

**COUNCIL MEETING
12th April, 2023**

Present:- Councillor Tajamal Khan (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Aveyard, Bacon, Baker-Rogers, Ball, Baum-Dixon, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, Brookes, Browne, Burnett, A Carter, C Carter, Castledine-Dack, Clark, T. Collingham, Z. Collingham, Cooksey, Cowen, Cusworth, Elliott, Ellis, Fisher, Foster, Griffin, Haleem, Havard, Hoddinott, Hughes, Jones, Keenan, Lelliott, McNeely, Mills, Miro, Monk, Pitchley, Read, Reynolds, Roche, Sansome, Sheppard, Tarmey, Taylor, Tinsley, Wilson, Wyatt and Yasseen.

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

156. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor was pleased to announce that the Highways and Flood Risk Team had won the Institution of Civil Engineers Yorkshire and Humber Region Smeaton Award for the Forge Island Canal Barrier. This prestigious accolade recognised excellence and innovation in schemes costing less than £5 million.

The Mayor invited Paul Woodcock - Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, Peter Henchley - Flood Risk Engineer and Mark Duquemin - Head of Environmental Management and Sustainability, to receive the Award.

The Mayor was also delighted to confirm that on the 5th April 2023 King Charles III granted the Yorkshire Regiment the title 'Royal' to acknowledge the Regiment's unique history of service to the Crown and also to bring the Regiment in line with the other three regiments of the Union Division who were recognisable by their Royal title.

Members were invited to join the Mayor in standing and congratulating the Royal Yorkshire Regiment.

The Mayor was also pleased to report on his engagements and activity since the last Council Meeting.

The Mayor described how he was honoured to meet a diverse range of people from many different backgrounds, including members of the Ukrainian, Hindu and Deaf communities.

The Mayor's diary was busy moving into Spring and he would update on further activity at the next Council Meeting.

157. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Barker, Barley, Bird, Hunter, Thompson and Whomersley.

158. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none to report.

159. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 1st March, 2023, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Allen

160. PETITIONS

There were no petitions to report.

161. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest to report.

162. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions submitted.

163. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no matters requiring exclusion of the press or public.

164. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT

The Leader report on his statement with some very sad news.

Over the last few days there had been news coverage following the tragic circumstances of the death of Marcia Grant, a Sheffield resident, but one of Rotherham's much-loved foster carers.

Marcia was a kind, generous lady who was well-known, much-loved and highly respected within the fostering community. Not only did Marcia provide endless love and care to vulnerable children when they needed it the most, but shared her time and considerable experience to nurture and support fellow foster carers.

Rotherham Council, along with the fostering community, were devastated at her loss and would continue to provide all the support and reassurance needed.

The Council's thoughts were with Marcia's family at this extremely difficult time. Foster carers were heroes, who selflessly opened up their homes and their hearts to give children the best possible start in life.

The tragic circumstances relating to Marcia were subject to legal proceedings, but the Leader wished to place on record the Council's thanks to her and condolences to those that she now left behind.

Unfortunately, there had also been a second tragic incident over the last few days as a young girl passed away in Clifton Park over the weekend. Again, the Council's thoughts and prayers were with her family.

For today may the memories of those lost be a blessing.

The Leaders of the Opposition Groups, Councillors Ball and Carter, echoed the Leader's comments and also passed on their condolences and deepest sympathies to the families of those involved, but in doing so paid tribute to the emergency services who were in attendance.

165. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 20th March, 2023 be received.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Allen

166. NOMINATIONS - MAYOR-ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR-ELECT FOR THE 2023-2024 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Nominations had been invited for the positions of Mayor-elect and Deputy Mayor-elect for the 2023-24 Municipal Year.

One nomination for the position of Mayor had been received:-

"That Councillor Taylor be elected Chair of the Rotherham Borough Council for the ensuing (2023/24) Municipal Year and that he be entitled to the style of Mayor by virtue of Section 245(1) of the Local Government Act 1972."

Proposer:- Councillor Pitchley

Seconder:- Councillor Keenan

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor A. Carter, fully supported the nomination and in doing so suggested the Council adopt a meritocratic system where it was incumbent on group nominations on the basis of proportionality. It was hoped this system could be adopted and brought forward in time.

On being put to a vote, the motion was carried by majority.

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Councillor Taylor was appointed Mayor-elect for the 2023-24 Municipal Year. His election as Mayor would take place at the Annual Meeting on 19th May, 2023.

There had been two nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor-elect received:-

The first was for Councillor Tinsley, nominated by the Conservative Group, to be elected Vice-Chair of the Rotherham Borough Council for the ensuing (2023/24) Municipal Year.

Proposer:- Councillor Ball Second:- Councillor Fisher

On being put to a vote, the motion was not carried.

The second was for Councillor Cowen, nominated by the Labour Group, to be elected Vice-Chair of the Rotherham Borough Council for the ensuing (2023/24) Municipal Year.

Proposer:- Councillor McNeely Second:- Councillor Sheppard

On being put to a vote, the motion was carried by majority.

