

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

- Date and Time :-** Tuesday 2 November 2021 at 1.30 p.m.
- Venue:-** Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.
- Membership:-** Councillors Atkin, Barley, Burnett, Cowen, Ellis, Havard, Keenan, Khan, Jones, McNeely, Mills, Miro, Pitchley, Reynolds, Sansome, Tinsley, Whomersley, Wyatt (Chair).
- Co-opted Members:-** Mrs. K. Bacon, Mrs. M. Jacques.

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. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 September 2021 (Pages 3 - 6)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 September 2021 as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. Thriving Neighbourhoods - Annual Report (Pages 7 - 14)

To receive an annual report in respect of Thriving Neighbourhoods.

7. Progress on Library Strategy and Action Plan (Pages 15 - 76)

To receive an update report in respect of progress and actions against the Library Strategy.

8. Work Programme Update (Pages 77 - 84)

To receive an update in respect of the scrutiny work programme for the 2021/22 municipal year.

9. Urgent Business

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

10. Date and time of the next meeting (Page 85)

The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on 14 December 2021, commencing at 1.30 pm in Rotherham Town Hall.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 7 September 2021

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Barley, Burnett, Cowen, Ellis, Havard, Jones, Keenan, Khan, McNeely, Mills, Pitchley, Reynolds, Sansome and Tinsley.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miro and Whomersley.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

18. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2021

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 July 2021 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Burnett declared a personal interest related to Flooding Alleviation based on his attendance as a Ward Councillor at a separate meeting in respect of flooding concerns within the Ward.

Cllr Tinsley declared a personal interest in respect of the Bereavement Services update based on his previous meeting with representatives of Dignity, Ltd. during his work as a Ward Councillor.

20. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The Chair advised that there were no members of the public or representatives of media organisations present at the meeting and there were no questions in respect of matters on the agenda.

21. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

22. FLOODING ALLEVIATION UPDATE

Consideration was given to an update report in respect of flooding alleviation and defence projects throughout the Borough. The report included updates on progress of construction of flood defences at specific locations in the borough as well as projected work and funding timescales. Information regarding recent event responses was also provided as part of the update.

In discussion, Members requested clarification of the rationale for the concurrent working at 6 priority sites rather than identifying and prioritising smaller projects that can be completed based on the funding currently available. Officers offered clarification regarding how projects are prioritised and offered the rationale that no part of the Borough is being left behind whilst others are being protected. This is the reasoning behind the concurrent project approach.

Members requested assurances that gullies are being properly maintained. The response from officers noted the figures and frequency of maintenance of all gullies and drains in the Borough, with gullies and drains in high flood risk areas receiving additional monitoring.

Members requested assurances that Borough residents have recourse when encountering difficulties applying for insurance. The response from officers noted that as flood defences are installed, the service provides statements to insurance companies upon request which reflect the updated situation at the property location.

Resolved:-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the next update be brought in 12 months' time to include information in respect of progress with canal barriers and the pilot communications initiative.

23. COLD HOMES

Consideration was given to a report regarding fuel poverty and home fuel efficiency, representing the first time this topic has been considered at scrutiny. Heat loss was described as one of the significant challenges for housing services which affects many families across the borough. The presentation provided information about the retrofits and energy conserving solutions that have been implemented across the Borough to tackle heat loss and promote fuel efficiency especially in areas of severe deprivation.

In discussion, Members requested assurances that the most up to date data and ward boundaries would be reflected in a future update on this topic. The response from officers noted the challenges to data collection presented by the pandemic and offered assurances that updated maps would be used in future presentations.

More details were requested regarding private landlords' response to heat loss. The response from officers noted the work with private landlords and the various resources that renters and homeowners can apply for as they seek to retrofit their properties.

Further information was requested in respect of the several households which have elected to retain coal heating. Officers offered these details outside the meeting.

Members also expressed concern for families who will be experiencing fuel poverty in the months to come and requested information about how these families are identified and assisted to access the support they need. The response from officers noted that when fuel poverty is identified, that officers liaise with Public Health officers to address the need.

Resolved:-

1. That the next update be submitted in 12 months' time, to include the latest ward data.
2. That a toolkit of available resources, schemes and grants supporting energy efficient upgrades and retrofits be provided to Members with a view to sharing these widely and encouraging Borough residents to apply.
3. That a clear action plan be developed in liaison with the Director of Public Health to identify residents who are experiencing fuel poverty and assist them in accessing support.

24. BEREAVEMENT SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to an update report including annual performance information regarding the contract with Dignity, Ltd. The report highlighted exceptions and provided information around land use as well as timelines for upcoming steps including consultation plans.

In discussion, Members requested further clarification around provision of environmentally friendly burials. The response from officers noted that the interest in environmentally friendly burials was very occasional and that a suitable site had been identified.

Members also expressed interest in more information around the upcoming consultation with professionals. The response from officers noted the intention to conduct this consultation, the results of which would be taken on board and learning reported back at the next update.

Members sought more details around the process by which Bereavement Services officers monitor the standards to which the contract is being fulfilled. The response from officers noted that there were regular reports from the contractor which were then followed up with quarterly site visits by the officers, who performed visual checks. Any concerns around compliance were then addressed with staff members to ensure compliance.

Resolved:-

1. That the update and annual report be noted.
2. That the next annual report be submitted in 12 months' time, to include information in respect of engagement with professionals, including clergy and providers.
3. That the forthcoming five-year plan for maintenance be circulated upon availability.

25. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Resolved:-

1. That the updated work programme be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Governance Advisor in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair to make changes to the schedule of work as appropriate between meetings, reporting any changes back to the next meeting for endorsement.

26. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items of business requiring consideration.

27. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chair announced that the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on 2 November commencing at 1.30 pm.

Select report type
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 02 November 2021

Report Title

Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual 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)

Martin Hughes, Head of Neighbourhoods
martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

Progress on the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and the Neighbourhood Working model

Recommendations

Note the progress of the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and the Neighbourhood Working model

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report 2020/21

1. Background

- 1.1 Cabinet approved the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025) in November 2018 following the introduction of the new Neighbourhood Working model in May 2017.
- 1.2 The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy aims to put communities at the heart of everything we do and to make people healthier, happier, safer and proud by:
 - Working with communities on the things that matter to them
 - Listening and working together to make a difference
 - Supporting people from different backgrounds to get on well together
- 1.3 This is the fourth annual report to be presented to the Improving Places Select Commission and covers the municipal year from May 2020 to May 2021.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy is constructed around 5 themes:
 - Engage & Develop the Workforce
 - Councillors as Community Leaders
 - Communication & Engagement
 - Asset Based Community Development
 - Integrated Place Based Working, which includes collaborative working with our Parish Councils
- 2.2 Like with all public services, 2020/21 has been a unique and challenging year. From March to Autumn 2020 the Neighbourhoods Team were heavily involved in the Council's response to the COVID19 pandemic. Initially setting up and running the Community Hub and latterly a key service in outbreak management and promoting vaccinations amongst various communities. Despite this the Neighbourhoods Team still delivered on its core business and supported ward members who were serving an extra year in office following the postponement of the May 2020 elections.
- 2.3 **Engage and Develop the Workforce –**
Ensuring the Thriving Neighbourhoods strategy and Neighbourhood working as an approach is embedded and understood across the Council and partner organisations.
 - 2.3.1 Year Ahead Plan (2020/21)
Thriving Neighbourhoods is one of the five themes and includes activity around –
 - Communities are at the heart of everything we do
 - Democratic arrangements are open, transparent and accountable
 - Vulnerable residents affected by Covid-19 are supported by the council
 - Rotherham residents, VCS organisations and businesses use their skills and assets to help others

2.3.2 Big Hearts Big Changes

Thriving Neighbourhoods is now receiving cross-council focus and support through the Big Hearts, Big Changes programme, which is an internal programme of activity supporting the delivery of the Council's priorities. Thriving Neighbourhoods is one of the five themes and includes activity and projects around –

- Place Based Working – delivering ward plans
- Asset Based Approaches – staff development
- Volunteering & Community Action

2.3.3 Engaging with ward members and local communities - providing opportunities and support for council officers and partners to work at ward / neighbourhood level, e.g. Streetscene zonal working, Transport, SY Police, etc.

2.3.4 Ward Plans – services invited to inform ward priority setting and work jointly with other stakeholders to tackle those identified

2.3.5 Delivery of Corporate Strategies and programmes – Neighbourhoods represented on various Strategic Boards / Partnerships / Steering Groups

2.3.6 Cabinet report and service plan guidance - includes requirement to consider ward priorities.

2.3.7 Employee Supported Volunteering – policy and programme which will allow council staff/teams up to 3 days paid leave to work on community projects or support community organisations.

2.4 **Councillors as Community Leaders**

2.4.1 Ward member briefings - 276 taken place across all wards in 2020/21, supported by the Neighbourhoods Team

2.4.2 Ward priorities and plans – a light touch review took place in May/June 2020 as a result of the pandemic. The Plans were published on the website. The 2021/22 ward planning process for the new 25 wards is much more thorough using data, input from service providers and community organisations along with local community intelligence - [Ward Plans – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

2.4.3 Ward budgets - £303,500 was allocated to projects, services and activities tackling ward priorities in 2020/21. A total of 239 community organisations were supported. This was significantly less than previous years as many groups were not operating during the pandemic. A summary of the allocations made in each ward is published on the website – [Ward budget summaries – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#). In addition Members allocated £203,700 Ward Housing Hub monies on projects that benefitted council tenants and were in line with their ward priorities.

2.4.4 Ward reports – the majority of ward members presented their report at Council. These provide numerous stories and case studies illustrating the

impact of neighbourhood working, the role of members as community leaders and progress on ward priorities. The reports are published online - [Ward reports – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

2.4.5 E-casework – the new system was developed throughout 2020/21 and tested in early 2021. It went live after the May 2021 elections.

2.4.6 Member Development – was limited in 2020/21 as a result of the pandemic. The 2021/22 Member Development programme, including the induction, has been well received. The wider Development Programme is scheduled to continue throughout the 2021/22 municipal year.

2.5 Communication and Engagement

2.5.1 Ward webpages and newsfeeds – continued to provide information about the individual wards throughout the year.

2.5.2 Monthly ward e-bulletins - well established providing numerous stories and case studies illustrating the impact of neighbourhood working. Subscriptions increased from 3,337 to 6,125 in 2020/21. An increase of 2,788. The 'engagement rate' is 80%, which is significantly higher than most other bulletins of this nature.

2.5.3 Community engagement – community meetings and events were obviously impacted by the pandemic. The main engagement activity was based around the pandemic. The Neighbourhoods Team lead on engagement with communities and community groups in relation to public health messages, local outbreaks, vaccinations, etc

2.6 Asset Based Community Development

2.6.1 Support for community organisations – 150 community groups were supported directly by the Neighbourhoods Team in 2020/21. Again, this was much lower than in previous years due community groups not operating during the pandemic. 18 new organisations were established, the majority of which were in response to the pandemic.

2.6.2 Response to COVID19 Pandemic - Rotherham benefitted from having an established neighbourhood working model and excellent relationships with its VCS partners when it needed to respond to the COVID19 pandemic. Building on local assets, the Neighbourhoods Team and ward members worked alongside the VCS sector –

- Rotherham Community Hub – worked with up to 430 community organisations, Parish Councils and local businesses to provide support to those who needed it across our communities. The evaluation of the Community Hub identified the importance of asset-based approaches and how the relationship between the Council and VCS had strengthened as a result of this joint working.
- Rotherham Heroes volunteer programme – received 1,286 offers of support from individuals. This led to the recruitment of three temporary Volunteer Co-ordinators to support the programme and to develop the

Council's future approach to supporting volunteers. An Evaluation of the Rotherham Heroes programme was completed in April 2021.

- Humanitarian & Community Group – regular dialogue with VCS infrastructure / umbrella organisations to co-produce an approach to communication and engagement and local support services
- Befriending Network – range of VCS organisations that came together to provide a range of befriending services for those experiencing isolation and loneliness

2.7 Integrated Place Based Working

- 2.7.1 Ward Plans – council services and partners can shape ward priorities by providing local intelligence and information, which informs ward members decisions. The priorities within the ward plans form the basis for local projects, partnerships and networks supported by the Neighbourhoods Team and ward members. Priorities are shared across all Council services and key partners to help inform delivery, strategies and the allocation of resources - [Ward Plans – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)
- 2.7.2 Community Action Partnerships (CAPs) / multi-agency meetings – 358 neighbourhood based multi-agency meetings were co-ordinated and supported by the Neighbourhoods Team in 2020/21. These shifted to online Teams meetings in Spring 2020 as a result of the pandemic. This has ultimately been well received by all partners due to ease of attendance. As a result attendance at CAPs and other multi-agency meetings have tended to be more consistent. A new Terms of Reference for the CAPs was agreed in Summer 2020.
- 2.7.3 Locality Area Managers groups (North, Central & South) – includes senior managers from Neighbourhoods, Housing, Environmental Enforcement / CPU, Early Help, Streetscene and SY Police. Responsible for strategic delivery of services across the area in response to ward plan priorities and issues raised by CAPs, etc. as well as translating borough-wide strategies into local action.
- 2.7.4 Locality Area Joint Tasking Groups (North, Central & South) - includes senior managers from Neighbourhoods, Housing, Environmental Enforcement / CPU, Early Help and SY Police. Responsible for tackling specific community safety related cases and issues that require a multi-agency response
- 2.7.5 Parish Councils – the operation of the Parish Councils was also impacted by the pandemic. Meetings were conducted online but there was less opportunity for wider network events, etc. However, during 2020 and 2021 significant progress was made on –
- The Joint Working Agreement – between RMBC and the Parish Councils. Led by the Joint Working Group and provides the framework for future collaboration.
 - Flood Resilience - consortium of Parish Councils were successful in securing £66k funding via SYCF for flood resilience activity. Whiston Parish Council secured a further £12k for flood prevention along Whiston Brook

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The report presented is for information.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The report presented is for information

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The report presented is for information

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 financial and procurement implications, other than those relating to the Neighbourhoods core budget and the Members' ward budgets

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

7.1 There are no direct legal implications

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct staffing implications other than the recruitment and deployment of Neighbourhoods staff.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The outcomes within the Thriving Neighbourhoods strategy support the delivery of the Better Health and Wellbeing Theme within the Year Ahead Plan and the outcomes relating to Vulnerable Adults and Children and Young People.

