



# CABINET

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**Monday 21 November 2022**

**10.00 a.m.**

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

**Cabinet Members:-**

Leader of the Council  
Deputy Leader of the Council,  
Neighbourhood Working Portfolio  
Adult Social Care and Health Portfolio  
Children and Young People Portfolio  
Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance Portfolio  
Housing Portfolio  
Jobs and the Local Economy Portfolio  
Social Inclusion Portfolio  
Transport and Environment Portfolio

Councillor Chris Read  
Councillor Sarah Allen

Councillor David Roche  
Councillor Victoria Cusworth  
Councillor Saghir Alam  
Councillor Amy Brookes  
Councillor Denise Lelliott  
Councillor Dave Sheppard  
Councillor Dominic Beck

**Rotherham**  
Metropolitan  
Borough Council 

## **CABINET**

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

**Date and Time:** Monday 21 November 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

**Agenda Contact** Governance Unit – [governance@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:governance@rotherham.gov.uk)

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

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

## **A G E N D A**

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

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

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

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

### **3. Questions from Members of the Public**

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

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

Councillors may also ask questions under this agenda item.

### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 23)**

To receive the record of proceedings of the Cabinet meeting held on 17 October 2022.

## **5. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There are no exempt items.

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **6. Proposal to close Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) - following the transfer of pupils to Elements Academy (Pages 25 - 41)**

Report from the Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Services.

Recommendations:

1. That approval be granted to commence a period of pre-statutory consultation on proposals to close Rowan Centre PRU.
2. That a further report be brought to Cabinet following pre-statutory consultation, outlining the outcome of the consultation, and seeking approval to enter into a period of statutory consultation.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND FINANCE**

### **7. September 2022/23 Financial Monitoring Report (Pages 43 - 70)**

Report from the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast overspend of £18.2m.
2. Note that actions will continue to be taken to reduce the overspend position but that it is likely that the Council will need to draw on its reserves to balance the 2022/23 financial position.
3. Note the updated Capital Programme.
4. Approve the proposed use of the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund.
5. Approve the proposed use of the Homelessness Rough Sleepers Initiative Grant.

**8. Medium Term Financial Strategy (Pages 71 - 86)**

Report from the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

1. That the MTFS update be noted.
2. That Cabinet note the requirement to use reserves in order to balance the Council's outturn position for 2022/23.

**9. New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited (Pages 87 - 100)**

Report from the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2022/23 financial year.

**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**10. Corporate Safeguarding Protocol (Pages 101 - 126)**

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet approve the updated Corporate Safeguarding Protocol.
2. To note the outcome of 'Good' from the recent Ofsted Inspection of Children and Young People Services.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING**

**11. Refresh of Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025) (Pages 127 - 154)**

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet approve the refreshed Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025).
2. That Cabinet agree that the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy Delivery Plan and Full Equality Analysis are developed by April 2023 and presented to the Improving Places Select Commission in Spring 2023.



**12. Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

To receive a report detailing the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in respect of the above items that were subject to pre-decision scrutiny on 16 November 2022.

**13. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Monday 19 December 2022 commencing at 10.00am in Rotherham Town Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**SHARON KEMP,**  
Chief Executive.

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THE CABINET - 17/10/22

**THE CABINET**  
**Monday 17 October 2022**

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

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors .

**50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**51. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

(1) Mr. Dickson explained that he was the Chair of the Dinnington Community Land Trust and that Dinnington had been the first area in the Borough to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan had been agreed by referendum and incorporated in Rotherham's Local Development Plan. The main thrust of the Neighbourhood Plan was focussed on the health and wellbeing of the community, and it identified interventions that were necessary to reverse the downwards trend in that particular area. The Land Trust was a community interest company that was formed 2 years ago to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan was delivered in a timely manner. The data and analysis from the Trust had been provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Head of Public Health to update the Strategy that was currently being refreshed. There had been several productive meetings to that effect. What Cabinet may not have been aware of was the progress that was being made in relation to social and affordable housing and sports and community facilities for the local community as an enabler to the health and wellbeing improvement sorely needed in Dinnington. Locally owned land was being utilised alongside the development of alliances with local sports groups to develop those facilities.

In his question to Councillor Roche, Mr. Dickson asked if he agreed that the work of the community in Dinnington to create affordable houses plus the creation of local sports and community facilities for its residents was a proactive way for the local community to try and improve its own health and wellbeing?

Councillor Roche stated that he had met with Mr. Dickson and the Director of Public Health several times. The best way forward was to continue those discussions and Councillor Roche confirmed that the Trust would be invited to the Health and Wellbeing Board to look at the information in more detail. Councillor Roche fully agreed that housing conditions were a key factor in Public Health as evidenced by cholera

in the Victorian times. Housing was a key factor in peoples' mental and physical health and as such, it was an aim of the Health and Wellbeing Board to work with the Housing Directorate to make sure houses were fit for purpose. In terms of health inequalities, Councillor Roche confirmed that this, alongside promoting physical activity, was one of the key aims of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Councillor Roche stated that he supported the Trust with their activities in that area but could not comment on specific schemes unless they were brought directly to him.

The Director of Public Health stated that housing and physical activity were all key parts of determinants of health. The Public Health Team were currently working with communities to support and build opportunities within those communities, so they were very supportive of the work being done in Dinnington. He was, therefore, keen to keep those conversations going and hear about the work being done by the Trust.

In his supplementary, Mr. Dickson asked all Cabinet Members if they agreed that every Directorate should be asked to support, wherever practicable, the initiative of Dinnington in their efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents?

The Leader responded on behalf of Cabinet and stated that wherever it was possible and practicable to do so, the Council would aim to offer its support as suggested by Mr. Dickson.

- (2) Councillor Ball stated that he had a question about the fires at Kiveton. He had written to the Chief Executive, the Assistant Director of Community Safety and Street Scene and had copied the Leader in. The email was an open invitation to the Cabinet Members to go and visit Kiveton fire site. This had come directly from the Chief of the Fire Service. Councillor Ball stated that "we" had to get in there due to the fire being in its current state for 6 months. The Council could supply some plant which would help the health of the residents of Kiveton and the surrounding area because of the smoke. It needed a concerted effort between the Environment Agency, the Council and the Fire Service along with anyone else. Could this be done?

The Leader explained that he had visited the Kiveton area, not the site, very recently and had experienced the acrid smell that residents were having to put up with for a prolonged period of time. The Council wanted to do everything it could along with its partners in order to tackle that.

The Chief Executive explained that the Local Resilience Forum, which was chaired by the Council and attended by the Environment Agency and Fire Service, were working on the matter. The Fire Service was on site and had primacy to control the fire. The Environment Agency had primacy over the site in terms of working with the Fire Service and

looking at the activity that was needed to bring the fire under control and to prevent it from happening again. The Council was in constant contact with the Environment Agency and Fire Service to both support and appropriately challenge. A further meeting was scheduled for the week of Cabinet to discuss the further actions that were taking place. The Environment Agency was looking at what further actions in terms of plant and equipment were needed.