“That Councillor Cowen be elected Vice-Chair of the Rotherham Borough Council for the ensuing (2023/24) Municipal Year and that she be entitled to the style of Deputy Mayor by virtue of Section 245(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.”

Councillor Cowen was appointed Deputy Mayor-elect for the 2023-24 Municipal Year. Her election as Deputy Mayor would take place at the Annual Meeting on 19th May, 2023.

167. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY UPDATE - IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and on this occasion the Improving Places Select Commission.

On introducing the update the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, wished to place on record her thanks to Councillor Barley and also Councillor T. Collingham for their support as Vice-Chairs and welcoming Councillor Bacon to his new role.

Since the last report much of the activity had been focused with the budget proposals featuring on the work programme.

The Board challenged the assumptions underpinning the budget, their alignment to the Council Plan, themes and proposals for the level of council tax and rents and charges, whilst being mindful of the cost of living pressures.

The Board recommended increases for advice and support and suggested mitigation measures for more vulnerable households.

The Board was proud that it undertook scrutiny in a constructive manner with a non-partisan approach and hoped this would continue.

It was pleasing to see the Cabinet responses to the scrutiny reviews, especially those on today's Council agenda. This demonstrated that Cabinet took the work of scrutiny seriously and in the interests of transparency.

All Scrutiny Members were also urged to attend the Scrutiny Strategy Day, to be held on 26th April 2023 in the John Smith Room from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. This provided Members with an opportunity to influence and prioritise the work programme for scrutiny in the next 12 months.

In seconding the update Councillor Wyatt, Chair of the Improving Places Select Commission, highlighted this year's achievements and assurances provided through a cross-party approach and wider coverage of issues. He valued the support and contribution of his Vice-Chair, Councillor Tinsley.

Emphasis was drawn to:-

- The wide ranging work of the Commission from highways to public safety and CCTV.
- Issues causing distress such as fly-tipping, flooding, anti-social behaviour.
- Issues that could bring people pleasure, such as libraries, culture and heritage.
- Issues of concern from housing to end of life services.
- Work undertaken within the resources available
- Tribute to the Tenants Scrutiny Panel facilitated by Rotherfed, who were willing give up their time to provide support.
- Neighbourhoods annual report, an example of how the Council had progressed.
- Spotlight reviews on areas such as Selective Licensing, Bereavement Annual Report, the good work of Rotherham Allotments Alliance and examples of match funding for the Neighbourhood Agenda.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

Mover: Councillor Clark

Secunder: Councillor Wyatt

168. CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REVIEW CULTURAL STRATEGY

Further to Minute No. 89 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th December 2022 consideration was given to the report detailing the response to the findings and recommendations from the spotlight review jointly undertaken by Improving Places Select Commission and Improving Lives Select Commission on 2nd February, 2022.

Scrutiny Members from both the Improving Lives and Improving Places Select Commissions taking part were congratulated for their detailed and in-depth review into the Cultural Strategy.

The 4 recommendations had been accepted and progress was either ongoing or due for completion.

The overarching point demonstrated that the cultural offer within the Borough was accessible to all, with particular focus on young people and ensuring a good spread of events across the Borough and in individual Wards.

This was evidence of a good piece of work and all those involved were thanked for their contributions.

Resolved: That the Cabinet's response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of the Cultural Strategy be noted.

Mover: - Councillor Sheppard Second: - Councillor Pitchley

169. CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REVIEW MARKETS: ENGAGEMENT AND RECOVERY

Further to Minute No. 127 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th February 2023 consideration was given to the report detailing the response to the findings and recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission spotlight review of Rotherham Markets carried out during 2022.

The 8 recommendations were all accepted by Cabinet and developed subsequent to meetings with Officers with responsibility for the management and operation of markets in Rotherham, as well as representatives of the National Association of British Markets (NABMA) and National Market Traders Federation (NMTF). This evidenced the need to ensure engagement with market traders and how consultation was undertaken was further developed.

Resolved:- That the Cabinet's response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Rotherham Markets be noted.

Mover: - Councillor Lelliott Second: - Councillor Wyatt

170. CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REVIEW COVID-19 CARE HOME SAFETY

Further to Minute No. 136 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20th March 2023 consideration was given to the report detailing the response to the findings and recommendations from the spotlight review carried out by Health Select Committee on Covid-19 Care Home Safety.

The review focused on the biggest issues and the learning from the pandemic and ongoing needs in respect of care home safety.

In terms of recruitment and retention within the care home sector the Adult Social Care Workforce training programme would continue in 2023/24.

The Adult Social Care Commissioning and Finance Team have undertaken work on the Fair Cost of Care exercise and developed a draft Market Sustainability Plan.

It was also noted that relationships with Care Homes and Registered Care Home Managers were strengthened during the pandemic and these stronger relationships continued to be built on to address the ongoing challenges.

Members welcomed the outcome of this review and the difficulties endured for those involved during the pandemic. Whilst some limited action could be taken locally the outcome of the national review was still awaited.

Resolved:- That the Cabinet's response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Covid-19 Care Home Safety be noted.