9.2 The ward plans and priorities published online illustrate that ward members are targeting activity and resources towards Vulnerable Adults and Children and Young People. During 202/21 there was an increased focus on support for Vulnerable Adults as a result of the pandemic.

9.3 The Rotherham Heroes continue to support Vulnerable People within communities.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The neighbourhood working model enables the Council to respond to the specific needs of Rotherham's increasingly diverse communities. Engagement with residents takes into account the assets and needs of different communities of interest, which differ in each neighbourhood and ward. Neighbourhood working allows the flexibility to respond to these needs.

- 10.2 The ward plans and ward budget allocations published online illustrate that ward members have targeted activity and resources toward communities with protected characteristics. The introduction of community impact assessments linked to the future ward plans and ward budgets will assist in measuring impact going forward

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are few implications other than the potential for ward plans to have a specific ward priority around air quality and climate change. This would lead to projects and awareness raising that would contribute to tackling this agenda.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 Multi-agency working referred to in sections 2.7 of this report illustrates the importance of partners (in the public, voluntary and private sector) and Parish Councils in the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy. The ward plans are informed by the experience and intelligence from these partners which encourages the establishment of shared priorities and goals.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Risks relating to the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy are captured in the Assistant Chief Executive Directorate Risk Register.

- 13.2 Risk - failure to enhance community cohesion throughout the borough
Mitigation -

- Opportunities provided for people from different backgrounds to interact;
- Community Action Partnerships and other ward-based partnerships/networks in place (which involve local VCF sector) to ensure early identification of community issues and a local co-ordinated response
- Ward e-bulletins and social media platforms being utilised to promote cohesion including postcode targeted promotion.

- 13.3 Risk - Failure to take account of the new ward boundaries in service design
Mitigation -

- Council Heads of Service and key partners informed to prepare and align service delivery and ensure new or existing data is captured in line with the new wards

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Martin Hughes, Head of Neighbourhoods
Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Approvals obtained on behalf of:-

	Named Officer	Date
Assistant Chief Executive	Jo Brown	12/10/21
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	12/10/21
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	N/A	N/A
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)	N/A	N/A
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	N/A	N/A

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

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 02 November 2021

Report Title

Service update of the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action Plan 2020-2022 for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Zoe Oxley, Acting Assistant Director, Culture, Sport and Tourism
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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report updates the Improving Places Select Commission of the progress made against the Library Strategy 2021-2026 and the associated action plan which was approved by Council on the 11th November 2020. The report sets out how the Strategy and new service offer is enabling the Council to fulfil its statutory duty under the Public Library Act and meet the needs of the community through the delivery of the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service.

Recommendations

1. Note the progress made against the Library Strategy 2021-2026 and the action plan.
2. Note the progress made on the development of the new Central Library
3. Note the progress made on the transfer of Brinsworth Library to Brinsworth Parish Council
4. Note the progress made on the relocation of Thurcroft Library from Thurcroft Junior Academy to the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall site utilising the approved libraries capital allocated.
5. Note the progress made on the implementation of self-service technology in order for customers to access library sites independently.
6. Note the impact that Covid-19 has had on the Library and Neighbourhood Hubs service.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs 2020-2022
Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Rotherham Library Strategy 2021-2026

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

1. Background

- 1.1 Following approval from Council on the 11th November 2020, the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service launched the new five-year Library Strategy 2021-2026. The strategy was formed following extensive consultation and engagement with Rotherham residents to ensure that the future service delivery model was aligned to the needs of local communities.
- 1.2 An Action Plan was also produced to set out how the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service would deliver against the new Strategy in 2020-2022, taking into account the findings of the Equalities Impact Assessment and Assessment of Local Need.
- 1.3 This updated report is intended to review the key actions detailed within the Strategy and report on the current service position and significant achievements to date. The associated action plan provides a comprehensive overview of progress in a more detailed format.
- 1.4 It is important to note that on 23rd March 2020 the UK entered the first national lockdown as a result of Covid-19, which saw an immediate closure of library sites across the borough. Throughout the last eighteen months there has been a range of operating conditions from full and partial closures to normal service resuming. During these challenging times the Library service has continued to provide a range of opportunities for Rotherham's residents to engage with its services, supporting vulnerable communities, reducing isolation and increasing participation. Services have been adapted to ensure that libraries were accessible either digitally, outdoors or face to face.

2. Key Issues

Covid-19 pandemic

- 2.1 Due to Covid-19, Rotherham Libraries have been unable to deliver activities within sites for a 17 month period, this has impacted significantly on the ability to deliver the key actions detailed within the Library Strategy and associated action. However, in order to ensure that Libraries were continuing to have a presence in their local community, the service responded quickly to the raft of changing lockdown measures, adapting events and activities to enable audiences to continue accessing library services and in some cases growing audiences through social media and digital activities.
- 2.2 Throughout the pandemic, Libraries provided a wide range of online activities, Rhyme Times, events, readers groups and crafts with a Facebook reach of 865,728. An expanded range of e-books, e-magazines and e-audio led to 3823 new library members. The Order and Collect service for books was introduced in August 2020 and has continued to operate from all sites as an alternative access channel for those still nervous about entering the library to browse. To date there has been a total of 12,961 books issued via the Order and Collect service with 135,199 library e-resources issued.

- 2.3 The trial of pop-up outdoor libraries was offered initially in August 2020 from Rosehill Park, Herringthorpe Valley Park and Clifton Park. These sessions allowed the service to safely offer a service to adults and children in Rotherham and provided a library presence within local communities to promote the importance of reading, which was integrated as part of the summer reading challenge. These sessions proved successful resulting in libraries delivering further pop-up outdoor libraries in the summer of 2021, with equal success, with 166 adults and 207 children attending.
- 2.4 Rotherham libraries have continued to follow the Government guidelines and the step by step roadmap to inform all stages of service recovery. Safety measures and protocol guidance for Libraries has been clearly set out by both Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Libraries Connected throughout the pandemic and Rotherham Libraries have ensured that they have worked in line with the toolkit provided at every stage, regularly liaising with neighbouring local authorities to understand their plans.

Face to Face Services

- 2.5 In September 2021, the Library service started to reconnect with partners in order to restart activities and events and whilst the Library service has made some progress in welcoming back groups and restarting activities a small number of groups are not ready to come back due to the pandemic. Due to previous activity being placed on hold this has resulted in key areas within the action plan having not yet been actioned, specifically those areas where partnership working is vital.
- 2.6 Specialist services offered from Aston, Dinnington, Maltby, Rawmarsh and Swinton resumed in July 2021 on an appointment basis, each site offers this service one day per week. To date the service has delivered 136 appointments face to face and responded to 2942 customer enquiries about specialist services.

The percentage breakdown by service of the 136 appointments delivered is provided below:

- 85% Blue Car Badge
- 3% Housing Benefits
- 3% Council Tax
- 5% Concessionary Travel
- 4% Other

- 2.7 Comprehensive risk assessments have been devised covering all aspects of service recovery, service delivery and site by site information. A Covid protocol for the return of events, activities and groups is in place, which ensures that any risks have been considered and mitigated.

Library Strategy Action Plan 2020-2022

- 2.8 In order to monitor the progress of the service in achieving the Library Strategy objectives, a comprehensive action plan was developed as a tool to allow the service to track service development over the first two years of the Strategy. The plan is split into seven main objectives, which in turn link back to the Library Strategy and the wider Cultural Strategy. Update on progress against each of the objectives is provided below. See Appendix 1 for full details of the plan.

Objective 1 - Creative and Cultural Enrichment

- 2.9 Championed by the Head of Creative Programming & Engagement, this area of the action plan covers how libraries can support wider cultural and arts engagement across the borough, including how they can work better with partners to enrich communities and access funding in order to do so. Currently, libraries are working with colleagues in heritage and the wider Culture, Sport and Tourism (CST) service to deliver co-created activities. Pop up libraries were delivered in green spaces throughout the summer as part of the Culture, Sport and Tourism summer programme. Libraries are also displaying memory trees to branch off from Thrybergh Country Park “Hope Fields”, promoting death positive engagement following the pandemic. Libraries delivered Fun Palaces in 13 sites this year, as well as working with the Flux Capacitor programme to specifically target underrepresented groups.

Projects relating to this objective are as follows:

Fun Palace

Fun Palace is a nationwide celebration of culture at the heart of community, using arts, science, craft, tech, digital, heritage and sports activities as a catalyst for community engagement. This annual event takes place over the first weekend in October. Fun Palaces are free community events, created by and for local people. This year Rotherham Libraries once again joined in with the national Fun Palace weekend. Thirteen of the fifteen libraries had community led activities over the three days (expanding on 3 sites in 2019) with over 120 people attending. The offer included talks from local history societies, electric guitar playing, photography skills, crafting, knitting, quilting, sketching, Morris dancing and an interactive singalong with a local choir.

The service has recently recruited a Rotherham Fun Palace Ambassador funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. The main objective of this role will be to engage with communities in order to expand the current offer but also develop Fun Palaces with other area such as theatres, museum, community halls and country parks.

Flux – Creative People & Places

Rotherham Libraries are a key player in this action research programme, funded by the Arts Council People and Places which is designed to deliver a lasting impact on Rotherham communities participation in arts and culture. A new Programme Director has been appointed to lead this work and libraries

will be included in a year one test programme to work with communities to co-produce new engagement programmes across libraries in Rotherham.

Contain Outbreak Management Fund

Culture, Sport and Tourism will be using the Government funding to deliver a programme designed to improve confidence for the 55 and over age group following the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the next 6 months a targeted programme of cultural activities will support this group to return to daily activities across cultural services including libraries.

Objective 2 - Reading and literacy

- 2.10 Championed by the Assistant Director of Culture, Sport and Tourism, this objective is focused on the library services commitment to developing a life-long love of reading, and how this can be achieved starting from a young age.

The objective tasks include key milestones to ensure that libraries across the borough are working with national and local partners to encourage engagement and building on links already formed with schools and children's centres, this includes the continued promotion of the Schools Loans Service to enhance the learning experience using written language. This objective covers all aspects of reading, including digital resources and audio, and is set out to ensure that access is free and inclusive of all, and that libraries have the right stock in the right place and that it is promoted in the correct way. The objective pays importance to the building of readers groups (face to face and digital) and participating in national readers events such as the summer reading challenge, leaving no child behind. Many of the milestones within this area are currently in progress or have already been delivered, with planning moving forward for further engagement activities. Projects relating to this objective are as follows:

Novels that Shaped our World

Novels that Shaped Our World is a BBC initiative, working with libraries to increase levels of reading in local communities. "Page, paragraph or poem" is a creative writing event for Rotherham people.

Rotherham libraries challenged their readers to try their hands at their own writing, encouraging them to reflect on, and make sense in their own words, of these last few months in lockdown. There were three video workshops led by Ray Hearne, local writer, encouraging creative activity – before, during and after lockdown.

Home Educators Book Group

A monthly virtual Home Educations Book Group was launched in April 2021. The children vary in ages and attend as a family with their parents/carers. The group has been so successful that they are now holding monthly face to face meetings with the first one taking place at Rawmarsh Library in October 2021.

Reading Pictures, Seeing Stories

Building on the success of the 2018 Reading Pictures: Seeing Stories Festival the service will contribute to the delivery of a high quality and effective visual literacy programme across Yorkshire and the Humber which will take place during April and May 2022. Working with visual and creative digital artists and book illustrators, children and young people will be given the opportunity to meet, learn and to explore the connection between literacy and the visual arts. Working with key partners of book illustrators the library service will reach children and families not normally engaged with the arts.

BookTrust Storytime

Rawmarsh Library was selected as one of ten libraries in England to be a pilot for the new BookTrust library offer – BookTrust Storytime. BookTrust Storytime aims to inspire families, in particular disadvantaged families, to engage with a diverse range of books and experiences through their library and to help them make sharing stories a regular family activity. The pilot successfully commenced in October 2021, families attending the first session all enjoyed it with the children receiving a copy of the book to keep. The library service is really looking forward to continuing to work with BookTrust and with children and families in the community to make the pilot successful and to obtain useful feedback before the new offer is rolled out nationally.

Objective 3 - Digital access and literacy

- 2.11 Championed by the Head of Digital Services, this objective covers all aspects of digital engagement, from the libraries having the most up to date technology (public PC's, printers etc), to delivering digital makerspaces for local people, schools and groups. Improving digital literacy is high on the agenda, and it is therefore important that libraries can offer access to physical equipment and digital know-how, to ensure that the digital divide is reduced within Rotherham communities.

Projects relating to this objective are as follows:

Libraries Capital I.T Programme

All libraries have received new public PC's, with new printers and self-service kiosks also installed at 9 sites. In doing this, these communities have access to new technology and the ability to self-serve when using the library.

The service is currently in the process of exploring Wi-Fi printing and a libraries digital application, as well as the procurement of further self-service kiosks.

Plans for the roll out of self-service technology are underway and will be piloted at Brinsworth and Mowbray Gardens to allow self-service access to the library building. This will promote and encourage ownership and the use of the available space by the community as well as extend opening hours. Libraries are working closely with Bibliotheca to implement Open plus technology at the two library sites and anticipate a completion date of January 2022.