Councillor Beck explained that progress had been made this far, with the measures that were in place and being undertaken by the Fire Service and Environmental Agency because of the Council's intervention. The fire, in its current form, had been smouldering for about 6 weeks and before that as well in a separate event. If it was not for those Local Resilience Forums meetings which the Council had chaired and got the relevant people around the table for, there would not be the actions that were currently being undertaken by the Environment Agency. It must be remembered that it was the Environment Agency who had the statutory responsibility to take the principal lead in resolving the massive issue that was ongoing down there. The Council would use their powers as much as possible to ensure that the fire was put out as soon as possible because of the implications on public health for the people in Kiveton and surrounding areas. Once the fire was out, which hopefully would be as soon as possible, there needed to be a long-term solution from the Environment Agency to get rid of the waste. The waste was historic, and the Council would work with the Environment Agency to ensure they acted upon their statutory duties in this regard.

In his supplementary, Councillor Ball explained the scale of the fire and stated that there were 200,000 tonnes of rubbish that needed moving. The problem was that the Environment Agency had put plant in there, but it was not enough. The Council needed to help the residents now by supplying plant. There was no space on site to move the rubbish, douse it and dispose of it. The current process of taking out small bits to try and break the fire was not working. This was about the health of the residents of Kiveton, and the surrounding areas and it needed an intervention now. There was also concern potential strike action that could exacerbate the issue. Councillor Ball asked for Cabinet Members to have a site visit to see what could be done to help for the health of the residents.

The Leader stated that he understood the point been made and would take it away to assess what further work could be done by the Council and its partners.

- (3) Councillor Ball stated that some years ago there was a working party related to modular housing. Was there an update on this? Was it still active? Was the Council still looking at it?

Councillor Brookes explained that the working party on modular

housing had not continued. A lot of information on modular housing had been requested during the development of the Housing Strategy and this information gave an unclear picture on the cost/benefit analysis of modular homes to achieve the type of eco-efficiencies that were wanted. It was currently thought that design interventions were more appropriate for what the Council was trying to achieve.

**52. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet held on 20th September, 2022, be approved as a true and correct of the proceedings.

**53. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chair advised that appendices to Minute Nos. 58, 60 and 62 contained exempt information, however, the meeting remained open to the public and press throughout.

**54. PROPOSALS REGARDING DAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH HIGH SUPPORT NEEDS**

Consideration was given to the report which sought to update on the outcome of the 90-day consultation exercise which established the views and needs of users of the current Learning Disability Day Service, their families and carers regarding the future service offer for people with high support needs. The report also sought approval for the proposals regarding a new service offer which included building at Warden Street in Canklow, complemented by community outreach.

A consultation exercise had been carried out in 2017 regarding the Transformation of Services and Support for People with a Learning Disability. Included within the transformation programme was the replacement of the existing High Support Day Service provision with a new service offering modern accessible day opportunities with multi-functional fit for purpose facilities, promoting independence, wellbeing and social inclusion. The current Service comprised 2 buildings: Maple Avenue at Maltby which was Council-owned and the Elliott Centre at Herringthorpe which was located on a large NHS-owned site and was leased.

There were issues with both current sites. Maple Avenue was a previous Children's Residential Home property over 2 floors that did not meet accessibility requirements. The building also limited the service that could be offered. The Elliott Centre lease was high risk for the Council and service users due to a lack of security of tenure. This was due to the 3 year term and "no-fault" 9 month break for both parties which could mean notice being served and alternative temporary accommodation needing to be found. The NHS was selling land on the same site for re-development

which left the site at risk of being a building site along with concerns over access and safety. There were also concerns over equipment, such as the heating system, coming to the end of its life.

It was intended that the current services based at Maltby and Herringthorpe would continue until the new Service was open and people could be moved across. The new Service would be available to all current day services customers, with the expectation of becoming operational on a phased approach by Winter 2024/25.

Details on the consultation process were set out in section 1.2 and 1.3 of the report with full consultee responses being included as Appendix 1. The Service Options Appraisal was attached as Appendix 2 and outlined the options for delivery of a new service. The Site Options Appraisal, attached as Appendix 3, detailed the outcome of findings and site visits by the Council's Asset Management Team. Following the consultation there had been a 50/50 split on whether users wanted one large building centrally located or 2 smaller buildings in different areas. The Site Options Appraisal, therefore, looked at the comments and opinions from the consultation; the availability, location and suitability of sites; best value and investment of the £2.1m to secure the highest quality facilities and service; and delivery of the best possible outcomes. A total of 29 potential sites had been identified. The proposal also took account of the service offer that was to be in place at the new facility.

The preferred option as set out in section 3.3 of the report was that the Service would operate from one large new build centrally located building, complimenting the community outreach support across the Borough to support local communities. The current Elliot Centre and Maple Avenue would be decommissioned and a new site developed at Warden Street, Canklow.

The Service Offer was specifically discussed during the meeting. It was confirmed, as per section 1.10 of the report, that any Service Offers currently delivered would continue under the new model. The new Service would be multi-functional within the heart of the community and welcome support and involvement from local businesses, community groups and voluntary sector organisations. The offer would focus on community connectivity and would support people with complex support needs delivered in a person-centred manner. This would be alongside a hub for wider community activity, learning and skill development.

This report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process. The Board fully supported the recommendations but asked that consideration be given to ensuring that any consultation undertaken on Service design was inclusive and took account of the differing needs of current and prospective service users/groups across the range of protected characteristics. They also requested that further consideration be given to mitigating the potential carbon impact of disposal/demolition of Council

assets related to the scheme.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet acknowledge the outcome of the 90 day consultation exercise which established the views and needs of users of the current Learning Disability Day Service, their families, and carers and younger people preparing for adulthood, regarding the future Service offer for people with high support needs.
2. That Cabinet agree the recommended proposals for a new Service offer, as detailed in sections 1 and 3 of the report, including a new building at Warden Street in Canklow, complemented by community outreach.

**55. COMMISSIONING MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY FOCUSSED COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined proposals for a Flexible Purchasing System for a new care and support model for Mental Health recovery focussed Community Services. Mental Health Care and Support Services were necessary to meet the Council's statutory requirements. A review of current care and support provision indicated the need to improve the Community Service model to one which offered mental health recovery support, personalised social care with increased choice and control for people living with mental ill-health.

The new model had been co-produced in partnership with people accessing Services and their supporting professionals to inform service design. The aim of the Service was to support people to achieve independent living skills and move towards and sustain independent living in the communities in which they live. This was in line with the guiding principles of the mental health recovery framework for people who were deemed eligible for support under the Care Act 2014. This model promoted the identification of the strengths of individuals and offered them support to build the resilience necessary to enable them to regain control over their lives after experiencing a serious mental illness.

A Flexible Purchasing System would increase choice and improve outcomes for people in Rotherham. It would comprise a number of separate lots and each lot would specify a community service with the principle of mental health recovery at its core. This included supported living, day opportunities and preventative services.