Mover: - Councillor Roche

Seconder: - Councillor Yasseen

171. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS FOR HOOBER

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th November 2018, consideration was given to the annual Ward updates for Hooper as part of the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy.

Update reports had been provided as part of the agenda. However, each Ward Member was invited to speak.

Councillors Lelliott and Roche provided an update on Hooper Ward.

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Councillor Roche drew particular attention to:-

- The 4 Hooper Ward Priorities, which were widely consulted upon.
- Forthcoming consultation event on the new plan with four aims to improve road safety, improve the environment, making good use of all green spaces for all and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and emphasis on improving wellbeing with a focus on the loneliness, isolation and mental health.
- Working with a number of groups and individuals looking at road safety.
- Introduction of a number of speed activated cameras and monitoring these on a regular basis to ensure they were located with the greatest impact.
- Funding had been obtained for much needed pedestrian crossing at Cortonwood Retail Park.
- Confirmation of a large tranche of new measures within the Ward, including several 21 zones requested by the local community.
- Working closely with South Yorkshire Police on roads that become victims of speeding traffic.
- Close working relationships with Residents' Associations and further meetings scheduled.

Councillor Lelliott focused on:-

- Listening to the community and making them at the heart of what local Ward Members do, what was being delivered and achievements.
- Improvements to the green space and shop frontage on Masefield Road, next to the junction of Christchurch Road, West Melton, secured by way of funding through the Council's Towns and Villages Fund.
- Community garden scheme and litter picking.
- Making sure all branches of the community were given the opportunity to attend community meetings.
- Site visits and meetings with partners to look at off-road motorbikes and the problems they were causing.
- Partnership working and multi-agency approaches to deal with Ward problems and issues.
- Ensuring support to all community groups.
- Ward access and developments facilitated by the devolved budget and Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Plans and funding for Christmas Tree Festivals and day trips for local schools.
- Excellent collaborative working relationships between Ward Members and good attendance at Neighbourhood Working Meetings.
- Thanks, and appreciation from all 3 Ward Councillors.

Resolved:- That the update be received, and the contents noted.

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Seconder:- Councillor Lelliott

172. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS FOR WATH

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th November 2018, consideration was given to the annual Ward updates for Wath as part of the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy.

Update reports had been provided as part of the agenda. However, each Ward Member was invited to speak.

Councillor Atkin drew particular attention to:-

- Fantastic collaborative team approach to neighbourhood working from Housing, Early Years, Environmental Health and Housing Associations with thanks and appreciations to Nicola Hacking and Katie Northcliffe, Neighbourhood Officers.
- Special thanks to Jill Ratcliffe and best wishes for a long and happy retirement.
- Excellent support from the PCSO's Paul Gray and David Wright.
- Devolved budgets and funding arrangements.
- Supporting the Town Centre and thriving retail provision, including the 2 day a week market, with the addition of a Saturday market.
- Improvements to remove old and decrepit garages which were attracting anti-social behaviour.
- Successful Christmas Festival which was a great success.
- Success of Montgomery Hall and the volunteers that support its management.

Councillor Cowen focused on:-

- Importance of priorities and strategy and meeting outcomes.
- Support from Neighbourhood colleagues and former Councillors.
- Success of securing a cemetery tap.
- Working with the Events Team.
- Support to community safety events to raise awareness of crime and anti-social behaviour and distribution of free community safety items.
- Closure of Wath Day Centre and moving onto Community Connect.
- Provision of a sensory garden.
- British Legion Poppies and the erection of the named lamp-post poppies.

Resolved:- That the update be received, and the contents noted.

Mover:- Councillor Atkin

Seconder:- Councillor Cowen

173. NOTICE OF MOTION - GRANGE PARK - ACCESS

It was moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Elliott that:

That this Council notes:

Over the last three decades, patrons of the Grange Park have had unfettered access to all its amenities, its wildlife, its amazing dog walks and its natural beauty. The main demographic of park users is pension aged walkers including ramblers using the Trans Pennine trail which crosses the site and the young children from 5 to 15 using the junior football academy. Recent events have now reduced the park to a mucky dirt track and created a dangerous environment for the young footballers, spectators, and walkers alike.

The Council believes that:

Since 1929, several access routes have criss-crossed the land and have been used to access the former colliery, the park, and the landfill. Of these routes only four have ever been referred to in conveyancing documents. Currently according to the land registry, no maps are filed against these. In 1973, the Council purchased the land from the NCB which formed part of the old colliery and its access. The land was purchased to form a public park for the recreation of the residents of Rotherham. In 2001, the Council agreed a right of access as part of a lease agreement with Millmoor Juniors and resurfacing works were commissioned by RMBC at the request of Millmoor Juniors to complete an accessway which ran along their boundary. It was also used between 1994 and 1997 with the Councils permission, by the current owner of Grange Landfill Ltd., the then contractor of Watsons Estates to speed up the re instatement of the toxic tip site. This same site owner is now claiming an access right under the "doctrine of lost modern grant." However, the public of Rotherham West believe that the evidence provided by the company to meet the threshold for a right of access "on a balance of probabilities" the 51% test, has not been reached, however, the Council refuses to share the Legal opinions. Despite documentation existing that shows a "legal right of way" existed since the 1930s under the "iron bridge" the company is attempting to confuse the access right, we believe that this is because although legal, it is not in a usable condition.