Makerspaces

Makerspaces encourage creative learning and exploring within the local communities by the provision of sessions and support that is different from anything we have regularly provided before in libraries. A Makerspace is in place at Wath and is currently being developed at Kiveton Park. The Makerspaces will include digital code club sessions, digital technology demonstrations, digital makerspace sessions and ICT sessions. The project builds on the “Mini Makers” project that we received funding for in 2019, using more innovative technology such as 3D printers, pottery wheels and VR headsets. As part of this piece of work a training package is also forming part of this project to give staff the skills and confidence to successfully facilitate a makerspace in its true sense. Support has been accessed from the University of Sheffield, the regional STEM ambassadors, an online introductory course and a visit to Barnsley Makerspace.

Objective 4 - Helping everyone achieve their potential

- 2.12 Championed by the Head of Operations and Business Transformation, this objective is intended to focus on the way in which libraries shape the current offer to ensure it meets the needs of the local community. Libraries are for everyone, so we will continue to offer resources in all formats, adapting each library to meet the local demographic and working with Ward Councillors and other cross cutting agendas and strategies such as Thriving Neighbourhoods to keep abreast of local issues and resolutions.

Libraries will support school children right up to sixth form, delivering homework clubs and safe spaces to study and bring their own devices using the new ICT equipment installed as part of the capital refurbishments, to encourage the use of library resources with their studies and offering free wi-fi to assist getting online. Work is in progress to re-establish job seeker support, deliver functional skills and training to those not currently in work and also give opportunities to work within libraries as an apprentice or volunteer which has reduced vastly through lockdown. Rotherham libraries are currently setting up a business and intellectual property centre (BIPC) in the central library to support small businesses and entrepreneurs to grow, working in partnership with neighbouring local authorities.

Projects relating to this objective are as follows:

Volunteers

There has been recognition that volunteers can bring new skills and ideas to libraries as well as reap the positive benefits that volunteering brings (such as improving mental health and reducing social isolation). The lockdown period and the subsequent temporary closure of libraries has impacted on the number of volunteers that wish to return. Now libraries have reopened with a full library offer the service will continue to seek to increase the number of volunteers working closely with RMBC volunteer coordinators within Neighbourhoods.

The Business and IP Centre (BIPC)

The BIPC provides free access to in depth databases and books that help businesses search best practice, research their market and understand their Intellectual Property. Delivering expert advice on all aspects of business by providing 1-1s, seminars and major events.

The BIPC is part of a National Network led by the British Library in London. They recently secured funding from DCMS to expand the BIPC offer regionally, of which Rotherham are supporting this initiative within Riverside Library.

A training programme for staff has been produced and currently being rolled out in order to support the BIPC to operate from Riverside in partnership with British Library and Sheffield Council. There will be a dedicated space within Riverside library and PC's specifically for the users of BIPC. The BIPC will open for public use in November 2021.

Objective 5 - Healthier and happier lives

- 2.13 Championed by the Head of Public Health, this area of the action plan primarily focuses on all aspects of health and wellbeing, and how libraries can support better health to those communities across the borough. By utilising resources and working with partners, Rotherham libraries will promote the “get healthy” ethos, and offer resources relating to wellbeing and mental health, encouraging customers to use libraries to reduce social isolation and meet in a safe space. Libraries are planning to organise and facilitate groups and sessions to enhance this offer, working with Public Health, NHS, local care homes and social care to ensure that the services offered meet the needs of the community. Libraries have invested in quiet spaces for children with autism, including sensory toys and props. The service is co-creating outdoor activities and events wherever possible, promoting people to “get outdoors” to access services. The two new library developments at Thurcroft and Swinton will have reading gardens incorporated within the plans to further encourage reading for pleasure and enjoying the fresh air at the same time.

Projects delivered or planned to be delivered against this objective are as follows:

Covid-19 testing partnership with Public Health

Community testing originally began on 7th January 2021 operating from the Café space within Riverside House. Staff were needed to support this and as libraries remained closed at this time staff from across the library service worked in partnership with Public Health to deliver the lateral flow testing centre. Library staff continued to support the test at the site until 29th June 2021.

In addition, as part of a Government campaign to ‘embed the habit’ making testing eligibility simpler, more convenient, and habitual, it was agreed

that more collection points within the community were required in addition to the pharmacies that were already doing this. Therefore on 19th April libraries became part of the LFT Community Collect initiative supporting self-testing at home.

Rotherham Show

Rotherham libraries had a fantastic turn out, with lots of customer engagement and exciting conversations taking place across the weekend. A series of story time sessions and rhyme times took place, with a digital demonstration of e-services and book give-aways also included. Families enjoyed Lego making, craft and colouring sessions as drop-in activities. The service recorded 881 engagements and signed up 52 new borrowers over the three days.

Objective 6 - Greater prosperity

- 2.14 Championed by the Head of Operations and Business Transformation, the action plan focuses on those within the local community who require support seeking employment, training or further education. Libraries will work closely with partners to ensure that there is adequate provision in each site to assist those locally requiring support. Partners attending the people and skills networking group will work with the service to plan and deliver these sessions. Libraries will offer volunteering opportunities, work placements to enhance employability skills for the future, as well as working with educational partners such as RNN Group, The Source and the UCR to promote higher education and training. ICT classes facilitated by library staff will continue alongside the assisted digital support to bridge the digital divide and improve digital skills for all ages. Libraries will work with Job Centre Plus and RMBC Pathways to extend the reach of this offer and encourage those wishing to seek this support, to use their local library to do so.

The Source Skills Academy

The Source Community Outreach Programme is due to commence in October taking experienced tutors and engagement officers into local libraries which are now kitted out with the latest IT equipment for the public to use. Sessions will run at the central Riverside Library and branches in Dinnington and Maltby. This is the first time teams from The Source have gone out to work from libraries.

This project is aimed at boosting young people's confidence and skills and encouraging them in to work or training, especially young people between 16-25 whose job prospects may have been impacted by the pandemic and feeling lost or isolated. This partnership will mean young people can benefit from the libraries new facilities whilst getting the right help and support they need. They will be guided onto courses including money management, English and Maths boosters, organisational skills, self-awareness and confidence-building as well as presenting and speaking skills, creative writing and digital skills courses which will be available.

Employment and skills network

As part of the working group, partners from across the borough will come together with Rotherham libraries to re-establish employment support for local communities. Links are currently being formed with Job Centre Plus, Pathways and RUCST, to ensure that each community has a presence where people can access this type of support to get them back into work or training.

Objective 7 – Stronger more resilient communities

- 2.15 Championed by the Head of Neighbourhoods, Rotherham libraries have designated this area of the action plan around how we view the location of our buildings and the offer delivered from each site in line with community need. Utilising the approved Capital funding, libraries are in the midst of a two year programme of improvements to library buildings and ICT provision. The capital refurbishment programme has allowed the service to review sites and either refurbish, relocate or co-locate where necessary. The service has worked with partners and other services as part of this piece of work, including colleagues in ICT, Asset Management and Children's Services. This area of the action plan also focuses on how libraries can work better with local communities to deliver services, extending responsibility and giving communities a safe, modern and accessible place that they can be proud of. This programme is still ongoing with several areas still awaiting completion in the coming months.

Capital Programme

As part of the capital improvement programme, monies were approved to either refurbish, relocate or co-locate ten neighbourhood libraries, progress on each site is as follows:

Thorpe Hesley Library: The site has been fully redecorated, with new carpets and blinds. A new reception desk provides a focal point within the library, with a new ICT desk layout to make better use of the space. The site has also benefitted from some new shelving in the children's area and book storage, and refreshed book signage. The library offer is currently restricted based on the library space available and the location of the existing site. Investigations are ongoing to identify an alternative location.

Wath: This site has undergone extensive refurbishment to the interior and exterior and has benefitted from a full redecoration to the ground floor, community meeting space and staff room. New carpets have been laid across the ground floor and new vinyl in the upstairs community space. All shelving and furniture has been replaced which includes the ICT area and Children's area along with the introduction of toilet and refreshment facilities, and a Makerspace where Mini Makers sessions take place teaching children a range of STEM activities. New book signage and wall graphics have also been added.

Greasbrough: To further enhance this library following the partial refresh in 2018, the site has benefitted from brand new shelving throughout with new signage, new furniture including children's, and a new ICT area.

Wickersley: The site has benefitted from a full redecoration to the library space and meeting room. New carpets have been laid throughout, with vinyl in the staff room and refreshment area. Most furniture has been replaced where required, including a new reception counter and mobile shelving in the centre to allow a more flexible space. A new ICT suite, study desk and quiet space have been created. New book signage has also been installed. This site also has hot refreshment facilities.

Mowbray Gardens: The library has had a general modernisation including the fitting of new carpets, and painting. The furniture has been refreshed where necessary and in addition, new technology which allows for the library to be open without staff being present is to be piloted at this site. The outside space has also had some improvements to remove weeding and vegetation, jet wash paved areas and remove debris from the roof.

Kimberworth: The library has had a general modernisation including the fitting of new carpets, and painting. The furniture has also been refreshed where necessary. The outside space has also benefitted from some improvements along with new signage on the building. Vinyl wraps applied to the blanking panels in the curtain wall as well as the block paving area which has been cleaned up and wild-flower seeds planted in the outside garden area.

Dinnington: This library has received new shelving along the back of the library, mobile shelving in the centre and reduced height shelving in the children's area. The upstairs has been completely revamped, with all stock now relocated on the ground floor. Upstairs has a new ICT suite, activity tables, casual comfy seating and areas for study and reading. New carpets have been laid on the first floor in addition to new blinds.

Kiveton Park: Early Help services are now located within the library and work is underway to deliver a range of activities for children aged 0 – 5 years including baby massage and other childrens activities. The space has been redesigned to incorporate both services, with a new meeting room that doubles as a hot desk facility, 1:1 meeting room, new open catering kitchen and casual "café" style space to deliver cooking demonstrations as part of the Youth Engagement Programme. A new ICT suite has been created where ICT classes are delivered, with tables for study or meeting. Makerspace facilities are currently in development. New furniture and mobile shelving has been installed throughout to allow additional flexibility when the library is both open and closed.

Thurcroft Library: This library will be relocated to the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall in the form of an extension to the current building. This will increase opportunities to work more closely with the Parish Council and local

community groups along with the potential to increase numbers to the library. The project is currently in the tender process. Work is scheduled to be completed by Spring 2022.

Swinton Library relocation: The redevelopment programme for the Swinton town centre will provide improved community facilities including a refurbished Civic Hall and the existing Library being relocated to the former customer service centre. The refreshed community facilities will include a café and meeting spaces. The public realm and accessibility within this area will be improved through a significant landscaping scheme which will open up the site improving visibility of community facilities, safety and accessibility. The project is currently awaiting planning sign off before commencement of the works.

Building Signage

Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs displaying old style RMBC logos and corporate colours have been replaced with the new style signage with the exception of Rawmarsh which is still in progress and Thurgroft due to the site relocation plans.

Digital Screens

Wall mounted screens are in the process of being rolled out across Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs in order to display notices and messages relating to local and corporate information to keep the community up to date with all the latest news within the Rotherham borough.

Central Library

As part of the Future High Street Fund Programme, plans are ongoing to relocate the Central Library to the Market. The new library will create a new civic building as part of the redevelopment of the wider Rotherham Markets as outlined in the Town Centre Masterplan along with significantly improving the quality of the built environment in the town centre. It is planned for planning approval and public consultation to be undertaken by November 2021 with appointment of contractor to the scheme in place by June 2022. It is anticipated that construction will start on site in Spring 2022, indoor markets 2023 and finally the library in 2024.

Brinsworth Community Library and Neighbourhood Hub

Following Cabinet approval, Brinsworth Library successfully transferred to a community managed library on 26th April 2021 supported by Brinsworth Parish Council. A concession agreement in relation to the provision of community managed library services was put in place to ensure that training and ongoing support was available following the transition over to a community managed library in April 2021. As part of the successful transition, RMBC provided initial training for both Brinsworth Parish Council staff and volunteers.

When comparing the footfall statistics for Quarter 1 (2021-2022) with the footfall in a “normal” year (using 2019-2020 for this comparison) the service currently has a 61% decrease in customers physically coming into libraries, this is concurrent with the national picture. In order to encourage communities back into libraries as well as showcasing the capital improvements made across Rotherham libraries a relaunch programme has been planned. The relaunch event will welcome the communities back into Libraries under the strapline ‘Love your Libraries’. The events will be themed based on the Universal Library Offers - Culture and Creativity, Health and Wellbeing, Information and Digital and Reading and will include a range of activities and events for both adults and children to enjoy. The programme will commence at Kiveton Park on 28th October 2021 and will then be delivered from Dinnington, Wath, Kimberworth Park, Mowbray Gardens, Greasbrough and Wickersley throughout November and December 2021.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 IPSC to note key achievements and progress made against the Library Strategy and associated action plan.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 N/A

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1

Milestone	Date
Roll out of digital screens displaying Council information	Completion date: November 2021 <i>** Swinton and Thurgroft to be installed at the point of relocation</i>
Progress updates of new Libraries Action Plan	Ongoing
Thurgroft Library co-location with Thurgroft Parish Council	Completion date: May 2022
Swinton Library relocation	TBC
Roll out of technology to access a library outside staffing opening hours (Mowbray Gardens and Brinsworth)	Completion date: January 2022

Relocation of the Central Library as part of the Town Centre master plan and Rotherham Markets redevelopment.	Completion date: 2024
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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 The cost incurred to date on refurbishing the 14 neighbourhood sites amounts to £1.5m and is being met from the Libraries Capital Investment Programme budget.
- 6.2 A further £2.9m supports the outcomes of the strategic review including the proposal for a new site in the town centre for the Central Library. The new central Library is part of a wider scheme involving the markets, public realm and includes funding from the Government's Future High Street Fund.
- 6.3 In relation to the improvement and modernisation works, the procurement of any third-party Contractor to supply/deliver will be undertaken in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's own Financial and Procurement and Procedure Rules.