The recommendations in the report were likely to complement Government's proposal to reform the Mental Health Act 1983 and modernise mental health care to ensure that patients were involved more closely in decisions about their care and treatment. The types of services required were set out in section 1.7 of the report.



The options considered were set out in section 3 of the report. The options of a market-led approach and the development of in-house provisions were not recommended. The Flexible Purchasing System model had been recommended for approval because it would allow the Council to procure a range of Community Services which reflect the principles of the Mental Health Recovery Framework to develop specialist provision in the Rotherham market. The range of services would be high quality and would have the required capacity and capability at competitive market prices. It was proposed that the Flexible Procurement System was advertised with an indicative 5 year duration, and the model would continue beyond this period if it remained fit for purpose. Organisations would be able to apply to join the FPS for as long as the model remained advertised.

**Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet approve a procurement process to establish a Flexible Purchasing System (FPS) and procure a range of Community Services which reflect the principles of mental health recovery model and at its conclusion successful bidders are appointed by the Strategic Director Adult Care, Housing and Public Health for a period of 5 years.

**56. HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT PATHWAY - PROPOSAL FOR FUTURE COMMISSIONING**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the recommendations for the future of Housing Related Support Services. These were non-statutory services that supported people experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless to live independently in the community. It was designed to complement the Council's offer to alleviate and prevent homelessness.

The proposals were a change to the current model, moving away from a set number of services for people with defined needs to one where resources could be more quickly accessed to meet needs, especially around complexity and where Service capacity could be better utilised.

There would be an agreed overarching Service specification, co-designed with the market. The premise of this would be that all commissioned services would have the ability to support anyone at risk of homelessness irrespective of compounding or complex issues, in a person-centred way. This would be used to procure a group of experienced and skilled service providers that were able to provide support and accommodation either on a block basis of multiple units or as individual packages of support. The system would allow for changes in need and demand, allowing the Council to access quality places. It will also allow quick access to the market, in the form of good quality and contractually compliant providers to maximise future short-term grant funding opportunities.

Details of the preferred option were set out in paragraph 3.1 to 3.10 of the

report. A Flexible Purchasing System would be used to procure a group of providers and would give the Council the greatest chance of maximising opportunities through additional and unforeseen funding. It would also allow for providers to opt in for different levels and types of support in relation to short-term emergency accommodation-based support; accommodation-based support; and floating support (resettlement or prevention.)

**Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet approve the remodelling of existing Adult Housing Related Support Services to create one single pathway which will support a 'no wrong door' approach into Services.
2. That Cabinet approve the procurement of the pathway using a 5 years Flexible Purchasing System which will be reviewed to ensure it remains fits for purpose and a progress report prepared for Cabinet.

**57. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY 2023 - 2028**

Consideration was given to the report which explained that the current Looked After Children's (LAC) Strategy had been agreed in June 2019 and was due to end in December 2022. As such, a new Strategy needed to be in place for January 2023. The Duty of 'sufficiency' required Local Authorities (LA) to ensure that there was a range of sufficient and appropriate placements that met the needs of children and young people that were looked after by the LA. There was also a responsibility to take steps to develop and shape service provision to meet the needs of all children and young people in care at a local level, as far as was reasonably possible. The Looked After Children and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2028 had been developed in line with the duty to provide or procure placements for Looked After Children by the Local Authority.

The Strategy identified the principles that were applied when commissioning the provision of secure, safe and appropriate accommodation and support to children in care and care leavers over the next 3 years. It provided the needs analysis that informed market management work, seeking to ensure that there was the right mix of provision available to meet the needs of children and young people and that this provision mix provided positive outcomes and value for money. Whilst the Strategy was not primarily a financial one, it was expected that the commissioning and strategic intentions set out would provide significant cost avoidance and savings opportunities and which were essential to the sustainability of improved outcomes and the LA budget.

The 2023-2028 Strategy was attached to the report as Appendix 1. It was confirmed that monitoring and oversight of progress against the delivery plan and an annual review of the aspirations would be undertaken by the

Corporate Parenting Board.

**Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet approve the new Strategy.
2. That Cabinet approve that the monitoring and oversight of progress against the delivery plan, and annual review of the aspirations, be undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Board.

**58. OPERATIONAL DELIVERY OF LAC SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY - NEW RESIDENTIAL PROVISION PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given the report which provided an update on the in-house children's residential development that had been agreed by Cabinet on 17th February, 2020. A number of updates had previously been reported to Cabinet. The children's residential development responded directly to Rotherham Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) strategic intention to reduce the number of external residential placements for children and ensure more Rotherham Looked After Children (LAC) and young people were placed within the Borough, close to their family and community networks.

Updates on Phase one to three were provided in the report. Three new children's homes and one emergency home had been purchased or acquired; 4 managers and 44 staff members had been recruited; 3 homes had been rated as "Good" by Ofsted and 8 beds had been utilised by 9 children since the settings opened. A further 2 children and young people had been supported to "set down" from residential care into foster care settings.

There were also proposals to change the children's residential development plan across those phases to address demand and feedback from Ofsted. A one bed emergency accommodation children's home with flexible Statement of Purpose would be provided. It was proposed that instead of 2 x 4-bed homes, 4 x 2 bed-homes would be purchased. It was also proposed that a further report be brought back to Cabinet detailing a potential 2 x 2-bed home purchase (subject to Department for Education funding.) A decision on that funding was due in mid-October 2022.

The new provision, along with foster care, third party placements, semi-independent provisions, and other family-based placements, would provide a mixed economy of arrangements which would seek to effectively meet Rotherham's statutory duties, outlined in the Sufficiency Strategy 2019-2022.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the following changes to the children's residential development plan across phases one to three:
  - a) Register one bed emergency accommodation children's home with flexible Statement of Purpose (SOP) to meet a variety of current and future sufficiency need.
  - b) Change phase three from 2 x 4-bed homes to 4 x 2-bed homes to better meet current demand, improve occupancy rate and cost efficiency
2. Agree to receive a further report regarding a potential fourth phase of the children's residential development which incorporates:
  - c) A potential further 2 x 2-bed homes (Subject to Open Children's Homes DfE funding bid – Decision due Mid-October 22)
3. Approve that the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport be authorised to negotiate the remaining acquisitions required and complete necessary transactions, in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer, Strategic Director Children's and Young Peoples Services, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, and the Assistant Director of Legal Services.

**59. ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY SUFFICIENCY (SEND) PHASE 4**

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval to move forward with Phase 4 of the Rotherham Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) programme of activity. From 2018 onwards, Cabinet had approved 3 previous phases of SEND Sufficiency, each targeted at addressing incremental rises in SEND cohorts and creating or improving specialist education provision. This was in order to make Rotherham best placed to have education provision within the Borough that met the needs of all children, young people and young adults with identified SEND needs.

Phase one had concentrated on increasing special schools places; phase two focussed on the need for more targeted provision for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and phase 3 created specialist provision for children and young people with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs through the Elements Academy which opened in September 2022. Rotherham had also entered into a Safety Valve Agreement with the Department for Education.