This Council resolves that:

Mirroring the thoughts and wishes of the residents of Droppingwell, Blackburn and Kimberworth, this Council should undertake an immediate review of all the evidence provided to the Council by the company and set out in a public document why they believe it gives the company a right of access under the "doctrine of modern lost grant." The Council should then undertake a public meeting to consult and take on board the vast knowledge of the public, which up to now it has failed to engage or

consider. If an undisputable right cannot be proven on balance of probabilities, the Council will request that the company provide any further evidence that they believe proves a right and the Council will set out in a public document why they believe the Company has a right of access if the Council continue to believe that they do have one.

In accordance with Rule of Procedure 19 (2) Councillor A. Carter requested that a recorded vote should be taken on the proposed motion. In accordance with the Rule of Procedure 5 Members stood to show their support for a recorded vote to be taken on the motion.

In accordance with Rule of Procedure 19 (1) a recorded vote was taken on the motion as follows:

For: Councillors Bacon, Ball, Baum-Dixon, Bennett-Sylvester, Burnett, A. Carter, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, T. Collingham, Z. Collingham, Elliott, Fisher, Jones, Mills, Miro, Reynolds, Tarmey, Tinsley, and Wilson.

Against: Councillors Alam, Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Aveyard, Baker-Rodgers, Beck, Brookes, Browne, Clark, Cooksey, Cowen, Cusworth, Ellis, Foster, Griffin, Haleem, Havard, Hughes, Keenan, Khan, Lelliott, McNeely, Monk, Pitchley, Read, Roche, Sansome, Sheppard, Taylor, and Wyatt.

Abstentions: None.

The motion was put and lost by majority; however, the following actions would be taken forward:

- The Council's legal officers would again review the information that could be released to Councillor Jones, the action group and to members that represent neighbouring communities.
- The Council's officers would launch a call for evidence to take place between the date of this meeting and last until 12 June 2023, to ask for specific information regarding access which related to the period between 1965 and 1985. This would involve a dedicated email address being created and the Council writing directly to residents in the area with an open appeal for that information.
- Following the call for evidence the Council's legal team would publish a further statement, updating the Council's position.

174. NOTICE OF MOTION - TOBACCO CONTROL

It was moved by Councillor Roche and seconded by Councillor Sheppard that:-

This Council notes that:-

- There has been a significant reduction in the number of people smoking, and there have been improvements in the services designed to assist with smoking cessation. Rotherham can be very

pleased with the progress it has made in areas such as the reduction in the % of pregnant women smoking, in the impact of the new tobacco working group. We understand our progress is better than in many other areas. Despite those, smoking remains the single largest driver of health inequalities and poor health in Rotherham, where – in common with the rest of the UK – it is the leading cause of cancer and preventable and early death. We know that that we have been successful, but we also know there is more to be done

- Preventable disease continues to have a massive impact on the public's health, the NHS and the economy.
- Decades of comprehensive policy action have meant adult smoking prevalence in the UK in 2019 was at a record low at 14.1%, but this masks significant inequality.
- Differences in smoking rates make it one of the leading drivers of health inequalities, responsible for half the difference in life expectancy between the lowest and highest income groups in England.
- Smoking is estimated by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) to cost society £17bn annually for England, £2.4bn of which falls to the NHS.
- That through their Public Health duties, local authorities are responsible for improving the health of their population and do this through services such as stop smoking services and wider tobacco control activities.

This Council:-

- Believes that local government must be adequately resourced to fulfil their Public Health duties and that the Council will make representations through Cancer Research and ASH to push for this to happen. Furthermore, as part of this, the Council calls upon the 3 Rotherham MPs to seek to improve funding for Public Health from the Government
- Supports Cancer Research UK's calls for a Smokefree Fund (a fixed annual charge on the tobacco industry, making the tobacco industry pay for the damage their products cause, without being able to influence how the funds are spent) to fund local tobacco control work, and urges the UK Government to consider implementing a Smokefree Fund as part of its efforts to reach the Smokefree 2030 target and tackle health inequalities. By supporting this motion, we will be joining others in a Cancer Championships network to help to provide more weight and support to Cancer Research UK to achieve their aim.

Therefore, this Council will:-

- Ask Trading Standards and the Police in Rotherham whether ways can be found to further crack down on illegal tobacco sales. Also, to work with Trading Standards and Public Health to investigate if anything can be done re the "positive and open" way vaping is

advertised/displayed with at the very least calling upon vapour outlets to consider how they portray their wares that might encourage youngsters to start vaping

- Call upon Children and Young People’s Services to work with schools to see how they can provide further information and preventive work to warn of the dangers of vaping and smoking; in doing so to support youngsters to give up vaping whilst at the same time warning of the dangers of taking up vaping as a choice rather than as a measure to aid smoking cessation
- Calls upon South Yorkshire ICS, to provide more support and a unified approach to those wishing to give up smoking in our region.