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

- 7.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide "a comprehensive and efficient" public library service "for all persons desiring to make use thereof" (Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964). The Act states that the local authority has a duty to provide facilities for borrowing books and other materials and that it should encourage both adults and children to make full use of the service. The Act does not try to define what a 'comprehensive and efficient Library service' is, but when considering how best to deliver the statutory duty, each library authority is responsible for determining, through consultation, the local needs and to deliver a modern and efficient library service that meets the requirements of their communities within available resources.
- 7.2 Should the Secretary of State receive a complaint that the library authority has failed to carry out its duties relating to the public library service imposed on it by the Act they can instigate an investigation as to whether such a failure has occurred. If the outcome of that investigation is that the library authority has failed in its duties, then an order can be made declaring the library authority to be in default and setting out directions for the purpose of removing the fault. Should there be a failure to comply with such an order the functions of the library authority can be transferred to the Secretary of State.
- 7.3 The Council also has to ensure it complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Under section 1 of that Act, the Council must, when making decisions of

a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage. In addition, under section 149 of the Act, the Council must comply with the public sector equality duty which requires it to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In dealing with this duty, the Council must have due regard in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different to the needs of persons who do not share it; and
- Encourage persons who share a relevant characteristic to participate in public life or any other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. Protected characteristics include disability, age, race, sex, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity and sexual orientation.

- 7.4 Legal Services prepared a concession agreement under which Brinsworth Parish Council were granted the opportunity (on a concession basis) to operate Brinsworth Library. This agreement is now in place and signed by all parties.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 None

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The service is currently well used by children up to the age of 11 years. Support for literacy is very strong for pre-school and Early Years children and their families through Bookstart, Story Times, Rhymetimes, Chatterbooks reading groups, class visits and the Summer Reading Challenge. This support has been tailored during the closure of Libraries due to COVID-19 and transferred, where possible, online.
- 9.2 The service is aware that the number of young people aged between 11 and 18 accessing their library provision is low. Building on the information already collated throughout all phases of engagement, the service will be looking to improve the offer for this age group with the development of programmes

including code clubs, young readers groups, makerspaces and volunteering in libraries.

- 9.3 The Library Service will be a key player in supporting young people in their ambition to create a programme of events and activities to "make all of Rotherham's cultural destinations, libraries, leisure centres and green spaces child-focused, family-friendly and safe for everyone, young and old." in order to deliver against the Children's Capital of Culture initiative.
- 9.4 Co-location of Kiveton Park Library with Children and Young People's Services brings opportunities for the community to utilise a new facility to improve skills and learning for example using the new catering kitchen to deliver food hygiene courses in order to equip Children with essential life skills.
- 9.5 During 2020 library events and activities, such as Rhymetimes and Storytimes moved online and had good engagement with the public via the Rotherham Libraries Facebook page. The Schools Library Service team were able to offer virtual sessions to schools to help with reading and literacy, which they would normally deliver in classrooms. Two team members had recently completed a Makaton training course and so were able to produce some signed storytelling and singing videos to send to schools to share with their children, which were positively received
- 9.6 In April 2021 Rotherham Libraries started an online book club for home educated children and families with the elective home education officer for RMBC. When restrictions eased the group moved onto sessions in a local park and from November 2021 it will meet face to face in Rawmarsh Library. Some of the group members have since attended other library activities, such as a Makerspace session at Wath Library.
- 9.7 Increased volunteering opportunities will be available to both young people and adults including those who are older, vulnerable or disabled. Evidence suggests that volunteering benefits people by helping to alleviate social isolation and loneliness.
- 9.8 As part of a commitment to widening access, the library service will continue to provide vehicle-based services, mainly to older people who might otherwise be unable to get to a library.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Equalities Analysis and Screening Assessment for the Library Strategy is attached at Appendix 2.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 In order to breakdown potential impacts on emissions an Emissions Impact Assessment form is attached at Appendix 3.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The library service is increasingly working in partnership with other public, voluntary and community sector bodies in delivering services in order to deliver against the Library Strategy and associated action plan.
- 12.2 In some cases partnership working has resulted in co-location and joint delivery of services. Future opportunities will continue to be explored.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Due to the impact of Covid-19, the ability to deliver the key actions detailed within the Library Strategy and associated action plan have been heavily restricted. However, in order to ensure that Libraries were continuing to have a presence in their local community, the service responded quickly to the raft of changing lockdown measures, adapting events and activities to enable audiences to continue accessing Library services and in some cases, growing audiences through social media and digital activities. Although the results to date have been very positive, audiences have started to experience digital fatigue and as a result of digital inequalities not everyone has had the opportunity to access the services and activities offered.
- 13.2 Rotherham libraries have continued to follow the Government guidelines and step by step roadmap to inform all stages of service recovery. Safety measures and protocol guidance has been clearly set out by both Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Libraries Connected throughout the pandemic and Rotherham Libraries have ensured that they have worked in line with the toolkit at every phase, regularly liaising with neighbouring local authorities to benchmark this

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Zoe Oxley, Acting Assistant Director Culture, Sport and Tourism

Approvals obtained on behalf of:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	15/10/21
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Stuart Fletcher	15/10/21
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.

Report Author: Zoe Oxley, Acting Assistant Director Culture, Sport and Tourism

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Objective: CREATIVE AND CULTURAL ENRICHMENT (Champion: Head of Creative Programming & Engagement, Culture, Sport and Tourism)					
Service Offer	Tasks	Sub Task	Milestone (RAG STATUS)	Lead	Due Date
Offer a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events that provide everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of cultural experience.	Work in partnership with the rest of Culture, Sport and Tourism in order to deliver a programme of group based activities as part of the Rotherham Together programme providing a creative response to recovery from COVID-19 in Rotherham with a focus on offering particular support to those who are bereaved	Work with the wider CST team in Heritage and Museum services to deliver co-created activities. Project group initiated Feb 2021.	- Delivery of group-based activities as part of the Rotherham Together programme.	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	December 2021
Seek funding to extend the cultural offer and engage with a wider range of interests, supporting the local and regional cultural sector.	Work with colleagues in Parks and Green Spaces to extend the Library into the outdoors	Run a program of events within parks and green spaces in order to increase the number of engagements. Work with the wider CST team to host events and work in partnership Identify any other opportunities to work together with the wider CST team.	- Pop up libraries to be delivered from Summer 2021 following success in 2020. Project group initiated March 2021. - 4 pop-ups planned in green spaces and 2 in libraries outdoor spaces (Mal/Thorpe) Death positive memory trees distributed to all sites to branch off from Thyrbergh County Park "Hope Fields".	Operational Manager North/South	September 2021
	Target hard to reach communities identified during the recent consultation (BAME, Young people, males and self-identified disabled) and those with protected characteristics	Work with partner organisations such as Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) to develop a programme	- Partnership document completed for all sites, staff working with partners in the Communities	Operational Manager Central	December 2021
	Sustain the increased participation of online activities	TL's reviewing the LC e-learning modules to determine which are relevant.	- Digital training for all Library Staff - Keep the online content refreshed in order to sustain existing participation numbers - Utilise other CST social media platforms to promote the library offer	Operational Manager COI/SDS	December 2021

Appendix 1 Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs 2020-2022

	Explore regional and national funding opportunities	Apply for at least 2 funding opportunities during 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with neighbouring authorities. - Utilise Libraries connected for opportunities - Reading Friends 10k funding obtained to deliver project from Jan 2021. - Expression of interest sent in for Libraries Improvement Fund (ACE) July 2021. 	Operational Manager COI/SDS	March 2022
The service will seek to increase art, dance, music and theatre into the library space, working with existing partners with emphasis on bringing stories to life.	Deliver a programme of activities through the Flux Capacitor programme which will specifically target those people in communities of lowest engagement including BAME communities and Young people 16 – 25 years		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and deliver a full programme of activities during 2021/22 - Capture information/statistics in relation to impact including case studies. 	Operational Manager COI/SDS	December 2021
	Support the delivery of Fun Palaces at variety of library sites, working with colleagues in the wider service to co-ordinate and grow	Planning meeting took place in March. Museums to take the lead role. Work to be coordinated by Rotherham Ambassador.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the delivery of additional Fun Palaces during 2021/22 - Monitor the uptake by joining with wider services and the impact this has on increased numbers 	Operational Manager North/South	October 2021
	Delivery of the Anne Frank exhibition in the central library, creating an exciting and high-quality experience to those who visit.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate exhibition through all available platforms - Increase the number of engagements to this event by 10% based on the previous year that the event was held 	Operational Manager Central	December 2021
Communication about library activities will be improved, especially those which are free and low cost and promote cohesion and community spirit.	Production of a marketing plan in order to encourage the take up of activities across libraries.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate an increase in activities by 10% for the year 2021/22. 	Operational Manager COI/SDS	March 2022

Objective: READING AND LITERACY (Champion: Assistant Director, Culture, Sport & Tourism)					
Service Offer	Tasks	Sub Task	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
The service will encourage and support everyone, especially children and young people, to develop a life-long love of reading; for example, through continuing partnership work with places where children go and organisations which work with them.	To carry out promotional work in order to encourage increased subscriptions to the Schools Library Service		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise a schedule of promotion events, having a staff presence around the borough - Increase in the subscriptions to the Schools Library Service by 5% 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	To continue to build on the service offer working in partnership with others such as Grimm & Co, Museum, Green Spaces and Theatres	Working group formed with Museums and Heritage. Pop up libraries planning in place working with Green Spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular communication with partnership organisations and the delivery of joint events during 2021/22 - Joint promotion and marketing in progress using RUCST advertising media 	Operational Manager North/South	June 2021
	Delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge and associated summer activities	Planning ongoing for summer 2021. Pop up Libraries planning in progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the take-up of the Summer Reading Challenge by 10% for 2021/22 - Roll out a programme of pop up library events in country parks and woodland space. 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	Continue to work with the Reading Agency to deliver services to children		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of focussed activities during 2021/22 - Roll out of Bookstart packs 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	Delivery of a wide range of activities to focus on engaging children of all ages within local communities, particularly those aged 11+		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase engagement by 10% 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	Work as part of the Rotherham 0-5 Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) Strategic Group in order to deliver key priorities	Training delivered in 2020. Pathway model updated to include Libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of all Library staff in the SLCN Universal Training Offer. - Library activities and services to be included within the SLCN model pathway - Proactively promote and signpost families with identified SCLN needs 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	April 2021

Appendix 1 Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs 2020-2022

Offer a wide range of reading items, including e-books, e-magazines, large print, audio-books, newspapers and magazines to support the personal literacy development of individual readers.	Ensure sufficient budget to fulfil the range of titles and genres	Stock budget on target to be spent by year end. Additional £50k included in 21/22 stock budget. OM to review monthly to ensure on track.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stock budget to be spent for 2020/21 in order to fulfil the wide-ranging offer - Revised budget breakdown created for 21/22 stock budget to ensure spend is channelled where required. AH and FE to monitor. 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2021 March 2022
	Ensure stock is distributed according to local need, considering those with protected characteristics within the local demographic	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review that stock within libraries is relevant to what the communities want and need following consultation 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2022
	Ensure stock is promoted and displayed in an attractive style to encourage reading for pleasure to all ages	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train all frontline staff how best to fulfil stock and how it can be displayed to attract interest - Opening the Book delivered free front line training to those staff at sites refurbished in May 2021. 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2021
The service will continue to develop readers' groups, including online, themed and targeted groups.	Establish new reader groups targeting underrepresented sectors e.g. Males, BAME, Children and disabled. Encourage virtual and face to face groups to grow and support them in building an identity in the community inclusive of all	Exploring online readers groups. TBC if this is in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce a further 2 readers groups 	All Team Leaders	July 2021
Participate in national and regional reading events that encourage participation, especially among children, such as the Summer Reading Challenge.	Roll out of Summer Reading Challenge 2021	Planning has started and order placed with the Reading Agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in number of participants during 2021/22 by 10% in comparison to the previous year 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	June 2021
	Hold author visits at various times during the year to create excitement around books and reading for pleasure	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver 4 author events during 2021/22 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
	Delivery of pop up and outdoor libraries in order to encourage reading.	Project group scheduled to start March 2021 to start planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embrace 4 new locations in various parks and woodlands in order to provide the opportunity to engage with those currently not accessing the service with particular focus on underrepresented groups 	All Team Leaders	March 2022
	Support and enable staff to utilise the skills learnt to inform their future practice within Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs in the delivery of activities.	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with neighbouring authorities to learn and adopt new skills where it has worked well for other libraries. - Use Basecamp for idea sharing and benchmarking exercises. 	Operational Manager North/South	March 2021

Objective: DIGITAL ACCESS AND LITERACY (Champions: Head of Customer Services, and Head of Digital services, Customer Information and Digital Services)					
Service Offer	Tasks	Sub Task	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Up-to-date computer equipment will be provided for people to use free of charge along with free Wi-Fi access in all library buildings. There will also be the facility for customers to print from their own devices.	Deployment of new public network PC's across all libraries	PC's refresh concluded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rolled out to all sites - Obtain feedback from users on the new equipment 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	December 2020
	Deployment of Netloan system which enables customers to book PC's and release prints without the need for staff interaction	Completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rolled out to all sites 	Customer Information and Digital Services Senior Officer	December 2020
Encourage digital literacy among children through developing such things as digital makerspaces and after school code clubs.	Delivery of Makerspaces	Deliver 2 x Makerspaces in 2021 at Wath and Kiveton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with other libraries who already offer makerspace and attend other LA's to review - Work currently progressing to design each space. Specification is currently in progress and is adapted to each site in terms of space and power. Sessions in the planning phase. ICT currently in consultation for support. Budget to be combined to launch both spaces before Autumn 2021. 	Operational Manager North/South	March 2022
	Further roll out of code clubs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify sites that require additional code clubs - Roll out at two additional sites during 2021/22 	Communities of Interest Team Leader	March 2022
Trained staff, volunteers and partners will support people getting online and using ICT with confidence, ensuring that no one is left behind.	Staff and volunteers undertake Libraries Connected e-learning which includes 3 digital modules	LC modules currently in review by TL's. DS/KQ to feed back progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All library and volunteers staff to complete training (referenced within PDR's) *new staff continually training 	Service Development and Support Team Leader	December 2021
	Ensure assisted access is provided in line with Customer Access Strategy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff to continue to work closely with CIDs Customer Service to ensure assisted access is provided in order to deliver against the strategy 	Service Development and Support Team Leader Customer Information & Digital services (CIDs) Customer Service Team	April 2021