The focus of phase 4 was to work closely with schools within the Borough

and the DfE to create 10 additional SEND resource bases within mainstream education settings which would create a minimum of 100 additional SEND places over the next 3 academic years. The proposed breakdown of these places was set out in paragraph 1.7 of the report.

The second proposed aspect of Phase 4 was to support School Access Issues (both in mainstream schools and Special Schools) by creating 2 funding streams which would be accessible through application and assessment for schools to request capital investment to support the schools to meet a higher threshold of SEND need. This would be through adaptation to existing buildings and would allow a wider level of complexity of need to be met within individual settings. The total fund would be £3 million across 4 years. The rollout of the schemes was expected from Easter 2023 onwards.

**Resolved:**

1. That approval be granted for the proposal to create 10 additional SEND resource bases in mainstream education and thus create a minimum of 100 additional SEND places across this phase of SEND sufficiency.
2. That approval be granted for the proposal to enhance both mainstream and specialist SEND accessibility, through targeted investment in schools to enhance their ability to meet a wider level of SEND needs within their individual education settings.
3. That the 2022/23 High Needs Capital Allocation be used to fund these proposals in line with Safety Valve Capital Application submitted to the DfE.

**60. FOSTERING FEES AND ALLOWANCES 2022**

Consideration was given to the report which sought to improve the care experience for children in Rotherham by ensuring that, wherever possible, they were looked after in a foster family environment. This meant children could be cared for and stay connected closer to their families, schools, communities, and services that know them best. In the spirit of this ambition, to retain existing foster carers and recruit new ones, the Council's Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) was seeking approval to revise and increase its 'offer' for foster carers regarding the fees and allowances that they received.

In order to make the Council more competitive in the foster carer market and encourage foster carers to join, stay and offer more children a family home, benchmarking activity had been completed. The Council's digital marketing was provided by an independent marketing agency who regularly analysed the market. This benchmarking activity, described in full in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, highlighted that when compared to an Independent Fostering Agency or other local authorities, the Rotherham's

offer was less competitive in relation to payments linked to mileage, third and subsequent placements and enhanced fees when supporting complex young people.

Currently, the Council's skills payment was paid at 100% for the first and second placement then at 50% for third and subsequent payments. Benchmarking identified a range between £50 and £102.10 for skill level 1 and 2, between £86.71 and £277.76 for skill level 3 and between £112.21 and £468.48 for skill level 4. The feedback from foster carers identified 3 existing fostering families who would consider extending their approval if the full skills payment was offered for a third child. Appendix 5 detailed analysis of foster carer allowances and explained how the skills payments were allocated and included regional benchmarking associated with skills payments and feedback from foster carers.

The proposed uplift position was to pay 100% of the skills payment for the third plus child. This would be £100.00 at level 1, £125.00 at level 2, £175.00 at level 3 and £360.00 at level 4. Currently 8 children were placed as a third or fourth in-house fostering placement. Implementing this proposal would increase the cost of these placements by circa £87.50 per week per child. For the 8 children this equated to £36.4k per annum.

3 additional carers had been identified to date, who would be willing to take an additional child subject to the new payment offer. Against a standard IFA placement this would save £81k per annum for 3 placements.

It was also proposed that the foster carers' mileage rate be increased from 40p per mile to 45p per mile. This was in line with the rate received by Council employees. The rate for day care would also increase with the rate depending on the age of the child as per paragraph 2.5 of the report. A Complex Care Payment and Enhanced Payment would also be introduced.

This report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process. The Board fully supported the recommendations but asked that an annual review of the achievements of the Fostering Service be undertaken, including a report on the impact and outcomes of the changes to fostering fees and allowances.

### **Resolved:**

That approval be given to make the following changes to improve the financial offer for Foster Carers to support retention and recruitment of Foster Carers:

1. To change the service model to provide a financial package for foster carers based on the needs of the child/young person as well as the skills of the foster carer.

2. To make the following changes to the fees and allowances that foster carers receive:
  - a) 100% of skills payment to be paid for all children placed
  - b) Increase to foster carer mileage rate from 40p per mile to align to employee rates, currently 45 pence per mile
  - c) Agreement to the revised Day Care payment
  - d) Uplift of the skills payments aligned to the annual inflationary uplift in the national fostering maintenance allowance
  - e) Agreement to the complex care payment allowance e.g., for Step down to Foster Care and Emergency Foster Care for Teenagers in crisis
  - f) Agreement to the Enhanced payment allowance e.g., Children with complex behaviour and/ or health needs
3. That an annual review of the achievements of the Fostering Service be undertaken, including a report on the impact and outcomes of the changes to fostering fees and allowances.

#### **61. ROTHERHAM LOCAL HERITAGE LIST**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the proposed process for local heritage listing. Local heritage lists identified locally valued heritage assets, nominated mainly by members of the public and local interest groups. Such a list included heritage assets that were not nationally designated (for example, not listed buildings or scheduled monuments) but had local value and/or heritage interest. The Council did not currently have a process in place for establishing and maintaining a local heritage list. As such, local heritage listing was recommended to help identify heritage assets that would warrant consideration in the planning process.

South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS), as a joint service for the whole of South Yorkshire, had been awarded Government funding to lead on the establishment of a local heritage list for Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. In discussion with officers from the 4 authorities, and using guidance produced by Historic England, SYAS had proposed a local heritage listing process to be followed by each Authority. The process would ensure that nominations received were appropriately assessed prior to inclusion onto the local heritage list. The outcome would give greater weight to the protection of locally valued heritage assets when making planning decisions. The process would include delegation to the Head of Planning and Building Control to allow for efficient and timely changes to the list.

The suggested process was set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report and the assessment criteria was contained in Appendix 1.

**Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet note the production of a local heritage list for the whole of South Yorkshire in general and Rotherham in particular.
2. That, in order to compile the full Rotherham Local Heritage List, Cabinet approve the proposed process for local listing as set out in the report.
3. That Cabinet approve delegation to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, to include, amend or delete heritage assets on the Rotherham Local Heritage List.

**62. FORGE ISLAND FINAL DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS**

Consideration was given to the report which set out a recommended delivery approach to allow the Forge Island Scheme to progress to the construction phase. The approach involved the Council acting as funder for the scheme and contracting with Muse Development Limited to facilitate delivery.

Very recent volatility of the financial markets and the challenge this posed to private funders providing up-front capital within the requirements previously agreed by the Council, had resulted in Muse (in line with the Development Agreement for Lease) re-assessing delivery arrangements and proposing options for the Council to consider, including the Council acting as funder of the whole or part of the development. Consideration of this option was urgent as a result of ongoing and rapidly changing upheaval in the financial markets which was reducing both the availability and the attractiveness of private funding as a route to deliver the scheme. This was combined with time pressures that were created through the commercial agreements with prospective tenants and contract prices.

The matter had been considered by Council on 5th October, 2022, and Council had agreed to give Cabinet the option to act as funder of the whole development and approve the necessary increase in the Council's Capital Programme to allow for this.