Background / supporting information

- The prevalence of smoking in Rotherham is significantly higher than for all-England. Approximately 16.9% of Rotherham adults (around 35,400 people) were smokers in 2021 compared to 13.0% nationally.
- From 2017-19, there were 1,272 smoking attributable deaths in Rotherham – a rate of 271 deaths per 100,000 population. This is significantly worse than the England rate of 202 or the Yorkshire and the Humber rate of 239 deaths per 100,000 population
- An estimated 13,836 Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) in Rotherham were caused by smoking in 2019 alone. This accounts for 16% of all DALYs in Rotherham - making smoking the single greatest contributor to the total burden of disease locally.
- Rotherham performs significantly worse than all-England for most indicators used to monitor the impact of smoking on population health.

Indicator	Rotherham	All England
Smoking attributable hospital admissions: Directly standardised rate per 100,000 population (2019/20)	2,023	1,398
Smoking attributable deaths: Directly standardised rate per 100,000 population (2017-19)	271	202
Smoking at time of delivery (2021/2)	12.8%	9.1%

- Smoking is the single largest driver of health inequalities in England. The more disadvantaged someone is, the more likely they are to smoke and to suffer from smoking-related disease and premature death.
- Rates of smoking are considerably higher amongst some groups, including:-

- People who work in routine and manual occupations
- People from lower socioeconomic groups
- People with long term mental health conditions
- People with drug and alcohol additions
- People from some ethnic groups, including mixed ethnic groups and white British populations
- LGBTQI+ people
- Inequalities in Rotherham that are more pronounced than seen nationally. For example, the odds of smoking amongst routine and manual workers in Rotherham are 2.45 times those of the general population, compared to an odds ratio of 2.22 nationally (2020 data).

Local tobacco control

Rotherham has a multi-agency Tobacco Steering Group which oversees delivery of plans to address local tobacco control actions. The action plan and a range of indicators monitoring progress was recently presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in January. The action plan was aligned against 5 strategic aims designed to deliver a smokefree Rotherham by 2030 (<5% prevalence), which have been based on national evidence of [good practice](#) and recommendations from the Government's [The Khan Review](#):

- *Strategy and Coordination.* Deliver a co-ordinated Tobacco Control Policy, strategy, governance and monitoring system
- *Quit for good.* Encourage and support smokers to quit for good
- *Enforcement.* Tackle suppliers of cheap, counterfeit, and illicit tobacco and nicotine-containing-products through delivery of effective enforcement
- *Reduce variation* in smoking rates by tackling inequalities
- *Stop the start.* Reduce the number of people taking up smoking, particularly young people

As part of this work an e-cigarette position statement has been developed to generate consensus on how to ensure that there is access to e-cigarettes as an effective harm reduction tool and quitting aid for existing smokers, without inadvertently contributing to a growth in the uptake of vaping amongst non-smokers (especially children and young people) through normalisation, or glamorisation of vaping.

Smoking Cessation Services are provided in the community, currently through Get Healthy Rotherham, and also as part of NHS services, including QUIT programme in hospitals and a service for pregnant women. Illicit tobacco work is undertaken through the Trading Standards team.

Investment in tobacco control is highly cost effective. Every £1 spent on Smoking Cessation Services estimated to deliver a saving of £10 in future health care costs and health gains. Despite this, there has been a national and local decline in spending on tobacco control. In Rotherham, spend on

tobacco control per head of population fell by 49% between 2013 and 2018 within the context of overall cuts in Public Health spending.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

175. AUDIT COMMITTEE

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Baker-Rodgers Seconder:- Councillor Browne

176. LICENSING BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Board Sub-Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Ellis Seconder:- Councillor Hughes

177. PLANNING BOARD

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Atkin Seconder:- Councillor Andrews

178. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS

(1) Councillor Ball asked the designated spokesperson on the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel if they were happy that residents of Rotherham were having to pay an increased precept to cover the failures of South Yorkshire Police over CSE and Hillsborough?

Councillor Haleem confirmed that no-one wanted to pay the precept and would prefer not to have to pay for the consequences of things that had gone wrong in the past. However, whilst the Government met most of the "legacy costs," there was a requirement for the Police Force to make a contribution towards this.

In a supplementary question Councillor Ball confirmed no reasonable person was happy to pay for this but asked should this not have come out of the earmarked reserves that this Force holds and why this was not considered as an option given the current climate.

Councillor Haleem reiterated that if the Government wanted to contribute more in order to reduce the burden on Council taxpayers, then this would be welcomed.

(2) Councillor Ball asked the designated spokesperson on the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel if they could provide a figure of how much CSE cases and Hillsborough have cost the taxpayers of Rotherham in total and per head?

Councillor Haleem was unable to answer on behalf of the Police, but it was her own understanding it was not possible to provide this information specific to Rotherham.

In a supplementary question Councillor Ball asked if the spokesperson was comfortable with some of the figures due to Labour-led decisions.

Councillor Haleem would only be able to comment if she had any figures.

179. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

(1) Councillor Hoddinott referred to the recent consultation and asked when building would start on the much-needed pedestrian crossing at the top of Morthern Road?