	Ensure staff can support customers transact digitally		- All frontline staff to be trained in specific Council and partner services which are delivered online in order to offer relevant support	Service Development and Support Team Leader	April 2021
The Libraries workforce will be skilled and knowledgeable in the support they give, focusing on assisted digital processes	Staff to support each other and train volunteers/mentor new recruits		- All staff will be fully trained in how to use new and existing digital technology to ensure they are confident and competent themselves	Service Development and Support Team Leader	April 2021

Objective: HELPING EVERYONE ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL (Champion: Head of Operations and Business Transformation, Culture, Sport and Tourism)					
Service Offer	Tasks	Sub Task	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Continue to offer a wide variety of stock and materials for loan or reference in various formats, both traditional and digital	Ensure that the range of stock is specifically chosen to be inclusive of all Rotherham communities and those with protected characteristic.	-	- 210k to be spent on stock for 2020/21 - Obtain feedback from communities to understand the demand.	Service Development and Communities of Interest Operational Manager	March 2021
Continue to adapt and mold the service offer to meet the needs of the local community, ensuring that no one is left behind as the service shapes the refreshed service offer	Ensure that the service offer meets the needs of each community. Working in line with other service strategies, e.g. Thriving Neighbourhoods to cross-cut agendas	-	- All sites to work closely with their local community groups, partners, neighbourhood officers and Ward Councillors	Operational Managers Central/North/South	March 2022
	Work with the British Library and neighbouring local authorities to become a Business and intellectual Property Centre (BIPC), supporting small business owners and entrepreneurs across Rotherham to start up and grow their businesses	- Meetings taken place. TL and Operational manager involved in set up as this progresses.	- Regular meetings with Sheffield Council to plan for rollout at allocated library site - An information specialist will provide advice, deliver training to local staff and arrange partner-led workshops and 1-1s with a specific site	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	January 2022
Support school age children with homework and college/sixth form students with their studies, working with local education departments to promote this	Allow children/young adults to learn outside the classroom and access additional support in the form of digital and additional resources	- Promote Libraries as a safe and fun place to study and meet	- Develop 2 additional after school clubs /homework clubs with dedicated study space - Offer free printing to those attended the HWC - Sites in the Communities are ready to offer after school clubs/homework clubs	Communities of Interest Team Leader	December 2021

Appendix 1 Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs 2020-2022

Support adults from all communities to get back into education or work, by offering access to online information and face to face support.	Work with the DWP to assist job coaches becoming closer to communities	- Set up sessions across the library network to support customers accessing training and qualifications and job seeker support	- Facilitate Job Coaches operating from Libraries - Utilise links made at the people and skills network group to build this package across all sites - Work with RMBC pathways and other local groups where DWP are unavailable	Operational Manager North/South	December 2021
	Support adults to access apprenticeships or further training to enhance employability skills for the future.	-	- Explore opportunities to delivery virtually - Work with communities to offer this within a suitable space within libraries	Team Leader Central	March 2022
Supported by Voluntary Action Rotherham, the service will offer a range of volunteering opportunities to individuals and community groups to enhance the delivery of the library service.	Increase the number of volunteers within the service	- Working with volunteer co-ordinators with a view that a volunteer process is likely going to be centralised	- Work with VAR as our primary partner in order to increase the number of volunteers by 50% during 2021/22.	Operational Manager Central	December 2021
Increase the number of new apprenticeships available within the service.	Increase the number of apprenticeship posts within the Library Service structure	- Appointed and in post since September 2020	Appoint 3 apprentices	Operational Manager North/South/ Central	October 2020
Ensure library staff are trained to support customers to make the best use of the full range of library resources, along with encouraging the take up sector specific qualifications.	Staff and volunteers undertake Libraries Connected e-learning which include 3 digital modules.	-	- Ensure that all library staff and volunteers undertake the training *can only complete every 3 years as they do not get updated before this.	Operational Manager Central	November 2021
	Undertake the Libraries and Archives Apprenticeship		- 3 staff to undertake this apprenticeship each year 3 staff currently appointed in North, South and Central	Operational Manager Central	April 2021
	Undertake the Management and Leadership Apprenticeship	-	- 2 staff to undertake this apprenticeship each year	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	April 2021

Objective: HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER LIVES (Champion: Head of Public Health, Adult Care Housing & Public Health)					
Service Offer	Tasks	Sub Task	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Provide and support the use of information on physical health and mental well-being, through the service's own resources and in partnership with others	Increase the number of books to support healthy living, mental health and well-being	- An additional extra £50k included for 21/22 budget	- Review of stock available in each library and increase where required - Stock budget has been reconfigured into separate detail codes to cover for different requirements of service delivery	Service Development and Support Team Leader	March 2021
	Offer a quiet, calm place for children who may be on the autistic spectrum.	-	- Roll out of equipment to support children within libraries Kiveton Park, Aston and Maltby. - Completed	Communities South Team Leader	March 2021
Encourage customers to get healthy, get active and get outdoors by delivering Library services in parks and green spaces	Explore how the service can utilise attractive outdoor spaces across the Borough to deliver "pop-up" libraries and outdoor activities	-	- Work with Culture, Sport and Tourism teams to find suitable spaces and help promote. - 6 pop up libraries delivered across libraries and green spaced in Summer 2021. Annual events planner to include these moving forward, post COVID.	Communities of Interest Team Leader	August 2021

Host events, activities and groups with partners to encourage and support a healthier, happier lifestyle.	Address Health inequalities which have been identified as part of the Health and Wellbeing review e.g. BAME, Children and Young People, women from deprived communities, unpaid carers and older people	- Work with partner organisations and identify which sites are most suitable to meet the needs of the community	- Work with partners to co-design targeted activities to those groups - Public Health consulted already so that our Health & Wellbeing Champions can take the lead on this.	Team Leader South	October 2021
	Address topics of discussion such as healthy eating, weight management, relaxation, stress management, exercise and fitness.	-	- Pursue opportunities across the Borough to work with "Get Healthy Rotherham" - Get Healthy already work within our sites	Communities of Interest Team Leader	October 2021
	Introduce and grow specific health and wellbeing groups and events e.g. Menopause Café, Musically Minded and Shared Reading	-	- Explore how these events could be hosted digitally. - Work with partners to attract interest.	Communities of Interest Team Leader	October 2021
Actively seek to reduce social isolation and loneliness	Organise reading groups and activities in which people can come together, both face to face and digitally.	- Can also link in to pop up library provision and get individuals outdoors.	- "Cuppa and a Chat" sessions to take place across all libraries. - Programme of reading groups targeted at those with protected characteristics and under-represented groups	Team Leader South	December 2021
	Attend training to enable staff to identify individuals requiring support as first points of contact		- Staff to attend "Making Every Contact Count and Loneliness training" delivered via Public Health		
Promote reading for pleasure as a positive benefit to health and mental wellbeing.	Increase promotion and marketing to attract new customers.	-	- Work with partners in Public Health to identify groups and communities who would benefit from reading to improve their mental health - Work with NHS partners in Joint Service Centres (Aston, Maltby, Rawmarsh) to promote reading for pleasure and other Library resources that may assist improving people's mental health.	Service Development and Communities of Interest Operational Manager	November 2021
Offer a service to those who are potentially lonely and vulnerable	Utilise Booklink and Home Library Services to engage with this group.	-	- Work with the community hub in order to identify additional customers who would benefit from the Booklink/Home Library Service	Communities of Interest Team Leader	November 2020
Support and encourage the staff within the service to stay safe and well at work	Ensure that the importance of health and wellbeing at work/home is prioritised by all	-	- Work with Public Health to deliver the Wellbeing Champions scheme within Libraries - We already have Health & Wellbeing Champions (1 member in the South & 1 member in the North, we are looking to increase	Team Leader North	November 2020

			this)		
	Ensure that all staff have sight and understanding of the corporate wellbeing guide and understand the steps to take to ensure that their own health and wellbeing is important to them	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular team meetings to talk over wellbeing guide - Make reference to guide in PDR's where relevant 	All Team Leaders	November 2020
Support the Council, suppliers and communities to address the climate change emergency.	Identify books and other resources to enable communities and individuals to understand the issues and take action in line with best practice	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new 'climate change' collection is identified and promoted - A programme of activities are developed, promoting debate and community action with 4 new annual events 	Service Development and Communities of Interest Operational Manager	April 2021 September 2021

Objective: GREATER PROSPERITY (Champion: Head of Operations and Business Transformation, Culture, Sport and Tourism)					
Service Offer	Tasks	Sub Task	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Work with partners to offer space for Information, Advice and Guidance particularly for those seeking or offering employment and training.	Support adults who are not in work or training to take a positive step	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of the Steps to Work programme to support adults who are not in work or training to take a positive step. 	Team Leader Central	March 2021
	Support adults to access apprenticeships or further training to enhance employability skills for the future.	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer 3 placements within libraries as part of the National kickstart programme 	Team Leader Central	November 2020
Offer work clubs in conjunction with partners.	Roll out of Job clubs within Libraries in partnership with the Job Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be addressed as restrictions lift and able to welcome back groups and face to face meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with Job Centre, to improve employability and build CV writing skills. - Utilise connections made with the people and skills networking group to deliver borough wide job seeker support 	Operational Manager North/South	March 2021
Offer assisted digital support and beginners ICT sessions	Support people getting online and becoming confident I.T. users	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create and promote beginner's ICT sessions at all libraries - This is being looked into at Community sites. 	Team Leader South	September 2021

The service will reach out to those who are unemployed and looking for work to assist them to improve their digital skills	Promote and advertise ICT sessions across the borough.	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilise partners and voluntary organisations to extend reach - Work with the partners internal and external to promote sessions and encourage participation 	All Team Leaders	June 2021
Libraries will work with local colleges to ensure that customers seeking further education are able to seek the right support local to them.	Work in partnership with local colleges.	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with RNN group and University Centre Rotherham (UCR) to promote higher education and study within Libraries - Already engaged with RNN local Colleges and local schools. 	All Team Leaders	June 2021
Staff and volunteers will be trained to provide digital support for those seeking employment and have the knowledge to signpost to relevant services if this is outside of the library assisted digital offer.	Staff to be competent and confident to use online resources to offer appropriate digital assistance	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All library staff to undertake training to allow for appropriate sign posting - Build up staff relationships with local educational establishments to build a network of contacts to liaise with to improve partnership working 	All Team Leaders	June 2021

Objective: STRONGER MORE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES (Champion: Head of Neighbourhoods, Assistant Chief Executive's)					
Service Offer	Tasks	Sub Task	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Libraries will function as friendly and welcoming community hubs, freely accessible to all.	Reviewing of buildings to look at if they are in the right location; if they can be colocated with other services/partners; if the buildings require refurbishing/ modernising; if the service can host wider cultural and heritage activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refurbishment of libraries are progressing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilising the approved Capital funding, carry out a two year programme of improvements to library buildings and ICT provision - Complete co-location of Kiveton Park library and the Early Help Services - Complete co-location of Thurgroft library with the Parish Council *on track 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	May 2022
Work with appropriate partners and the community to create a new community hub in the town centre in order to increase engagement and footfall.	Future high street funding bid (FHSF) approved. Library will form part of the Markets redevelopments in line with the Town Centre Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Details have been shared with staff with a view of reinstating focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce a design and service offer of the new library. Planning to be submitted in November 2021. *On track 	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	November 2021

Appendix 1 Action Plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs 2020-2022

Review opening hours in line with customer and staff feedback	Utilise statistical information, and engage with local community groups and seek to implement automated solutions, in order to keep libraries open for more people, for more of the time.	- Work is progressing with Open + to allow for self service technology to be rolled out	- Continue to check that opening hours are aligned to customer need. - Deliver self-service Libraries at 2 sites. Tender Evaluation Report approved 15/10/2021. On track.	Operational Manager Central	January 2022
Generate an income through charging for elements of the service provision	Explore the option to hire out library space and delivery of chargeable services, activities and events	-	- New meeting spaces to be developed as part of the refurbishment programme at sites such as Kiveton Park and Dinnington which can be hired out - Continue to charge for some activities and events to sustain a good quality and value service. Income to be reinvested back into activities and events.	Operational Manager North/South	March 2021
Continue to use the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support the provision of library services.	Delivery of infrastructure needed to support local development.	-	- Use this tool as a local authority to assist and support local development	Head of Operations and Business Transformation	December 2021
Libraries will host a wide range of diverse events and activities	Build community identity and cohesion	-	- Introduction of ESOL classes to 2 other suitable library site within the borough	Team Leader Central	December 2021
	Promote Fun Palace to give everyone the opportunity to demonstrate their talents	- Fun palaces took place with 100 tiny palaces due to Covid-19	- Work with other CST teams to expand and utilise other spaces within the borough	Operational Managers	October 2021
Work with local people to shape our future services, extending ownership, responsibility and pride.	Encourage the community to come forward and speak out within their local libraries.	-	- Arrange sessions and promote borough wide - Utilise partners and voluntary organisations to extend reach to all groups of the community	Team Leaders	December 2021
Staff and volunteers will be trained to provide excellent customer service to all those who wish to use library services	Identify training opportunities suitable for staff to maintain and develop customer service skills	-	- Training programme to be identified relevant for staff - Ensure staff continually complete other mandatory training. - Ongoing training	Team Leaders	March 2021

Appendix 2 – Equality Screening Assessment and Analysis for the Library Strategy



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.