It was noted that, irrespective of the source of upfront Capital funding, it was expected that the cost of repayment of the Capital costs would be met wholly or largely over the long term by revenue generated from commercial activity in the Forge Island development. It was recognised that changing the delivery arrangements for the Scheme to a position where the Council acted as funder would change the nature of the arrangement with Muse. To do so would require the Council and Muse to



enter into a Forward Funding Agreement (otherwise known as a “development funding agreement”) which would create a Public Works Contract. For reasons of transparency, a Voluntary Ex-ante Transparency Notice (VEAT) Notice was issued on 26th September, 2022, putting into the public domain the fact that the Council was considering this option.

Full details of the analysis and financial modelling of all options had been presented to Cabinet in Exempt Appendix 1.

This report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process. The Board fully supported the recommendations.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approves an increase in the Council’s Capital Programme to allow the upfront capital costs of the Forge Island development to be funded by the Council rather than a private investor, in order to provide best value to the taxpayer.
2. Approves the award of the contract for the delivery of the Forge Island Development to Muse Developments Limited.
3. Delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Regeneration of Environment, in consultation with the S151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Local Economy, to enter into the agreements necessary to give effect to the Forge Island Scheme.

**63. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN 2022/23**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the updated Climate Emergency Action Plan 2022/23 which was attached at Appendix 1. The report also noted the progress towards the Council’s NZ30 and NZ40 targets and noted the progress against the action outlined within the updated Climate Emergency Action Plan. Also included in the report was a summary of the key updates and risk along with an outline of the next steps to be taken. This included the development of a longer term Climate Emergency Action Plan for 2023/24.

A progress summary was included at paragraph 2.13 of the report and included the following:

- Successful recruitment of the Climate Change Delivery Team.
- Improved utilisation of climate related data – this will further the understanding of carbon emission reductions and inform future actions taken to reach the NZ30 and NZ40 targets.
- Successful negotiation of a change to the BDR contract that incentivises the contractor to divert more from landfill. As a result, the

percentage of residual waste sent to landfill has decreased to 0.6%, meaning that 99.4% of waste is now diverted from landfill.

- Initial pilot of Carbon Literacy Training complete, with a view to rolling this out to staff and Elected Members from the end of 2022 and into 2023.
- Additional funding opportunities have been awarded. E.g., £1.5 million from Wave 1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
- Established the housing stock emission baselines of Council-owned homes.

The next steps included the development of a new Climate Emergency Action Plan which would form part of the annual update that would be presented to Cabinet in March 2023. The Climate Change Project Board continued to meet monthly and continued to review and update that Action Plan.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet approve the Climate Emergency Action Plan in Appendix 1.

**64. OUTCOMES FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD RELATING TO THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER'S TAKEOVER CHALLENGE - CLIMATE CHANGE**

On 16th March, 2022, the Children's Commissioner's Takeover was held in Rotherham with climate change as the theme for this year's challenge. Rotherham Youth Cabinet had climate change as one of their key priorities in their manifesto.

Appendix 1 to the report set out the recommendations following the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge and the proposed response for Cabinet to consider. The recommendations developed by the Youth Cabinet focussed on:

- Enhanced action to reduce pollution and single-use plastics.
- Strengthening inclusive engagement with young people on the climate and environment agenda for Rotherham including through the development of an Environmental Awards Scheme for Rotherham Schools.
- Increased provision of carbon literacy training/awareness raising.

The recommendations had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in July 2022 who recommended that they be considered by Cabinet.

**Resolved:**

That the Cabinet response to the Children's Commissioners Takeover Challenge on Climate Change be approved.

**THE CABINET - 17/10/22**

**65. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

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

**66. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved:-**

That the next meeting of the Cabinet be held on Monday, 21st November 2022, commencing at 10.00 a.m. in Rotherham Town Hall.

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 21 November 2022

**Report Title**

Proposal to close Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) – following the transfer of pupils to Elements Academy

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

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Suzanne Joyner, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

**Report Author(s)**

Dean Fenton – Head of Service, Access to Education

[Dean.fenton@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Dean.fenton@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

Elements Academy was established under the Department for Education's (DfE) Free School presumption procedure and opened in September 2022 as a new Academy for pupils with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP's) with a presenting need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). Elements Academy is situated on the old College site at Dinnington.

All pupils who attended the Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) have now transferred to Elements Academy as a special school specialising in supporting the SEMH presenting need of pupils and this has been facilitated by amendments to individual pupils EHCP's.

Teaching, support, and ancillary staff who worked at the Rowan Centre PRU, have also transferred to Elements Academy to ensure a continuity of education and support for pupils. Subsequently Rowan Centre PRU has now been completely vacated.

This report seeks approval to commence statutory processes prescribed by DfE to bring forward proposals to formally close Rowan Centre PRU, following Statutory Guidance for Proposers and Decision makers 2019 – Opening and Closing Maintained Schools.

Should the proposal be approved, at the conclusion of statutory processes, the Local Authority will be in a position to make the site available for other educational purposes in line with DfE requirements.

**Recommendations**

1. That approval be granted to commence a period of pre-statutory consultation on proposals to close Rowan Centre PRU.
2. That a further report be brought to Cabinet following pre-statutory consultation, outlining the outcome of the consultation, and seeking approval to enter into a period of statutory consultation.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 Environmental Impact Assessment

**Background Papers**

DfE guidance to proposers and decision makers 2019 – opening and closing maintained schools.

SEND sufficiency Phase 3 – November 2020 report to Cabinet

SEMH Free School update – September 2022 report to Cabinet

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

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Proposal to close Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) – following the transfer of pupils to Elements Academy**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), Estate Road, Rawmarsh had evolved over time into a provision exclusively for children with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) with a presenting need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).
- 1.2 As all pupils had an EHCP with a presenting need of SEMH, it was necessary to redesignate appropriate specialist provision to meet the needs of the pupils.
- 1.3 Following the Department for Education (DfE) Free School Presumption process, proposals were brought forward by the Local Authority to establish a specialist provision to meet the SEMH presenting needs of pupils who will attend.
- 1.4 A robust Academy Trust sponsor selection process was completed to appoint Ethos Academy Trust as sponsor. The Academy Trust expertise is in the field of SEMH support with a strong education outcome for pupil's track record.
- 1.5 The old Dinnington College site at Doe Quarry Lane, Dinnington was converted into a fit for purpose specialist school to support the presenting needs of pupils in line with the sponsors requirements and subsequently opened in September 2022. The school is known as Elements Academy.
- 1.6 Pupils who attended Rowan Centre PRU were transferred to Elements Academy via the EHCP process. Also teaching, support and ancillary staff were transferred to the new school to ensure continuity for pupils in their new school.
- 1.7 Subsequently, the Rowan Centre site has now been vacated and currently stands empty.
- 1.8 This report brings forward proposals to follow due process as prescribed by the DfE to formally close the Rowan Centre PRU and make the site available for other educational use as required by DfE.