Councillor Beck explained that since the public consultation in March 2022, site investigations have identified significant challenges in accommodating a viable design for a pedestrian crossing owing to congestion of utilities equipment in the footways. Options were presently being reviewed to resolve these challenges in order to see if a safe crossing point could be provided.

As part of the forthcoming Transport Capital Programme, it was intended to bring this specific scheme forward. Subject to a feasible and affordable resolution being found, construction could be during the 2023 school summer holidays. However, this was subject to finding a viable design solution.

In addition, there had been success with other schemes particularly the one on the A57 which Councillors Pitchley and Taylor had been lobbying for in Swallownest.

(2) Councillor Fisher referred to the Gold Award being the highest badge of honour in the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) Employer Recognition Scheme. Rotherham had been awarded silver, while Barnsley, Sheffield and Doncaster Councils have the Gold Award. He asked could the Council reassure all local veterans that the gold standard would be achieved and when.

Councillor Allen confirmed the Council would like to reassure all local veterans that it would be aiming to achieve the gold standard in 2024, when the annual application process opened up for local authorities to apply in January.

In a supplementary question Councillor Fisher asked about the declaration for this year which was due to expire in March.

Councillor Allen was unable to provide a definitive answer but would investigate and confirm this in writing.

(3) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester explained that 25% of visitors to Rother Valley Country Park do so by public and sustainable travel, but only 11% to Thrybergh Country Park. He asked what was the plan to increase sustainable travel to Thrybergh please?

Councillor Beck confirmed like Councillor Bennett-Sylvester he wanted to see the figures increase. On this basis the Council was continuing to work with the Local Transport Authority, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, to develop and deliver improvements to the public transport system along with walking and cycling. Unfortunately, it all came down to funding and what was available.

Some funding had been secured to provide shower facilities and cycle racks to support active travel for both staff and customers. This would remain an ongoing piece of work.

The Council would continue to look into opportunities where Public Rights of Way in and around the Park could be improved. There were many things going on.

In a supplementary question Councillor Bennett-Sylvester referred to a Borough map in Rotherham bus station, Rother Valley Country Park was on it, yet Thrybergh Country Park was not.

In 2018, a local resident petitioned the Council regarding the speed limits on the A630 which the former Cabinet Member actioned, and the speed limit was lowered. Within this there was also a request to see if a central crossing island could be provided to stop the A630 being such a barrier for people walking or using public transport. This had been with the Council for the last 3 or 4 years so could this not be started at least to enable people travelling to the Park on the bus could at least get across the road.

Councillor Beck again confirmed it was down to funding and referred to the Transport Capital Programme which published a number of crossings that the Council were hoping to deliver.

The Council had been fortunate enough to put relevant funding forward as it did not receive enough from the Government for schemes such as this. As the funding was not now available like it once was, the Council had had to find and fund schemes like this itself. Local Ward Members, therefore, could potentially fund this type of activity, specifically the crossing referred to in your own Ward through the local Road Safety Programme.

When it was Dalton and Thrybergh's turn (in either Tranche 1 or Tranche 2) Members could have the opportunity to sit down with officers along with Councillor Baker Rogers and discuss what was the number one priority. It was then hoped that schemes such as this could be put in place with the funding set up by the Council.

(4) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked how confident was the Cabinet Member that everybody paying for Rothercare as part of their RMBC bungalow tenancy, either through the benefits system or their own means, was receiving Rothercare?

Councillor Roche confirmed every household whose tenancy included Rothercare had the choice to receive the Rothercare Service, some chose not to.

He was confident that all those households who wished to benefit from Rothercare were receiving the Service. For tenants who made a choice not to receive the Service they were informed that the offer remained if they should decide to take up the Service in the future.

Prospective new tenants were informed about Rothercare and the applicable mandatory charge as part of the lettings process. The lettings agreement, which was signed and agreed by all tenants, also included agreement to the mandatory Rothercare charge as a stipulation of the tenancy - as per Section 2G of the tenancy agreement.

In a supplementary question Councillor Bennett-Sylvester was concerned about the mandatory part of this providing a guaranteed cash income for the Service, and that was a priority.

He asked could the Council not just treat people as adults when taking on a tenancy for a bungalow and give them a choice of whether or not they wished to pay for Rothercare. That could save some pensioners £150 a year if they were not in need of the Service. A lot of time residents feel they have no choice in accepting a bungalow and end up having to pay this charge whether or not they need or whether or not, which seems unfair.

Councillor Roche confirmed that if the Council removed the mandatory charge, hundreds of households who currently have the charge met automatically through their benefits would have to find the money themselves. Having a service and not paying for it would simply increase the charge to others.

At the moment there was just under half of all residents who did not require the Service. However, it was pleasing to report that the Council was in the process of reviewing the whole of the Rothercare Service. The outcome was not yet known as the review was still ongoing, but the level of charges and how they were applied were all being looked at.

Councillor Roche would ensure Councillor Bennett-Sylvester's comments were fed in. The outcome of the review would then be presented to Cabinet sometime later on this year.

(5) Councillor Ball was aware the Children's Capital of Culture was fast approaching so asked when could Members expect parks to be brought up to standard and out-of-date play equipment replaced?