Service update of the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action Plan 2020-2022 for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs.

Directorate: Regeneration & Environment

Lead person: Zoe Oxley

Contact number: 01709 334283

Directorate: Regeneration & Environment

Service area: Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs

Is this a:

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

If other, please specify

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

The IPSC report "Service update of the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action

Plan 2020-2022 for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs” updates the Improving Places Select Commission of the progress made against the Library Strategy 2021-2026 and the associated action plan 2021 – 2022. The report sets out how the Strategy and new service offer in enabling the Council to fulfil its statutory duty under the Public Library Act and meet the needs of the community through the delivery of the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service.

The report sets out the following recommendations -

1. Note the progress made against the Library Strategy 2021-2026 and the action plan.
2. Note the progress made on the development of the new Central Library
3. Note the progress made on the transfer of Brinsworth Library to Brinsworth Community Trust, supported by Brinsworth Parish Council and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
4. Note the progress made on the relocation of Thurcroft Library from Thurcroft Junior Academy to the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall site utilising the approved libraries capital allocated.
5. Note the progress made on the implementation of self- service technology in order for customers to access library sites independently.
6. Acknowledge the impact that Covid-19 has had on the Library and Neighbourhood Hubs service.

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?	✓	
Could the proposal affect service users?	✓	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?		✓

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

Yes, an Equality Analysis has been produced and the appropriate approvals received.

- **Key findings**

The Service has created an action plan which is being developed and maintained as the service evolves, to address areas for improvement, and where we need to widen access and make the customer base more diverse. This will link into the wider strategic agenda of the Council.

As well as having an exceptionally high rate of customer satisfaction, currently the Service is engaging well with the following key areas: Females borough wide, White British people, Those who do not declare themselves as disabled and the following age groups: 4-11, 26-40, 41-65 and 65 and over.

Further work is required in order to engage better with the following; Males of all ages, borough wide, BAME, Disabled People, Ages 0-3, 12-17 and 18-25.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions <p>A robust action plan has been developed to address the areas where following analysis, the service is falling short in terms of engagement. It is envisaged that the Service will work with the wider Council and community/voluntary partners to focus on this utilising cross cutting agendas including Thriving neighbourhoods, Health and Wellbeing agenda, Building Stronger Communities vision and the Creative Recovery Programme.</p> <p>It is important to note that on 23rd March 2020 the UK entered the first national lockdown as a result of Covid-19, which saw an immediate closure of library sites across the borough. Throughout the last eighteen months there has been a range of operating conditions from full and partial closures to normal service resuming. During these challenging times the Library service has continued to provide a range of opportunities for Rotherham's residents to engage with its services, supporting vulnerable communities, reducing isolation and increasing participation. Services have been adapted to ensure that libraries were accessible either digitally, outdoors or face to face</p>	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	6 th March, 2019 onwards
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	08 th October 2021
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Aileen Heggie Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs Service Manager, Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Steve Eling	Policy Officer	08/10/2021
Zoe Oxley	Acting Assistant Director. Head of Operations and Business Transformation	08/10/2021

6. Publishing

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

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

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

Diversity Internet page.	
Date screening completed	08 th October 2021
Report title and date	Service update of the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action Plan 2020-2022 for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Improving Places Select Commission report – 2 nd November 2021
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	15 th October 2021

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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

This form:

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

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

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

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Library Strategy 2021-2026	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 18 th August 2020	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment	Service area: Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs
Lead Manager: Zoe Oxley	Contact number: 01709 334283
Is this a: <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify 	

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

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Zoe Oxley	RMBC	Head of Operations and Business Transformation
Gillian Moss	RMBC	Operational Manager
Gina White	RMBC	Operational Manager

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

Aim/Scope

The new Library Strategy covers the period 2021-2026. Since 8th July 2019, Rotherham libraries have undertaken extensive public consultation and engagement to inform the content within the new five-year Library Strategy.

The new Strategy sets out the direction of Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs during this period of transformation, aiming to meet the Council's statutory duty to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" service for all those wanting to use it (Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964), while at the same time implementing the necessary cost efficiencies. As part of the launch of the new strategy the service must consider implications of a revised service offer and how the library service better exercises the Public Sector Equality Duty in line with the new strategy.

Libraries are for everyone and the service is committed to ensuring that Rotherham libraries are inclusive and engaging with all sectors of the community, including people with protected characteristics. The priority is to ensure that all residents are able to enjoy the benefits of Rotherham's Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs. More groups and partner organisations are using the local community library as a valuable local base for their activities.

The financial pressure on the Council budget has not lessened, however, Capital investment has been approved for the existing 14 neighbourhood sites to a value of £1.4m and in a new site for the Central Library currently anticipated to require investment to a value of £5.7m.

Following the public consultation and engagement between 3rd February 2020 to 26th April 2020, a final analysis report has been written.

The key finding of the future of libraries consultation was the 83% of respondents agreed with the new vision for Rotherham Libraries and 79% agreed with the proposed core offer.

The priorities of the service are aligned to the wider Culture, Sport and Tourism (CST) service and as such, Libraries contribute to the cultural strategy outcomes, whereby a programme of cultural and artistic activities and events will be delivered to provide everyone with the opportunity to enjoy some form of creative experience.

Diversity and equality go hand in hand with the arts and culture, as they encourage individuals from every background and ability to realise their true potential therefore contributing to citizens artistic and cultural talent.

The Arts Council England 'Creative Case for Diversity' is a way of exploring how arts and cultural organisations and artists can enrich the work they do by embracing a wide range of influences and practices. The Council believes that libraries are a critical link between Rotherham communities and the wider cultural agenda. The location of libraries within the heart of communities affords the ideal platform to develop this piece of work.

Libraries occupy a position of trust within local communities, with a customer base which strongly values local proximity and the diverse offer which is available. The thriving neighbourhood strategy works in tandem with a library service offer within a neighbourhood setting which allows the service to tailor community activities with the demographic of each specific community where it is located. In doing so, this has contributed to a current customer satisfaction rating of 99% which is advantageous in contributing to a wide range of agendas

In addition, Libraries play an important role in supporting health and wellbeing. For vulnerable and inactive people, libraries can assist to re-motivate individuals to go outside and walk to their local library, giving purpose to their 'daily exercise'. Reading has been proven to be beneficial to mental health, and libraries have been developing work in this field, recognising that, particularly for people with low-level mental health issues (depression and anxiety), libraries offer a source of solace, respite and self-help. For this latter group, safe engagement with the physical world is an important part of reducing social isolation.

In considering how the service can better exercise the Public Sector Equality Duty it is important to consider this in relation to staff, customers, the complete library offer and the library buildings. The way in which libraries can incorporate this is as follows;

Staff: We will ensure that staff and volunteers are broadly representative of the community we serve. This may mean changes to current processes, and the way in which staff are currently recruited will be challenged and made more inclusive of those with protected characteristics. We therefore need to adopt new ways of working and engage with current staff to ensure they are comfortable and proactive in working alongside all sectors of the community, inclusive of those that may be different to them such as those with protected characteristics.

A training programme will be explored as part of staff induction which highlights the principles of equalities in the libraries and the workforce as a whole, and how the library offer reflects this. Staff will also complete the mandatory equalities training. It is important that staff and volunteers understand the importance of how those with protected characteristics should feel and that their needs are considered. All staff should be acting as allies and advocates to ensure that equality is our core business.

Customers: The Council's Customer Access Strategy explains how we will meet customer needs and demands using our resources most effectively and make sure all our customers have access to services irrespective of their circumstances. It outlines how we will strengthen customer relationships, improving experience and increasing satisfaction by continuing to work closely with our customers to ensure their needs are met. Libraries will be proactive in working to engage people who are non-users, particularly those with protected characteristics. Libraries have recognised that there is under-representation in terms of males, young adults and BAME individuals, and are working to improve this over the timeline of the strategy.

Libraries are currently collaborating with Early Help as part of the Kiveton Park Library capital project. The Early Help Service proposes to use the library in a variety of ways and for a range of purposes; with a key objective of maintaining a presence in the Kiveton Park locality, as this is important to the children, young people and families within the community. Libraries can capitalise on this partnership by engaging with their clients that wouldn't normally attend libraries and therefore ensure that residents, particularly those under-represented in our services, are involved in decision-making about our activities and services moving forward.

The Offer: Libraries will ensure that the book stock, resources and activity programmes are inclusive and diverse, and that we include books written by people with protected characteristics. It is important that books and other resources are available in diverse formats to address sensory impairments or language barriers. It is also important to focus efforts on underrepresented groups within the service to understand their needs and embrace their requirements to ensure libraries are attractive to everyone. Libraries will work over the five-year strategy to ensure that artists, partners and organisations that we collaborate with are diverse and committed to widening and diversifying engagement. Targeted events, projects and activities will be co-designed in collaboration with the very people we are seeking to work with.

Library Buildings: All Library venues and activities will be accessible to all including those with protected characteristics. The location of libraries was considered as part of the extensive public consultation and engagement carried out to inform the Library strategy. Where it has been identified that buildings could be better placed, libraries will adapt their location either by relocation or co-location (if a refurbishment to improve physical accessibility is not possible) to enhance the libraries position within the community. Libraries will use their position within the neighbourhood to deliver activities, with events such as Fun Palaces, which will support our community to create with, by, and for themselves. Libraries will help to develop local networks, linking individuals and organisations, encouraging staff and partners to co-create with local people, and help small groups to shout about their value as grassroots community activists. It is also important that libraries work in tandem with Fun Palaces and other arts organisations to shine a light on and value everyone's existing creative skills and activities and connect people to people and organisations to collaborate for change in their communities. Libraries will work with other Council services, community and voluntary sector partners to harness the support we need to make Rotherham libraries make the most of local strengths and assets, including individuals' abilities.

What equality information is available? Include any engagement undertaken and identify any information gaps you are aware of. What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

As a key element of the Library Review, a three-phase consultation was carried out.

An initial Assessment of Local Need describes local needs for a library service, including the general and specific needs of adults and children who live, work and study in the borough. It provides data to inform the consultation and subsequent Library Strategy.

The first phase of consultation in respect of developing a future service delivery model was carried out in April 2019, followed by consultation on more detailed proposals in May 2019, followed by the final phase of consultation and engagement in April 2020. Detailed proposals

were shared, including identification of potential improvements to services and efficiencies, in the context of a refreshed Library Strategy.

The following data is available on existing library users which has been obtained from the Library Management System. This information is collated monthly for all sites. By using this data we can make a comparison against the overall Rotherham population in terms of how well we are engaging with those in the community with protected characteristics. This allows us to identify if there is a fair representation within our local libraries to reflect the population by area. By identifying these areas for improvement, the service will target the key gaps within the local community and formulate an action plan to address these as part of the Library Strategy.

Age Profile Users Vs Population

Table 1	2019-2020		
		Active %	Registered %
	Age 0-3	2.10	3.97
	Age 4-11	17.73	27.46
	Age 12-17	10.44	6.68
	Age 18-25	8.44	4.21
	Age 26-40	20.95	13.92
	Age 41-65	24.17	20.48
	Age 66+	16.17	23.27

Table 1 breaks down the number of both registered and active borrowers by age. When we compare this to the overall population of Rotherham by age we can recognise where Rotherham libraries members are lacking in terms of age group.

Based on Rotherham as a whole, 19.3% of the population are aged under 16. Rotherham East has the highest proportion of 0-15 year olds at 25.4% (higher than the England average of 19.1%). When we compare this to the same age group in Table 1, we can see that our active members aged between 0-17 is 30.27%. This highlights that Rotherham Libraries engaging above the average in comparison to the overall population. However, we can see by the above breakdown that 17-25 age group is where the level of users decrease. This highlights an area for improvement. As Rotherham strives to become a child centred borough, libraries are well placed to engage with children and young people, making a significant contribution to giving children the best start in life.

When we make this same comparison with regards to those aged 65 and over. We know that 19.4% of the Rotherham population are aged 65 and over with this age group steadily increasing. Anston and Woodsetts Ward has the highest proportion of residents aged 65 and over at 26.3% (higher than the England average of 18.0%) When we compare this same age group of 66+ in Table 1 we can see that 16.17% are active users of Rotherham Libraries, with a proportion (65 year olds) falling in to another category.

The demographic profile of Rotherham indicates that the borough has an aging population,

and there is a demand for library services from the 66+ age group at 22.7% active usage. The Library Service is ideally placed to support older people to live independently and help them to remain actively engaged in their community. Libraries can and do enhance the quality of older people's lives, especially around reducing isolation and increasing socialisation.

Gender Profile

Table 2

2019-2020		
	Registered (%)	Active (%)
Male	41.34	37.47
Female	57.86	59.79
Unknown	0.79	2.74

Table 2 demonstrates that there are more females both registered and active library users in Rotherham than there are male. When this data is compared to the UK national statistics for Rotherham, we can clearly see that this is not a fair representation of the gender split in the borough. We therefore acknowledge that this is an area for improvement and targeted work on engaging with Rotherham males will be carried out as part of the Library strategy. It is important to note that Rotherham libraries are engaging above average with an excellent percentage which is more than that of the Female Rotherham population.

Males	Females
49.2%	50.8%
130,564 persons	134,847 persons

*sourced from UK National statistics for Rotherham

Ethnicity Profile

2019-2020		
	Registered (%)	Active (%)
White	64.89	65.59
Black or Black British	1.53	1.14
Dual Heritage	0.39	0.45

Table 3

Asian or Asian British	4.09	3.08
Other	1.81	1.00
Chose not to disclose	27.30	28.74

When considering the ethnic profiles of Rotherham libraries in terms of Registered and active users, these are predominately from a white background. Targeted work is required in order to better engage with BAME individuals and communities.

