          | 7        | 13                 | 38        | 54%             | 72%  |
| Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council   | 4                     | 0            | 14                                 | 12                             | 5          | 9        | 14                 | 44        | 64%             | 72%  |
| Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council | 2                     | 5            | 12                                 | 9                              | 10         | 6        | 16                 | 44        | 38%             | 72%  |
| Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council  | 0                     | 3            | 7                                  | 17                             | 7          | 9        | 16                 | 43        | 56%             | 72%  |
| Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council    | 1                     | 4            | 19                                 | 15                             | 7          | 17       | 24                 | 63        | 71%             | 72%  |



21 July 2021

*By email*

Ms Kemp  
Chief Executive  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Dear Ms Kemp

### **Annual Review letter 2021**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the decisions made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. At the end of a challenging year, we maintain that good public administration is more important than ever and I hope this feedback provides you with both the opportunity to reflect on your Council's performance and plan for the future.

You will be aware that, at the end of March 2020 we took the unprecedented step of temporarily stopping our casework, in the wider public interest, to allow authorities to concentrate efforts on vital frontline services during the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak. We restarted casework in late June 2020, after a three month pause.

We listened to your feedback and decided it was unnecessary to pause our casework again during further waves of the pandemic. Instead, we have encouraged authorities to talk to us on an individual basis about difficulties responding to any stage of an investigation, including implementing our recommendations. We continue this approach and urge you to maintain clear communication with us.

### **Complaint statistics**

This year, we continue to focus on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. We want to provide you with the most insightful information we can and have focused statistics on three key areas:

**Complaints upheld** - We uphold complaints when we find some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before we investigated.

**Compliance with recommendations** - We recommend ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

**Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority** - In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), along with a copy of this letter on 28 July 2021. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the decisions we have made about your Council, public reports we have issued, and the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

I would encourage you to share the resource with colleagues and elected members; the information can provide valuable insights into service areas, early warning signs of problems and is a key source of information for governance, audit, risk and scrutiny functions.

As you would expect, data has been impacted by the pause to casework in the first quarter of the year. This should be considered when making comparisons with previous year's data.

Last year, I raised concerns about your Council's late responses to our enquiries and it is disappointing to note there has been little improvement this year. In one case, we had to threaten to use a witness summons to elicit the information we needed. I will usually only consider a witness summons where a council has not provided a response after a considerable time and despite our continued efforts. In that same case, the Council was late in providing the agreed remedy to the complainant. Indeed, two of the three cases where we recorded our satisfaction with your Council's compliance with our recommendations, the remedies were not completed within the agreed timescales.

While I acknowledge the pressures councils are under, such delays add to the injustice already suffered by complainants. Additionally, the actions you agree to take, and your performance in implementing them, are reported publicly on our website, so are likely to generate increased public and media scrutiny in future. I invite the Council to consider how it might make improvements to ensure it responds to our enquiries in a timely manner and to reduce delays in the remedy process.

## **Supporting complaint and service improvement**

I am increasingly concerned about the evidence I see of the erosion of effective complaint functions in local authorities. While no doubt the result of considerable and prolonged budget and demand pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have amplified the problems and my concerns. With much greater frequency, we find poor local complaint handling practices when investigating substantive service issues and see evidence of reductions in the overall capacity, status and visibility of local redress systems.

With this context in mind, we are developing a new programme of work that will utilise complaints to drive improvements in both local complaint systems and services. We want to use the rich evidence of our casework to better identify authorities that need support to improve their complaint handling and target specific support to them. We are at the start of this ambitious work and there will be opportunities for local authorities to shape it over the coming months and years.