### **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 As the Rowan Centre PRU site is no longer in use following the vacating of pupils, staff and assets to Elements Academy, the building now stands empty.
- 2.2 To use the site for other registered education provision, it is necessary to follow a statutory process to formally close the Rowan Centre as a Local Authority maintained School and make the site available for other educational purposes as required by DfE.
- 2.3 Should proposals to formally close the Rowan Centre be approved following statutory process, the site can be offered to education providers for the use of

education provision where there is an identified need and the proposal be approved by DfE in due course.

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

- 3.1 **Option 1:** Leave the Rowan Centre 'as is'. However, as the site has now been vacated, the building will inevitably fall into disrepair over a period of time.
- 3.2 **Option 2: (Preferred option)** Follow a formal process to formally close the Rowan Centre which if approved will then make the site available for other educational use in due course.
- 3.3 Should the proposal to close the Rowan Centre be approved, expressions of interest for alternative education provision would need to be sought. Any subsequent expression of interest brought forward would need to meet with DfE approval.
- 3.4 To use the site for other purposes than educational use would require the submission of a school land transaction proposal to DfE and would require Secretary of State for Education approval. This could only be pursued if there were no viable alternative education options.

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

- 4.1 The DfE have been consulted in relation to the process to make the site available for other educational needs.
- 4.2 This report seeks approval to enter into a statutory process, which will then follow a pre-statutory and statutory consultation process with a range of stakeholders prescribed by DfE on the proposals brought forward.

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

- 5.1 November 2022 - Report to Cabinet seeking approval to commence a period of pre-statutory consultation on proposals to close the Rowan Centre PRU.

February 2023 - Report to Cabinet outlining the outcome of pre-statutory consultation and seeking approval to proceed to a period of statutory consultation by public notice (representation period).

February / March 2023 - Public notice period - during the representation period, submit formal proposals to DfE being consulted on.

April 2023 - Report to Cabinet outlining the outcome of statutory consultation and seeking determination of the proposals.

April 2023 - Formally notify the Secretary of State for Education of the determination.

- 5.2 It should be noted, that as the Local Authority is the decision maker in relation to this proposal, it must make a decision within a period of two months of the



end of the representation period (public notice). Where a decision is not made within this time frame, the proposal must be referred to the Schools' Adjudicator for a decision.

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

- 6.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.
- 6.2 As the Rowan Centre site has become vacant following the opening of the SEMH School and transfer of Rowan staff and pupils the site costs are being incurred, there will be a Corporate Landlord responsibility until future use of the site can be determined. Asset Management and CYPS colleagues have started a process to gain expressions of interest for the use of Rowan site with an aim to have a clear usage for Rowan site post the formal process to close the school. Indicative timescales would seek to have a new plan in place for the site for Easter 2023, with a school taking on the site from September 2023.
- 6.3 Future use of the Rowan Centre site and associated revenue and capital financial implications cannot be determined at this stage.

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

- 7.1 The Education Act 1996 requires an English local authority to secure (as far as their powers enable them to do so) efficient education in their area (section 13(1); and so far, as is compatible with efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unnecessary expenditure, a local authority must exercise its Education Act powers and duties having regard to the general principle that pupils are educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents (section 9). Consultation to inform the use of the building for other alternative provision goes towards compliance with the section 13 duty; furthermore, consultation assists compliance with the section 9 duty. The Local Authority should ensure compliance with the statutory duties at all times.
- 7.2 In line with the DfE statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers 2019 – opening and closing maintained schools, there is a clear process prescribed. It is vital that this process is followed to minimise the legal risks of challenge.
- 7.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires that local authorities, in exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to:
  - 1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other unlawful conduct under the Act.
  - 2. Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

It is vital that this duty is considered throughout the process and due regard given to all relevant factors to reduce the risk of legal challenge.

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

- 8.1 There are no human resource implications for the Local Authority to consider as the school is resourced to support the cohort of pupils attending. As the site is vacated, there are no staff employed at the Rowan Centre.
- 8.2 At the point of establishing Elements Academy a full Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE) process was completed for all staff transferring from Rowan Centre PRU to Elements Academy.

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

- 9.1 Additional Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) places created within the borough give more children and young people the opportunity to access high quality provision to meet their educational needs and in line with parental wishes. The opening of Elements Academy has created appropriate provision for the pupils who are attending and in line with their presenting needs.

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

- 10.1 Paragraph 7.3 of this report outlines the Equality Act 2010 requirements on public bodies in exercising their functions.
- 10.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (initial screening) was undertaken in relation to the proposal and is Appendix 1 to this report. As the DfE statutory guidance requires stakeholder consultation, this will be used to inform a full equalities impact assessment.
- 10.3 The previous Equalities Impact Assessment aligned to the establishment of Elements Academy and transfer of pupils from Rowan Centre PRU to the new school did not identify any potential for unlawful conduct or disproportionate impact and concludes that all opportunities to advance equality are being addressed. The increase in SEND places on a permanent basis contributes to ensuring sufficient provision for the increasing numbers of children within Rotherham with SEND needs and ensures that appropriate provision is made in accordance with parental preference. By acting to ensure children in Rotherham have access to a high-quality school place, the Council is promoting equality of opportunity for all children and young people.
- 10.4 The Council must ensure it meets its public law duties when making decisions, including meeting its public sector equality duty. It must consider all relevant information, disregard irrelevant information, act in accordance with the statutory requirements and make its decision in a fair and transparent manner.

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

- 11.1 An impact assessment has been undertaken linked to the proposals contained within this report and is attached as Appendix 2.

## 12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The proposals will have a positive implication for Ward priorities across the borough, as more children are able to access specialist provision in line with their presenting needs.
- 12.2 Should the proposal be approved at the end of the statutory process, the vacated Rowan Centre site can be made available for other educational use.

## 13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Following the vacating of the Rowan Centre site, the buildings are now empty and run the risk of falling into disrepair.
- 13.2 To make the site available for other educational use, the Local Authority is required by DfE to follow due statutory process by bringing forward proposals to formally close the Rowan Centre.

## 14. Accountable Officers

Nathan Heath (Assistant Director of Education and Inclusion)  
Dean Fenton (Head of Service - Access to Education)

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	07/11/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	31/10/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	01/11/22

*Report Author:*            *Dean Fenton*  
   *Head of Service – Access to Education*

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

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## PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

### 1. Title

**Title: Proposal to close Rowan Centre PRU**

**Directorate:** CYPS

**Service area:** Education

**Lead person:** Nathan Heath

**Contact number:** 01709 254821

Is this a:

☐

**Strategy / Policy**

☐

**Service / Function**

☒

**Other**

**If other, please specify:**

**Proposal to formally close the Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) following DfE statutory procedure, to then make the site available for other education purposes**

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

Following the opening of Elements Academy, all pupils who attended Rowan Centre PRU have now transferred to the new Academy in line with statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) processes.

Proposals have been brought forward to commence a statutory process following DfE statutory guidance to close the Rowan Centre PRU to make the site available for other education purposes.