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public services to avoid discrimination on the grounds of race and religion or belief. Rotherham's population is not homogenous and people with different cultural identities may have different needs or require different approaches to service provision. Changes in international migration patterns have a significant effect on the composition the minority ethnic population and the growth of new migrant communities which in turn can have an impact on demand for local services.

When we compare the overall Rotherham population of those who identify themselves as from a black and minority ethnic group, we know that they make up 8.1% of Rotherham residents (any group apart from white British) in the 2011 census. This compares to making up 5.67% of active library users or 7.82% registered users.

In Rotherham the BAME population is 20,842 people. The BAME population doubled between 2001 and 2011 and continued to increase to an estimated 27,500 or approximately 10.5% of the population in 2016 (latest RMBC estimate). We acknowledge that 1.1% of the population in Rotherham report that they cannot speak English well or at all. This is 2,712 people. This compares with 1.7% for England, and 1.6% for the Yorkshire and Humberside region. Therefore, Rotherham libraries will adapt new ways of how we can engage with this group so that they don't miss out on the opportunity to utilise their local library through the use of voluntary organisations such as REMA or Clifton Learning Partnership that enhance the engagement with this sector of the community

When considering the BAME Rotherham population figures against those of Table 3, the figures show that we need to do more to engage with those outside of the White British category. Percentage of BAME population by Ward can be found below:

Percentage of BAME Population by Ward:

Ward Name

BME Population 2011

Anston and Woodsetts	2.1%
Boston Castle	36.8%
Brinsworth and Catcliffe	6.2%
Dinnington	3.6%
Hellaby	2.7%
Holderness	3.4%
Hoover	2.9%
Keppel	2.7%
Maltby	3.0%
Rawmarsh	4.2%
Rother Vale	3.4%
Rotherham East	29.7%
Rotherham West	21.7%
Silverwood	3.4%
Sitwell	11.5%
Swinton	2.4%
Valley	7.5%
Wales	3.1%
Wath	3.6%
Wickersley	2.9%
Wingfield	4.1%

In relation to the demographic profile, 8.1% of the population belong to ethnic groups other than White British (6.4% are from non-white groups), well below the UK average of 20.2%. It follows that 91.9% of Rotherham residents are White British.

The Library Service has a central role in co-ordinating and facilitating learning activities to our BAME communities, reducing exclusion and encouraging participation. Support is given to foreign language speakers and to those who wish to improve their English language skills. Cultural events are organised and supported, especially at Mowbray Gardens Community Library, which serves the area with one of the largest populations of BAME residents in the borough.

Disability Profile

Table 4

2019-2020		
	Active %	Registered %
Self-declared disabled	1.34%	3.76%

Table 4 demonstrates the figures collated from library users when asked whether they consider themselves disabled. The number of active borrowers who consider themselves disabled is small compared to the overall total number of active borrowers for Rotherham

libraries.

Many factors influence health and wellbeing over the course of a lifetime. The whole system for health and wellbeing is focused around achieving positive health outcomes for the population and reducing inequalities in health. Wingfield has the highest percentage of residents who self-report their health to be bad or very bad at 10.2% of the overall Rotherham population, which in comparison to Rotherham Libraries active users is considerably low and work needs to be done in order to better engage with residents.

Living alone can also impact on the health and wellbeing of a person. Many older customers say that a visit to a library helps to reduce social isolation, therefore it is worth noting the percentage of pensioners living alone and how Libraries can impact and improve their Health and Wellbeing. Within Rotherham 31.9% of pensioners live alone, or 14,286 people. Anston and Woodsetts has the lowest proportion of pensioners living alone at 24.4 %. Rotherham East has the highest proportion at 39.8 %.

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

By making the comparison of data from the library management system and Rotherham's demographics overall, we have identified several areas where the number of library users with protected characteristics is lower than that of the representation for Rotherham's population overall. This analysis has allowed Rotherham libraries to recognise the sectors that are underrepresented as part of Library users.

Whilst there are areas that we can clearly see Rotherham Libraries are engaging well such as Females, Children 0-11 and Over 65's, it also indicates that there are groups which could be targeted to ensure Rotherham libraries widen access in order to make the customer base more diverse. These include BAME Individuals, young people aged between 12-25 and those that identify as male. We can also see that the sector that self-declare themselves as disabled is also an area to focus on.

Whilst we know where we have gaps in representation, we still need to learn more about how best to engage and cater for these sectors. Part of our approach involves aligning our needs with other Council departments, such as Early Help and RoSIS to engage with young people, and Adult Social Care in relation to disabled people. This also means strengthening the contribution we can make to the wider strategic priorities of the Council. We can also support other partners in the voluntary and community sector, such as working with Places Leisure to engage men, with the co-located library at Maltby providing an ideal opportunity to reach male users of the leisure centre. In turn we can enable Places Leisure to reach women who might not otherwise engage with their services, in turn helping to increase levels of physical activity which can improve health outcomes in the borough.

Whilst we have reasonably good data about library usage related to age, sex, disability and ethnicity, we know less about engagement related to: gender reassignment, sexual orientation, faith, 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.

As part of the library strategy over the next five years Rotherham libraries will develop and deliver a robust action plan as to increase our understanding of the issues experienced by people who hold these protected characteristics. We will work to address under-representation in usage and in our workforce across all Rotherham libraries. Our Equalities Impact Assessment EIA Action Plan is a starting point, identifying men, disabled people, young people and BAME sectors as those parts of the community who are currently known to be least-engaged. The expectation is that this work will be rapidly followed up by plans to engage with those who may be less visible, and therefore more disenfranchised.

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

To ensure the service is monitoring the impact of the Library Strategy and how this impacts on those with protected characteristics, it will be imperative that the quarterly monitoring arrangements that we currently have in place to check against the corporate Key Performance Indicator's are broken down further to allow the service to see how it is meeting the needs of those with protected characteristics.

The service currently reports on the following:

- Customer satisfaction
- Visitor numbers
- Active borrowers

We will work with the performance team to monitor this. This can also be explored when looking to implement self-service technology in libraries to gather data around those utilising the service.

The EIA Action Plan will be integrated with the wider Action Plan for the delivery of the Library Strategy. Progress will be monitored:

- Monthly reports to the Culture Sport Senior Management Team
- Performance reports to Directorate Leadership Team
- Quarterly monitoring as part of the Year Ahead/Council Plan
- Quarterly updates to the Cultural Partnership Board.
- Via Personal Development Reviews with Library Managers and staff

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

Extensive public consultation and engagement has now ended. The service received 1507 responses overall from public, partners and stakeholders.

Please see below the breakdown by protected characteristics for each of the consultations. For those that opted not to respond or left this blank, the numbers are not accounted for.

The BAME column indicates anyone that falls outside of the White British category.

- **01/04/19 – 30/04/19 – 385 responses**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female 243 Male 127	Under 16 – 9 16-25 – 22 25-34 – 39 35-44 – 77 45-54 – 69 55-64 – 74 65+ - 83	67	51

• **03/06/19 – 14/07/19 – 665 responses**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 423 Male - 207	Under 16 – 8 16-25 – 28 25-34 – 73 35-44 – 123 45-54 – 94 55-64 – 121 65+ - 186	50	100

• **03/02/20 – 26/04/20 – 365 responses (Library Strategy)**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 227 Male - 108	Under 25 - 10 25-34 – 24 35-44 – 71 45-54 – 61 55-64 – 68	14	43

		65+ - 106		
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• **03/02/20 – 26/04/20 – 88 responses (Brinsworth Community Managed)**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 64 Male - 17	Under 25 – 5 25-34 – 14 35-44 – 22 45-54 – 20 55-64 – 15 65+ - 9	2	6

• **25/06/20 – 09/07/20 - 4 responses (extended Library Strategy)**

Category	Gender	Age Range	BAME	Self-reported disabled
No. Of persons.	Female - 1 Male - 3	Under 16 - 4	2	-

Please see the Report on the Consultation Findings for further information.

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

Consultation has taken place with key managers and staff throughout the process and drop-in sessions/workshops were held for staff as follows:

- 8th July 2019 - Riverside House
- 11th July 2019 - Swinton Library
- 12th July 2019 - Aston Library
- 28th November 2019 – Riverside Gallery
- 9th December 2019 - Greasbrough Library

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)

The following table gives a breakdown of all the characteristics that Rotherham libraries currently retain with regards to active and registered library users:

Sector:	Area for Improvement
Male	Yes
Female	No
White British	No
BAME	Yes
Disabled	Yes
Not Disabled	No
0-3	Yes
4-11	No
12-17	Yes
18-25	Yes
26 – 40	No
41 – 65	No
66 and over	No

The Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Strategy is intended to fulfil the statutory requirement to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all who want to use it.

It presents the following as fundamental to our service offer:

- Libraries Connected nationally accepted Universal Offers: Reading, Learning, Information, Digital, Health, Culture and Children's.
- DCMS Libraries Taskforce "Libraries Deliver" report: Cultural and creative enrichment, Increased reading and literacy, improved digital access and literacy, Helping everyone achieve their full potential, Healthier and happier lives, Greater prosperity, Stronger, more resilient communities
- Arts Council England "Envisioning the Library of the Future" report priorities: Place the library as the hub of the community, Make the most of digital technology and creative media, Ensure libraries are resilient and sustainable, Deliver the right skills for those who work in libraries

The Service provides a hub at the heart of the local community and for those areas without access to a local building, there is a mobile and home delivery service.

The stock policy aims to provide a broad range of material in a variety of formats: material in print (hardback and paperbacks, newspapers and magazines) audio visual and

electronic formats. The service may focus on particular needs and demands when setting annual priorities, so it is therefore possible to find the same title in ordinary print, large print – for the visually impaired – spoken word CD, downloadable spoken word and e-book.

Every library offers free wi-fi access to the internet and all libraries have computers available free of charge to library members.

The service has invested in online resources including a wide selection of e-books, e-magazines and downloadable spoken word titles. The service participates in a co-operative partnership with a number of other library authorities which has significantly increased the number of e-book titles available to our borrowers at no extra cost to the service.

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

As highlighted above these are the groups identified through this equality's analysis where Rotherham libraries are falling short in terms of engagement with these sectors of protected characteristics. Whilst there may be obvious barriers of engagement such as accessibility to buildings which has been acknowledged as part of the consultation and engagement. It is important for the Library service moving forward to acknowledge these priority areas and embark upon an action plan to address these, which may include working with voluntary organisations, community groups, charities and public health. Through this approach we can ensure that we are directly targeting those that are unrepresented within Rotherham libraries.

By setting out this action plan it will allow us to identify any problems or barriers these groups face which prevents being a user of Rotherham libraries. This may include revision of stock to suit the needs of these groups, accessibility to buildings or groups fit for purpose to meet the requirements of those with a protected characteristic.

An internal barrier which could also play a factor with regards to having low engagement with these groups is Rotherham libraries staffing compliment and how this is representative of the Rotherham population and having a presence of staff with protected characteristics within all Rotherham Library sites. Rotherham libraries will contribute to the wider RMBC agenda with regards to fairly representing all protected characteristics within recruitment. RMBC is submitting a report to cabinet in November for approval seeking accreditation for local government equalities framework. A component of this is around the workforce and key lines of enquiry on this accreditation, therefore Rotherham libraries will strive to be an active participant of this wider piece of work to address having an equal representative of those with protected characteristics.

The criteria going forward with regards to recruiting future library staff needs to ensure it allows all those with a protective characteristic to have an equal opportunity to be part of Rotherham libraries.

The Library Strategy will provide the roadmap for the forthcoming five years' service delivery. As such our core offers, underpinned by nationally accepted minimum standards,

will ensure a service that is both comprehensive and efficient, accessible by all those wishing to use it.

This setting of minimum standards is important, given that the service is entering a period of significant change in order to effect savings efficiencies.

Public consultation invited users and non-users of the service to feedback on what they require from a library service. The Strategy reflects this, as it has been revised to meet customer needs while also seeking efficiencies of service delivery.

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

These are yet to be determined, there still needs to be further work on ensuring the service offer is appropriate and accessible for minorities within the overall population but the core service offer ensures all sectors are addressed. This will be done as an ongoing piece of work as the new Strategy is launched to ensure that the service offer within each community promotes community cohesion and has a positive impact on the lives of those accessing the service.

As part of the library strategy Rotherham libraries will seek to:

- Commit to widening access that the library service provides such as vehicle-based services, mainly to older people who might otherwise be unable to get to a library.
- Adapt the service to the changes of technology to meet the needs of the people of Rotherham including those with protected characteristics.
- Focus on children from lower-income families and increase social isolation and loneliness across all ages.
- Play a vital role in reaching out to every single person in the Borough regardless of age, gender or social and economic background.
- Play a part in reducing social isolation and maintaining good mental health, using the Five Ways to Wellbeing as a framework for activities; Supporting Adult Social Care and Housing in providing safe, trusted community-based places for service users and increasing opportunities for independent living
- Libraries will be easily accessible. Offering ease of access for people with disabilities. They will be well used, with up-to-date facilities and be responsive to changing requirements, using available technology and resources effectively
- Encouraging applications from those with protected characteristics for volunteer roles, apprenticeships and library roles.

In addition, targets are set out as part of the library strategy which feeds into addressing these gaps including;

- Increase reading for pleasure amongst young people by 25%

- Increase the number and range of activities and groups by 10%

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

Rotherham libraries intend to undertake a thorough analysis of community feedback, which will enable us to implement appropriate solutions with the resources available to us.

This equalities analysis will inform the action plan and the steps we will take in order to improve engagement with those sectors highlighted throughout this report.

Rotherham libraries have a huge part to play in improving community relations, and since the consultation and engagement begun in 2019, this area of work has formed much of the work we have done.