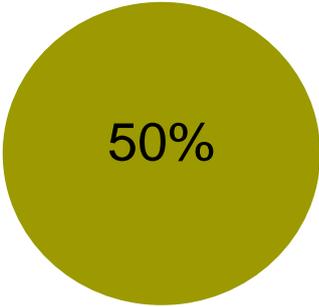
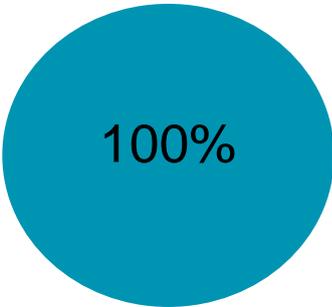
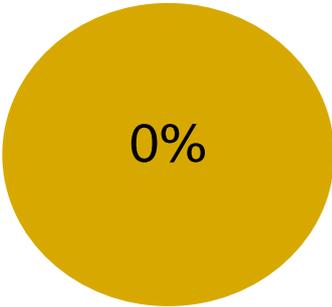
An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. During the year, we successfully adapted our

face-to-face courses for online delivery. We provided 79 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,100 people. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a horizontal line underneath.

Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

| Complaints upheld  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|   | <p><b>50%</b> of complaints we investigated were upheld.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>72%</b> in similar authorities.</p>  | <p><b>3</b><br/>upheld decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 6 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>              |
| Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations  |  |  |
|    | <p>In <b>100%</b> of cases we were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented our recommendations.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>100%</b> in similar authorities.</p>                         | <p>Statistics are based on a total of 3 compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to comply with our recommendations is rare. An authority with a compliance rate below 100% should scrutinise those complaints where it failed to comply and identify any learning.</li> </ul> |  |  |
| Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority  |  |  |
|   | <p>In <b>0%</b> of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>11%</b> in similar authorities.</p> | <p><b>0</b><br/>satisfactory remedy decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 6 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p> |

**NOTE:** To allow authorities to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, we did not accept new complaints and stopped investigating existing cases between March and June 2020. This reduced the number of complaints we received and decided in the 20-21 year. Please consider this when comparing data from previous years.

Work programme – Overview and Scrutiny Management Board UPDATED: 3 November 2021

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item            | Purpose/ Outcomes   | Recommendations   |
|--------------|------------------------|---|---|
| 16 June      | Year Ahead Plan        | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members are consulted and involved in the development of both the format and the contents of the new medium-term Council Plan.</li> <li>3. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members receive regular updates, at a frequency and in a format to be determined, on performance against the objectives contained in the new medium-term Council Plan.</li> </ol> |
|              | Equality Annual Report | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members are provided with the training and information to enable them to provide effective scrutiny and oversight of the equalities agenda at the Council in order to ensure the best equalities outcomes are obtained for both residents and Council employees.</li> </ol>  |
|              | Finance Update         | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That a further report be brought to the October 2021 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board regarding the allocation of Covid related business support grants.</li> </ol>   |

|  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
|  | Town Centre Master plan Implementation | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li><li>2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members are further consulted on the number, location and design of the public seating areas contained in the Town Centre Masterplan.</li><li>3. That in addition to protecting established trees and replacing any unhealthy or dying trees, that consideration be given to increasing the overall number of trees in the Town Centre.</li></ol> |
|--|--|---|--|