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		X
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

If you have answered **no** to **all** the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

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

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

The new Elements Academy is a specialist school for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), with a presenting need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).

Proposals were brought forward in 2020 to establish a new school to meet the specific needs of children with an EHCP with a SEMH presenting need who were attending Pupil Referral Unit provision.

The establishment of Elements Academy created specialist provision to meet the SEMH needs of children and opened in September 2022. All pupils who attended PRU provision with an EHCP with SEMH as the presenting need were transferred to Elements Academy in line with statutory EHCP processes.

This meant that all children attending Rowan Centre PRU transferred to the specialist provision. All pupils and staff have vacated the Rowan site and the site is currently unoccupied.

As the site is no longer required for PRU provision, it is necessary to follow DfE statutory guidance and bring forward proposals for consultation to formally close the PRU. The formal closure of the PRU will then mean that the vacated site can be brought forward for other educational purposes.

Equality and diversity has been considered via a range of forums and stakeholder engagement sessions, wide reaching consultation with a range of stakeholders in relation to proposals to establish the new school and transfer pupils to the appropriate provision to meet their needs. Wide reaching consultation was also undertaken during the appointment of the sponsor process, and post appointment philosophy and ethos of the sponsor, voice of the child, accessibility and whether stakeholders agree to the sponsor entering in to a funding agreement with DfE.

Consultation has also been undertaken with all staff employed at Rowan Centre PRU and trade union representation during a TUPE process, where staff were transferred to the Elements Academy along with pupils.

- **Key findings**

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

Elements Academy is part of an inclusive Trust family of schools that accommodates pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school.

All pupils who attended Rowan Centre PRU were transferred to Elements Academy with effect from September 2022 meaning the Rowan site is now vacated.

To enable the Rowan site to be brought back in to use for education purposes, the LA must first formally close the Rowan Centre following DfE statutory guidance.

As part of the statutory process to formally close the Rowan Centre, further consultation is required with all stakeholders identified in DfE guidance.

- **Actions**

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

Actions highlighted during consultation events to establish Elements Academy and transfer pupils from Rowan Centre PRU have been actioned and a regular communication strategy allowed for any issues arising to be addressed in the lead up to transfer to the new school.

A report to Cabinet seeking approval to commence the statutory process of bringing forward proposals to formally close Rowan Centre PRU is scheduled for November 2022. Should the report be approved, a full equalities assessment will be completed as the views of stakeholders are ascertained during pre statutory consultation and will be kept under review throughout the statutory process.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	November 2022 – March 2023
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	January 2023
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Nathan Heath

## 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Nathan Heath	Assistant Director of Education and Inclusion	13.9.22
Julie Day	Head of SEND	"
Dean Fenton	Head of Access to Education	"
SEND strategic board		"



## 6. Publishing

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

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

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	13.9 2022
<b>Report title and date</b>	Proposal to close Rowan Centre PRU
<b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>	Scheduled for Cabinet for November 2022
<b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	13.9. 2022

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Appendix 2 – Proposal to close Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

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
<b>Emissions from non-domestic buildings?</b>	No change	The proposal brought forward is to close the Centre as a PRU provision to enable the Centre to be used for other educational purposes if approved. Emissions will be reduced presently as the building has been vacated and now stands empty. Emissions will remain at similar levels to current across the borough if the building is repurposed in due course for education provision.	Emissions will reduce presently as the buildings are vacated but will remain at similar levels should the building be repurposed in due course.	Any subsequent adaptations to existing buildings to repurpose the site will be completed to current building code and overseen by asset management service.	The buildings now vacated are in the portfolio of vacated buildings controlled by Asset Management service until such time as the closure proposals are determined. Any subsequent repurposing proposals would be subject to a separate emissions assessment.
<b>Emissions from transport?</b>	N/A	The buildings and site are currently vacated and not in use. Any future proposals to repurpose for educational use would be subject to emissions from transport assessment.	N/A	The buildings and site are currently vacated and not in use. Any future proposals to repurpose for educational use would be subject to emissions from transport assessment.	The buildings now vacated are in the portfolio of vacated buildings controlled by Asset Management service until such time as the closure proposals are determined. Any subsequent repurposing proposals would be subject to monitoring / assessment by Transport Unit.

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
<b>Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?</b>	N/A	The buildings are currently vacated and not in use.	Waste levels across the borough will remain at similar levels to present.	N/A – should the proposal be approved a separate proposal to repurpose the site would involve a new assessment and monitoring.	N/A – should the proposal be approved a separate proposal to repurpose the site would involve a new assessment and monitoring.
<b>Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Emissions from construction and/or development?</b>	N/A	As the site is vacated and the proposal is to formally close it as a PRU provision there are no considerations until repurposing proposals are brought forward.	As the site is vacated and the proposal is to formally close it as a PRU provision there are no considerations until repurposing proposals are brought forward.	As the site is vacated and the proposal is to formally close it as a PRU provision there are no considerations until repurposing proposals are brought forward.	N/A
<b>Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?</b>	No change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:</b>  None					

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

The proposal is to formally close the vacated site. Should the proposal be approved in due course, then separate proposals would be brought forward to repurpose the site for education purposes. Transport implications of school transport arrangements are kept under review by Corporate Transport Unit.

Emissions overall will remain at similar levels.

**Supporting information:**

<b>Completed by:</b> <b>(Name, title, and service area/directorate).</b>	Dean Fenton Head of Access to Education, CYPS
<b>Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].</b>	
<b>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.</b>	
<b>Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]</b>	

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 21 November 2022

**Report Title**

September Financial Monitoring 2022/23

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

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

**Report Author(s)**

Rob Mahon, Assistant Director – Financial Services  
01709 254518 or rob.mahon@rotherham.gov.uk

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The report sets out the financial position as at the end of September 2022 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year, based on actual costs and income for the first six months of 2022/23. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework and is essential to achievement of the objectives within the Council's policy agenda. To that end, this is the third financial monitoring report of a series of monitoring reports for the current financial year which will continue to be brought forward to Cabinet on a regular basis.

As of September 2022, the Council currently estimates an overspend of £18.2m for the financial year 2022/23. Whilst the core directorates services have a forecast year-end overspend of £8.1m on the General Fund, there is £10.1m of estimated unbudgeted cost resulting from the wider financial impact of the war in Ukraine, inflation, energy price increases and the impact of the 2022/23 pay award, costs that the Council could not have projected within its Medium Term Financial Planning. These additional financial challenges have been factored into the current forecast following a review of the impact of these pressures on the current year and Medium-Term Financial Planning.

Whilst the energy price rises and inflation will impact the Council's costs in the provision of services there will be some mitigation in future years by increased core funding as business rates income is indexed to the rate of inflation. This position may change should Government announce changes to the funding of local authorities or if

Government do not provide inflation uplifts in line with the Council's assumptions. Government are expected to provide a Budget announcement on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, after publication of this paper, as such the impact of the announcement could not be factored in.