The service is keen to work closely with other areas within the Council to ensure that community relations are at the forefront of the service offer moving forward, and as such, we will endeavour to cross cut with other service strategies, such as the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy and the Building Stronger Community agenda. Building stronger communities underpins the Council's "One Rotherham" values and behaviours for its workforce, which help define how it works in the best interests of the Rotherham public.

Libraries can make a worthwhile and valued contribution to these areas by:

- Utilising Library buildings within the heart of communities to encourage usage and build up community spirit.
- Giving emphasis across Libraries that Rotherham is a shared community, which values decency, and provides opportunities so that no one is left behind, for example the digital services on offer that can be tailored to those with protected characteristics.
- Promoting the importance of strong, successful and cohesive communities, encouraging use by all. Relocating the Town Centre Library will have a positive impact on this area and draw back the community lost when it relocated from the Civic quarter.
- Working with partners to be proactive in providing opportunities to bring people together, fostering positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and facilitating the range of community voices and resident-led neighbourhood initiatives.
- Supporting and increasing digital inclusion

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

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

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

Title of analysis: Library Strategy 2021-2026
Directorate and service area: Regeneration and Environment, Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs
Lead Manager: Zoe Oxley
Summary of findings:
<p>The Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs Service will continue to fulfil the statutory requirement, however the revised 5 year strategy will take account of public consultation as a key element of the Library Review process. The core Library offer as contained in the Strategy will align with nationally agreed universal offers and delivery of the Library Strategy must take account of service efficiencies and budget limitations. As part of this piece of work, the Assessment of Local Need will also be refreshed to ensure that Service outcomes are in line with the Rotherham demographic. The stock Policy has recently been renewed in line with this.</p> <p>The Service seeks to ensure that an action plan is developed and maintained as the service evolves, to address areas for improvement, and where we need to widen access and make our customer base more diverse. This will link into the wider strategic agenda of the Council.</p> <p>As well as having an exceptionally high rate of customer satisfaction, currently the Service is engaging well with the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Females borough wide• White British people• Those who do not declare themselves as disabled

- The following age groups: 4-11, 26-40, 41-65 and 65 and over

A robust action plan has been developed to address the areas where following analysis, we are falling short in terms of engagement. It is envisaged that the Service will work with the wider Council and community/voluntary partners to focus on this utilising cross cutting agendas including Thriving neighbourhoods, Health and Wellbeing agenda, Building Stronger Communities vision and the Creative Recovery Programme.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, the ability to deliver the key actions detailed within the Library Strategy and associated action plan have been heavily restricted.

Action/Target

Key area for analysis/protected characteristic	Why?	Actions	Target date (MM/YY)
Males of all ages, borough wide	Across the borough, females make up the majority of the registered/active Library users. This is the case in every area of Rotherham, with some areas having double the number of females using the service than males. This was also reflected in the results of the consultation and engagement carried out as part of the analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify joint working opportunities with other Council departments, Places Leisure, Rotherham United Community Sports Trust, Streetpride and Green Spaces • Consult with male users/non-users to establish barriers to accessing the service • Work with male Library staff to deliver activities to encourage active involvement of males • Review the demographics against services at each location to ensure it is the right fit for that community • Approach community groups with active male involvement and learn from their good practice • Work with HR to consider how to improve 	March 2023

		recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from men.	
BAME	The % of BAME service users is slightly disproportionate to the overall population in Rotherham, the service would like to increase the number of individuals and families utilising libraries across the Borough but particularly in communities where there is a significant BAME population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with organisations such as REMA and CLP, and train staff, to better understand the needs of BAME individuals • Relocate the Town Centre Library closer to Eastwood/Clifton where the BAME population is higher than other areas of the Borough, and tailor the service offer to meet these needs • Ensure stock is fit for purpose and inclusive of BAME interests and languages (adults and children) • Work with HR to consider how to improve recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from BAME people 	April 2021 – March 2023
Disabled People	The number of registered and active service users is low across the borough. The service seeks to better understand why this is and explore if there are any barriers that Libraries present currently which are contributing to this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore joint working opportunities with Adult Social Care, Housing and VCS and train staff to better welcome disabled people within libraries • Consult with disabled users/non-users to understand if there are any barriers to accessing services. • Liaise with voluntary groups to find out why disabled people of all ages are reluctant/not accessing Libraries • Review the service offer against the needs of disabled service users • Review all Library locations to ensure all sites are easily accessible and DDA compliant. • Work with HR to consider how to improve 	March 2023

		recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from disabled people	
Ages 0-3, 12-17 and 18-25	Libraries are falling short in terms of registering and retaining people in these age groups. It is widely known across Libraries that these groups are specifically hard to engage with, and as such a big piece of work is required to address this issue and plug the gap in engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out benchmarking with other LAs and learn from areas of excellence • Explore joint working opportunities with Early Help and RoSIS, RNN Group and VCS. • Deliver capital improvements to Kiveton Library to enable co-location with Early Help. • Work as part of the Children's Capital of Culture partnership to improve the quality and reach of the library activities programme. • Hold focus groups with teenagers and young adults to explore potential barriers/interest • Carry out further work in schools to promote Libraries and reading for pleasure • Review stock levels and how appropriate this is for these age groups • Work with Health Visitors and Children's Centres/local nurseries to encourage 0-3 into Libraries. • Work with HR to consider how to improve recruitment practice in order to encourage more applications from young people 	April 2021 – March 2023
Investigate the needs and aspirations of people holding other protected characteristics:	We have identified the immediate priorities for the Library Service but recognise the limitations of our current data. We need to establish mechanisms for	<p>Agree priorities for intervention in collaboration with other Council departments and VCS partners: in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender reassignment, • sexual orientation, • faith, 	July – Sept 2022

	obtaining better quality intelligence on sectors of the community with other protected characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • civil partnerships and marriage, • pregnancy and maternity • socio-economic groups • parents, single parents and guardians, • carers, • looked after children, • unemployed and people on low incomes, • ex-offenders, • victims of domestic violence • homeless people. <p>Develop an agreed set of tasks for inclusion in the Y2 action plan and ensure integration in the 2022/23 budget planning process.</p>	
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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
Zoe Oxley	Acting Assistant Director. Head of Business Transformation and Operations	08/10/2021
Cllr D Sheppard	Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	15/10/2021

7. Publishing

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

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

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

Date Equality Analysis completed	08 th October, 2021
Report title and date	Service update of the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action Plan 2020-2022 for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs.
Date report sent for publication	To be confirmed
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	15 th October 2021

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Appendix 3

Carbon Impact Assessment - Service Update of the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Action Plan 2020-2022.

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 increased impact	The buildings used by library Services come under corporate Landlord arrangements and energy efficiency / heat decarbonisation measures are being reviewed by Asset Management. On site energy efficiency practices will be adopted where feasible.	There is no increase in impact from previous years and the energy consumption / CO2 emissions will be monitored at the new library site through AM.	Libraries have been including as part of the Council Heat Decarbonisation Plan and interactions will take place as funding is made available.	Overall Council emission data is available on the Council website and site specific data is available from AM.
Emissions from transport?	no increased impact	Emissions from transport can come from Fleet Transport; grey transport (private vehicles used for Council business) and commuting to and from work. The temporary measure of pop-up libraries may have slightly increased emissions but these could be offset by increased digital access and restricted use of buildings due to Covid restrictions.		Fleet transport is in the process of adopting low carbon fuel options where feasible. Mobile library services are looking into the feasibility of converting to electric vehicles and charging at night at Riverside House.	Emission data from commuting is unknown and further work needs to be carried out on grey fleet. Fleet transport are reviewing baseline data and future emission data capture
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	no increased impact	No significant increase from general and mixed recyclable waste	No significant increase from general and mixed recyclable waste.	Old books are re-used or recycled through Better World Books.	No monitoring of waste carried out
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	no impact	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Emissions from construction and/or development?	no impact	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	no impact	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields: Nil					

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

The library Strategy and Action plan does not increase CO2 emissions and in some areas such as transport there are measures to reduce emissions.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Aileen Heggie, Libraries & Neighbourhood Hubs Service Manager
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Nil
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.	Nil
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	David Rhodes, Environment, Energy and Data Manager

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 02 November 2021

Report Title

Work Programme Update

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)

Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
01709 254532 or katherine.harclerode@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To provide an update on the Work Programme of the Improving Places Select Commission.

Recommendations

1. That the report and proposed schedule of work be noted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Governance Advisor in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair to make changes to the schedule of work as appropriate between meetings, reporting any changes back to the next meeting for endorsement.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Work Programme – Improving Places Select Commission

Background Papers

Agendas of Improving Places Select Commission during the 2020/21 Municipal Year
Minutes of Improving Places Select Commission during 2020/21 Municipal Year

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Not applicable

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

IPSC – Updated Work Programme Update**1. Background**

- 1.1 The remit of the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) is to undertake scrutiny activity in respect of all matters pertaining to the borough of Rotherham as a place. In broad terms, this remit relates to business and economic development, employment, emergency planning, environment, housing, climate change, leisure, culture and tourism, transport and highways, as well as regulatory services such as trading standards and environmental health. The breadth of functions and services that fall within the Commission's remit is significant.
- 1.2 The way in which the Commission discharges its scrutiny activity is a matter for itself, having regard to the provisions of the Constitution and any direction from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The IPSC has chosen to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work.
- 1.3 The IPSC has eight scheduled meetings over the course of 2021/22, representing a maximum of 20 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 2.5 hours per meeting. Members therefore must be selective in their choice of items for the work programme. The following key principles of effective scrutiny are considered in determining the work programme:
 - Selection – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve.
 - Value-added – Items had to have the potential to 'add value' to the work of the council and its partners.
 - Ambition – the Programme does not shy away from scrutinising issues that are of greatest concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental wellbeing of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.
 - Flexibility – The Work Programme maintains a degree of flexibility as required to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration during the year and to accommodate any further work that falls within the remit of this Commission.
 - Timing – The Programme has been designed to ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, its findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. The Work Programme also helps safeguard against duplication of work undertaken elsewhere.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Members are required to review their work programme at each meeting during the 2021/22 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of the borough.
- 2.2 A revised draft of a work programme for Improving Places Select Commission is appended to this report.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Members are recommended to discuss potential areas of scrutiny work to be added to the work programme.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The work programme is subject to consultation with the Chair and Members of the IPSC. Regular discussions take place with Cabinet Members and officers in respect of the content and timeliness of items set out on the work programme.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The decision to develop a work programme is a matter reserved to the Commission and will be effective immediately after consideration of this report.
- 5.2 The Statutory Scrutiny Officer (Head of Democratic Services) is accountable for the implementation of any decision in respect of the Commission's work programme. The Governance Advisor supporting the Commission is responsible on a day-to-day basis for the Commission's work programme. Members are recommended to delegate authority to the Governance Advisor to make amendments to the programme between meetings.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications arising from this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
- 7.2 The authority of the Select Commission to determine its work programme is detailed within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Responsibility for Functions parts of the Constitution. The proposal to review the work programme is consistent with those provisions.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

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

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 There are no implications for children and young people or vulnerable adults arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Whilst there are no specific equalities implications arising from this report, equalities and diversity are key considerations when developing and reviewing scrutiny work programmes. One of the key principles of scrutiny is to provide a voice for communities, and the work programme for this Commission has been prepared following feedback from Members representing those communities.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are no implications for CO2 emissions or climate change arising from this report. Members will have regard to the Climate Emergency when selecting potential items for scrutiny.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The membership of the Commission includes co-opted members from RotherFed who contribute to the development and review of the work programme. Where other matters are being considered for inclusion on the work programme, relevant partners or external organisations are consulted on the proposed activity and its timeliness.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 There are no risks arising from this report.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Emma Hill, Acting Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

*Report Author: Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
01709 254532 or katherine.harclerode@rotherham.gov.uk*

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

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Improving Places Select Commission - Work Programme 2021/22 Municipal Year

Meeting Date	Agenda Items
29 June 2021	Initial Work Programme 2021/22
	Aids and Adaptations Tenant Scrutiny Review
20 July 2021	Rough Sleeper Strategy Update
	Revised Work Programme 2021/22
7 September 2021	Cold Spaces
	Flood Alleviation Update
	Bereavement Services Annual Report
2 November 2021 (Reports 22 October)	Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report
	Progress on Library Strategy and Action Plan
November/December 2021 Working Group	External Funding for Regeneration and Development
14 December 2021 (Reports 3 December)	Planning White Paper
	Rotherham Town Centre Update
	Allotments Self-Management Update
	Outcomes from External Funding Sub-group
January/February 2022 Working Group	Cultural Strategy (with Improving Lives Select Commission)
1 February 2022 (Reports 21 January)	Environment Bill – Waste Management
	Housing Strategy
	Fly Tipping Update
March 2022 Working Group	Market Service – Recovery and Future Engagement
22 March 2022 (Reports 11 March)	Active Travel Update
	Clean Air Zone Update
	Highways Service Update
	Outcomes from Cultural Strategy Sub-group

19 April 2022 (Reports 8 April)	Re-deployable CCTV Update
	Tree Management Strategy Update
	Antisocial Behaviour Policy Update
	Outcomes from Market Service Sub-group
April/May Working Group	Housing Repairs Service Review

KEEP SAFE WHILE VISITING RIVERSIDE HOUSE AND THE TOWN HALL



HOUSE KEEPING TIPS

- Meeting rooms and the Council Chamber will be sanitised before and after every meeting.
- Follow the one-way systems in place.
- Only one person (and their carer) should use a lift at a time.
- You're advised to take LFD tests at home, regularly if you don't have symptoms. **Visit the Council's website for details of where and how to get free LFD tests.**
- If you have any **symptoms of COVID-19**, you must self-isolate at home and book a PCR test. **Visit the Council's website for details of how to book a PCR test.**

Further information about COVID-19 can be found at
www.rotherham.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.rotherham.gov.uk/coronavirus

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