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item  | Purpose/ Outcomes   | Recommendations  |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| 14 July      | Financial Outturn 2020/21                                      | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 19 July. | 1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.  |
|              | May 2021/22<br>Financial Monitoring                            | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 19 July. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That a report be presented at a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that details how the changes that have been made to how the Council operates and provides services as a result of the pandemic have informed budget management procedures, and whether these changes to how the Council operates have highlighted any new opportunities where future budget savings could potentially be made.</li> <li>3. That further information on the budget processes and on the assumptions used to determine staffing budgets across all directorates be circulated to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.</li> </ol> |
|              | Local Plan: Adoption of Heritage at Risk Strategy and Register | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 19 July. | 1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.  |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item                                      | Purpose/ Outcomes  | Recommendations  |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| 28 July      | Grange Landfill                                  | Resolved on 18 March that a further report on the latest situation surrounding the Grange Landfill be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in three months' time. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the report be noted.</li> <li>2. That a further report on the current situation regarding the Grange Landfill site be brought to the January 2022 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, or sooner if there are any significant changes regarding the issues relating to the sites operation.</li> <li>3. That the Assistant Director, Community Safety and Streetscene liaises with the Leader of the Council, the Opposition Group Leaders and the Chief Executive on the potential to write a further letter to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government requesting that they use their discretionary powers to either revoke the planning permission granted in 1958 for the Grange Landfill Site or to make a discontinuance order.</li> </ol> |
|              | Adult Care - restructure and pathway development | Resolved December 2020 to request an update in 6 months.   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the report be noted.</li> <li>2. That the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board liaise with the Strategic Director – Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Assistant Director - Adult Social Care and Integration on the focus of a future report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on how the Adult Social Care service goes over and above statutory levels of service provision.</li> </ol>   |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item                                     | Purpose/ Outcomes  | Recommendations  |
|--------------|---|--|--|
| 15 September | Year Ahead Plan – Progress Report               | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 20 September. | That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.   |
|              | July Financial Monitoring 2021/22               | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 20 September. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That a report be circulated to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in order to provide members with information and assurance on the specific activities that are being carried out with, and by directorates in order to ensure the timely delivery of previously agreed budgetary savings.</li> </ol>   |
|              | Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Protocol | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 20 September. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That further consideration be given to how all elected members can be consulted and engaged with regarding the allocation and prioritisation of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funds.</li> <li>3. That an all-member seminar be delivered in order to provide members with information on the Community Infrastructure Levy, Section 106 agreements and on the new processes and protocols for the spending of both Strategic and Local Community Infrastructure Levy funds in their wards.</li> </ol> |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item | Purpose/ Outcomes | Recommendations |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 13 October   | TBC         | MEETING CANCELLED |                 |

| Meeting Date    | Agenda Item                                | Purpose/ Outcomes  | Recommendations  |
|-----------------|--|--|--|
| 3 November 2021 | Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report. | Annual item for the Board to receive the Safer Rotherham Annual Report in its role as the Council's Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee, as defined by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report 2020/21 be received and noted.</li> <li>2. That members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board receive a briefing on the specific data in relation to the information regarding the priority areas for the Safer Rotherham Partnership in order gain further assurance around the activities being carried across the Safer Rotherham Partnership.</li> <li>3. That the issues of Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery be added to the Board's Work Programme.</li> </ol> |
|                 | Covid Business Support Grants              | Resolved 16 June that a further report be brought to the October 2021 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board regarding the allocation of Covid related business support grants.                             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the report be noted.</li> <li>2. That the Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services, the Assistant Director - Financial Services, the Head of Corporate Finance and all staff who have been involved in the administration of business support grants be thanked and commended for their work in supporting businesses across the Borough during the pandemic.</li> </ol>  |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item              | Purpose/ Outcomes   | Recommendations |
|--------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 17 November  | TBC                      | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 22 November. |                 |
|              | Annual Complaints Report | Annual item   |                 |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item  | Purpose/ Outcomes   | Recommendations |
|--------------|--|---|-----------------|
| 15 December  | TBC  | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 20 December.  |                 |
|              | Progress Report on the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the use of agency staff | Resolved December 2020 to request an update in 12 months.   |                 |
|              | Adult Care Service Provision   | Resolved 28 July: That the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board liaise with the Strategic Director – Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Assistant Director - Adult Social Care and Integration on the focus of a future report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on how the Adult Social Care service goes over and above statutory levels of service provision. |                 |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item     | Purpose/ Outcomes  | Recommendations |
|--------------|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| 19 January   | TBC             | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 13 December.   |                 |
|              | Grange Landfill | <b>Resolved on 28 July:</b> That a further report on the current situation regarding the Grange Landfill site be brought to the January 2022 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, or sooner if there are any significant changes regarding the issues relating to the sites operation. |                 |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item         | Purpose/ Outcomes  | Recommendations |
|--------------|---------------------|--|-----------------|
| 9 February   | Budget Consultation | Annual item.   |                 |
|              | TBC                 | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 14 February. |                 |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item      | Purpose/ Outcomes                                       | Recommendations |
|--------------|------------------|---|-----------------|
| 23 February  | Digital Strategy | Resolved February 2020 to bring an update in 12 months. |                 |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item | Purpose/ Outcomes   | Recommendations |
|--------------|-------------|---|-----------------|
| 23 March     | TBC         | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 28 March. |                 |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item | Purpose/ Outcomes   | Recommendations |
|--------------|-------------|---|-----------------|
| 6 April      | TBC         | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 25 April. |                 |