Councillor Sheppard confirmed play would form an important part of the Children's Capital of Culture programme and the Council had invested over £462,861 in improvements to 28 play areas across 16 Wards over the last 2 years and would continue to manage and maintain play equipment at 35 play areas in the Borough.

In a supplementary question Councillor Ball could understand what was put in but asked would the Cabinet Member commit to carrying out a survey of all play equipment to ensure that they were in date and safe and would replacements be provided for those items damaged or past their use by date. He gave examples of where in Coronation Park there were 4 or 5 play pieces missing equipment so asked would the Council commit to putting those back in.

Councillor Sheppard explained that Members and residents could report where there were pieces of equipment that had been damaged. The Council did carry out standard checks, but things happen at certain times.

In terms of Maltby's Coronation Park, as Councillor Ball would be aware, the Council still had Section 106 monies to be spent in this area of around £40,000. The Council would continue to consult with Ward Members on what equipment that required being replaced for those lost over time and would be in regular dialogue over this action.

(6) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked how many instances have there been of cross contamination of communal bins serving Council flats in the past year and what was, as well as who, had covered the cost?

Councillor Beck confirmed it was not possible to give a figure for instances of cross contamination of communal bins from Council flats as the current system did not record the information specifically for communal bins. The service did recognise this as a problem and were working to replace the existing system, so this information would be more readily available in future.

The Service was aware of particular issues with communal bins and were working with relevant stakeholders, such as Housing and Waste colleagues, to try and address individual issues. Some of the actions so far had included visits to hotspots and use of CCTV as well as engagement with residents.

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There should be no excuse, but there were sometimes reasons for it. Every effort would be made to provide relevant education and improve on the waste calendars that were distributed.

In a supplementary question Councillor Bennett-Sylvester had noted at the last meeting that there was a £2.6 million cost to the Housing Revenue Account for putting the infrastructure in for these bins effectively creating pockets of little dump-it sites in various estates.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester was concerned that, as a result of the rushed implementation following this Council being embarrassed about being the last mainland authority not to have cut plastic collections, could it not be an idea to be like private landlords and just have a pink bin until the situation could be sorted. This would then provide a service that did not look as unsightly as people that live on these estates.

Councillor Beck could remember the roll out as he was Cabinet Member for Housing at the time. It was a good piece of joint working when plastic recycling was introduced. This had been a huge success and had increased recycling rates across the Borough. This was a continuing trend.

The Service would not want to take a step backward with Councillor Bennett-Sylvester's suggestion. Yes, it was not easy, and Ward Members were receiving casework reports on this from people living in communities where this was a problem.

This had to be approached in a more positive way around educating people and looking at other places where there were some good examples.

Rotherham was not the only place where there was a significant number of Council flats where communal bins were in operation and there might be places the Council could learn from as well, so this was an ongoing piece of work.

It was recognised this was an issue and work would continue with Ward Members where there were problems.

(7) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester explained there were 125 Council properties managed by the Homeless Section as temporary accommodation so asked what was the criteria for selecting properties to be managed as "crash pads" as they were known?

Councillor Brookes confirmed the Council's Temporary Accommodation properties were selected to ensure temporary accommodation was available in as many Wards as possible, so that those affected by homelessness could be placed close to their existing support networks and schools etc. However, this was not always possible, as it very much depended upon the availability and turnover of properties in each area.

For this reason, some Wards may have higher numbers of temporary accommodation units than others.

The portfolio was periodically reviewed and adjusted to ensure that the accommodation available continues to meet service and customer requirements. For example, if homelessness presentations increased for families, the Team would look to adjust the supply of family accommodation, whilst releasing any oversupply of single persons accommodation back into general housing management.

In a supplementary question Councillor Bennett-Sylvester referred on the range of these crash pads the 5 most deprived Wards in the Borough with just 37% of housing stock had 56% of these crash pads, while the 5 least deprived Wards have 9% of the housing stock could only carry 3%. There was a massive difference when you look at areas like Bramley, Ravenfield, Wickersley, where there were not any at all. These properties do cause a range of challenges but was it not time that some other areas start to carry the burden and look to have the same criteria.

Councillor Brookes confirmed that with the same distribution figures Greasbrough had the most general stock, so it followed that it had more provision. If Members had any particular concerns about percentages in deprived areas, then may be this could be looked into as part of the review.

(8) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked with the cost of hire increasing for community skips and challenges over the disposal of foam furniture had any consideration been given to altering the 10% operational spending limit or any other aspect of Ward Housing Hub spending?

Councillor Brookes confirmed she was aware that the cost of hire of a community skip had increased by approximately 10.5% over the past year. As such, she had asked that a degree of flexibility be applied with regard to the current guidance during this financial year and that the guidance be reviewed ahead of the next financial year.

The current Ward Housing Hub project approval guidance advised that no more than 10% of Ward Housing Hub funding should be committed to community skips. This was to ensure that most of the budget was spent on projects which delivered a longer-term sustainable benefit to neighbourhoods.