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item | Purpose/ Outcomes   | Recommendations |
|--------------|-------------|---|-----------------|
| 11 May       | TBC         | Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 16 May. |                 |

**Items pending schedule or removal**

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Details</b>  | <b>Status</b>  | <b>Officer</b>   |
|--|---|--|--|
| Hate Crime Strategy  | Further update on steps taken to address hate crime and agreed to be involved in any pre-scrutiny work on the Hate Crime Strategy and its development.  | Timescale TBC as work paused due to Covid-19.  | Assistant Director, Community Safety and Street Scene/ Head of Community Safety, Resilience and Emergency Planning |
| New HR and Payroll System  | Report on the new HR and Payroll System once implemented in phases from June 2019 which will rationalise information on the staffing establishment as at present data is held in HR and Finance.  | To be subject to a one-off sub-group review. Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development contacted re request.                          | Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development   |
| Forge Island   | To monitor exception reporting.   | To be scheduled.   | Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment  |
| CYPS - High Needs Block Update and Recovery Plan                   | Scrutiny acknowledged that it was early days in the recovery plan process with steps outlined to reduce the deficit. Overall position.<br><br>OSMB had other updates on this particular issue and other services within CYPS, but Chair confirmed continuation at work planning meeting on 27 May 2020. | June 2021 – Strategic Director Children’s and Young Peoples Services/Assistant Director – Education/Chair and Vice-Chair to meet to discuss focus of the report. | Strategic Director Children’s and Young Peoples Services   |
| Response to Covid-19 pandemic and plans for post-pandemic recovery | Ongoing monitoring and reporting.   | Overarching item   | Chief Executive and Strategic Directors  |
| Rothercard   |   | To be scheduled  |  |

|                        |   |                 |  |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|--|
| Finance/Budget Setting | Resolved at the 14 July meeting:<br><br>That a report be presented at a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that details how the changes that have been made to how the Council operates and provides services as a result of the pandemic have informed budget management procedures, and whether these changes to how the Council operates have highlighted any new opportunities where future budget savings could potentially be made. | To be scheduled |  |
| Domestic Abuse         | Resolved at the 3 November meeting to add to Work Programme.  | To be scheduled |  |
| Modern Slavery         | Resolved at the 3 November meeting to add to Work Programme.  | To be scheduled |  |

#### Standing items to be scheduled

| Item                                | Details                  | Status   | Officer   |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|
| Council Plan Performance Indicators | Regular monitoring       | To be scheduled quarterly as agreed at 16 December 2020 meeting. | Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement |
| Equalities Report                   | Standing bi-monthly item | To be scheduled bi-monthly as required                           | Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement |

#### Items to be scheduled during 2021/22

| Item                              | Details     | Status                             | Officer            |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Children's Commissioner Take Over | Annual Item | Topic to be determined and meeting | Governance Advisor |

|                                     |   |                                 |                               |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Challenge                           |   | scheduled for 2021.             |                               |
| REACH Action Plan/Provider Services | Request received from Strategic Director Adult Care for consideration from OSMB | To be considered for scheduling | Strategic Director Adult Care |