In a supplementary question Councillor Bennett-Sylvester pointed out that over 1,800 Council homes in the least deprived parts of town get £29,000 Ward Housing Hub yet just under 1,083 properties in Dalton and Thrybergh get £13,500. He asked was it time to scrap this £4 million and pay a direct £10.00 per house per Ward so that it was distributed where the problems were the most and where the most deprived communities were.

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Councillor Brookes was aware Councillor Bennett-Sylvester had raised this issue previously, but the answer remained the same. There were no plans to review, and the system would remain as it was.

(9) Councillor Ball referred over the last year could the Leader inform him how much Rotherham had paid into the SYMCA Strategic Economic Plan and how much had been spent in the Rotherham area?

The Leader confirmed the economic plan was a policy of the Mayoral Combined Authority, so there was no kind of entry fee for the policy, and it did not necessarily mean that money was received on the other side.

The Council paid an annual membership fee to SYMCA of £35,900 as part of the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Council did not directly make a payment for the SYMCA Strategic Economic Plan.

The total SYMCA investment into Rotherham during 2022/23 was £45.5m.

In a supplementary question Councillor Ball asked if it was possible to be provided with a full list of monies spent outside of the town centre for areas of Thurcroft, Maltby, Dinnington and Swinton and if possible, to report on 2 potholes on the A631 (one outside the Hellaby Depot and one at the bottom of Addison Road) and hoped they would soon be repaired.

The Leader confirmed he was sure it would be possible to provide Councillor Ball with a list of projects and would look to see if there was first a sensible way of dividing those up rather than providing a full list.

(10) Councillor C. Carter asked could the Cabinet Member confirm which at library sites in the Borough the Council does not employ any staff?

Councillor Sheppard confirmed there were 15 libraries across the Rotherham Borough and the Council employed staff across at 14 of these sites, with the exception being Brinsworth Library.

The library at Brinsworth was community managed through Brinsworth Parish Council with support from the Council. Whilst the Council did not employ staff at this site it continued to provide support services including the supply and maintenance of stock, transporting of books/stock, access to the Library Management System and the training of volunteers.

The arrangement was reached by a voluntary agreement with Brinsworth Parish Council and saw the Council making an investment of more than a quarter of a million pounds into the building and facilities, helping to ensure the library was on a sustainable long-term footing.

In a supplementary question Councillor C. Carter asked if the Cabinet Member believed residents of Brinsworth were getting a bad deal in that they were being taxed twice for their Library Services, once through their Council Tax and once in their Parish precept in comparison to other areas of the Borough.

Councillor Sheppard did not think residents were getting bad value. Investment had gone into Brinsworth Library with £124,800 of Section 106 money being used to build the new library and using capital funding of £148,401 for additional capital works and fitting it out.

The Council had invested heavily in Brinsworth the Cabinet Member hoped the residents of Brinsworth really appreciated that facility and continued to go along and enjoy each day.

(11) Councillor Tarmey asked was the Council aware that the electric vehicle chargers in Wellgate (multi-storey) car park were not functional. This did not bode well for the electric vehicle charging initiative so asked when would these chargers be working again?

Councillor Beck explained there were 5 electrical vehicle chargers in Wellgate Car Park (each with two sockets), and 3 were out of the 5 were functional. At present this had been adequate capacity for those needing to charge.

The Council was aware of the issue which had been identified by the maintenance partner. The issue was caused by low voltage on one of the electrical supply phases which had been reported to Northern Powergrid who attended on 4th April, and the maintenance partner was scheduled for a follow-up visit tomorrow. Unfortunately, grid supply issues were somewhat out of our hands.

In a supplementary question Councillor Tarmey had been advised by a local resident who had reported the problem to himself. Councillor Tarmey had visited to check, and it seemed to be a problem with actually getting the app to log in. It was tried on a couple of the chargers. He, therefore, asked who would be the best person for the resident to contact if they require support in how to operate the devices.

Councillor Beck confirmed if residents contacted Councillor Tarmey if he then contacted Councillor Beck the situation would be resolved.

(12) Councillor C. Carter asked did the Cabinet Member agree with her that public buses taking children to and from school should be required to collect students directly outside school premises, as opposed the collecting them from the nearest public bus stop, which could be some walk away?

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Councillor Beck confirmed he did not agree, and that South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority did not site bus stops directly outside schools. This was to remove any potential conflicts with School Keep Clear markings and other school transport, traffic, and pedestrians, in order to ensure the safety of all road users.

In a supplementary question Councillor C. Carter made reference to Bonet Lane where there were large volumes of Brinsworth Academy students waiting at one particular bus stop. This was causing issues for residents and anti-social behaviour in the area so asked could the Cabinet Member support to have the bus re-routed at school time to pull outside Brinsworth Academy's lay-by as opposed to at this bus stop.

Councillor Beck confirmed he would be happy to look into this issue and would raise it with the Transport Authority, which was SYMCA on this who may well have a view as the operators. If this was a safety issue and there was something within the rules that was possible, then the Cabinet Member was happy to look to see what could be done to improve that situation and work with Councillor C. Carter on this.

180. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items for consideration.