It is currently expected that the period of high inflation will last for around two years before returning to a more normal level but the cost increase being experienced will raise the base cost of services on which future inflation is applied meaning a compounding impact. Work is underway to understand the impact of the Government's energy support package for Councils on the current financial year.

As such the Council faces significant financial pressures that will need to be managed and mitigated through the Medium Term Financial Strategy and through significant use of the Council's reserves. Whilst there are demands nationally for additional support to the public sector to address these uncontrollable cost increases, it is not currently expected that additional funding will be provided to local authorities as part of the financial settlement for 2023/24, with Government's budget announcement on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022 potentially reducing the availability of funding, either through Government not inflating public sector resources as assumed or through other cuts to public sector funding.

### **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast overspend of £18.2m.
2. Note that actions will continue to be taken to reduce the overspend position but that it is likely that the Council will need to draw on its reserves to balance the 2022/23 financial position.
3. Note the updated Capital Programme.
4. Approve the proposed use of the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund.
5. Approve the proposed use of the Homelessness Rough Sleepers Initiative Grant.

### **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

### **Background Papers**

Budget and Council Tax 2022/23 Report to Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

May Financial Monitoring Report to Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022

July Financial Monitoring Report to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022

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

No



**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

**September Financial Monitoring 2022/23****1. Background**

- 1.1 As part of its performance and control framework the Council is required to produce regular and timely reports for the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet to keep them informed of financial performance so that, where necessary, actions can be agreed and implemented to bring expenditure in line with the approved budget for the financial year.
- 1.2 Delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Capital Programme within the parameters agreed by Council is essential if the Council's objectives are to be achieved. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework.
- 1.3 This report is the third in a series of financial monitoring reports to Cabinet for 2022/23, setting out the projected year end revenue budget financial position in light of actual costs and income for the first six months of the financial year.

**2. Key Issues**

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

**Table 1: Forecast Revenue Outturn 2022/23 as at September 2022**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Budget 2022/23</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn 2022/23</b>	<b>Forecast Variance over/under (-)</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Children and Young People's Services	67.8	72.2	4.4
Adult Care, Housing & Public Health	94.2	95.0	0.8
Regeneration and Environment Services	48.3	51.4	3.1
Finance and Customer Services	19.8	19.7	-0.1
Assistant Chief Executive	7.4	7.3	-0.1
Central Services	22.2	32.3	10.1
<b>Directorate Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>259.7</b>	<b>277.9</b>	<b>18.2</b>
Dedicated Schools Grant			0
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)			-1.8

- 2.2 The Council's overspend position at this point is largely due to the following overall issues:

- Financial implications of the war in Ukraine, inflation, energy price increases and impact of the 2022/23 pay award.
  - Placement pressures within Children and Young People's Services.
  - Home to School Transport pressures within Regeneration and Environment and CYPS.
  - Pressures relating to the longer-term recovery from Covid-19, on income generation within Regeneration and Environment.
- 2.3 As of September 2022, the Council currently estimates an overspend of £18.2m for the financial year 2022/23. Whilst the core directorates services have a forecast year end overspend of £8.1m on the General Fund, there is also £10.1m estimated overspend in relation to the wider financial impact of the war in Ukraine on inflation, energy price increases and national pay award.
- 2.4 These financial challenges are being considered as part of the Council's ongoing Medium Term Financial Planning. Whilst the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy did have reasonable cover for inflationary impacts and estimated pay award at the time of setting the 2022/23 Budget, the current rises are far above what the Council could have anticipated. An update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is provided within the November Cabinet agenda.
- 2.5 Along with most Councils across the UK, the Council assumed a 2% pay award for 2022/23 in the Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23. However, the national local government pay settlement provides staff at the bottom of the pay scale with a 10.4% pay award, whilst it reduces to 1.1% for the top salary point, the bulk of the Council's staff are towards the lower end of the pay scale and so will receive a pay award well in excess of the 2% modelled within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Given recent announcements from Government it is not expected that Council's will be provided with additional funding for 2022/23 or within the financial settlement for 2023/24, in order to support the application of this pay award. The financial impact of this pay award is £6.1m greater than the budget assumed within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 2.6 The energy price rises, and inflation will impact the Council's costs in the provision of services. However, some of this cost impact will be mitigated in future years by increased core funding as business rates income is indexed to the rate of inflation. This position may change should Government announce changes to the funding of local authorities or if Government do not provide inflation uplifts in line with the Council's assumptions. The Bank of England is still expecting that the period of high inflation will last for around two years before returning to a more normal level but the cost increase being experienced will raise the base cost of services on which future inflation is applied meaning a compounding impact. As such, the Council will face significant financial pressures that will need to be managed and mitigated through the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Council's reserves.
- 2.7 The current year forecast position will continue to be monitored closely and mitigations identified to enable a balanced outturn position to be delivered, though it's clear that the Council will need to call on reserves to achieve a balanced outturn position.

- 2.8 There is significant volatility at present in the economy that makes projecting forwards the impact of inflation and energy prices challenging, as such the Council will need to keep focus on assumptions based on these pressures. The Council will need to ensure that mitigating actions are taken to reduce the current directorate forecast outturns, this is underway with finance officers working alongside Directorates to identify opportunities to reduce costs through short term temporary measures. In addition, the Council will need to ensure that savings plans are delivered on time to mitigate any knock-on impact on future years Medium Term Financial Planning.
- 2.9 The following sections provide further information regarding the Council's forecast outturn of £18.2m, the key reasons for forecast under or overspends within directorates and the progress of savings delivery.
- 2.10 The Council is able to report further secured delivery of planned savings for 2022/23. The table below provides an update on the £11.5m of planned savings to be delivered over the medium term. £4.2m, over a third of planned savings have been delivered already within 2022/23. This includes £971k for Early Help & Social Care Pathway (reductions in social care teams linked to reducing caseloads), £2.4m savings from reablement services. For R&E there has been £119k delivery of increased income at Waleswood and £97k in respect of planned cost reductions on operational buildings. Several assets are being made ready for disposal which will help progress toward delivering the property savings although the actual amount secured will be confirmed at the point of disposal.

**Table 2: Planned delivery of £11.5m savings**

<b>Saving</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25 &amp; Total FYE</b>	<b>Still to be delivered 2022/23</b>	<b>Total Secured as at 30th September 2022</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
ACHPH	2,800	2,800	2,800	400	2,400
ACHPH – One off saving	500	0	0	0	500
CYPS	971	4,739	7,411	0	1026
R&E	374	762	784	158	216
R&E Customer & Digital	200	500	500	155	45
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>4,845</b>	<b>8,801</b>	<b>11,495</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>4,187</b>

### **Children and Young People Services Directorate (£4.4m) forecast overspend**

- 2.11 Children & Young People Services continue to implement the budget recovery plan with budget savings of £1.026m already delivered.
- 2.12 The budget pressure at the end of September 2022 is £4.4m, an increase of £0.1m on the July reported position. The main pressures relate to placements (£3.4m), Children in Care & Post 19 Transport (£1.0m) and staffing (£293k), offset by Supporting Families income (£300k).
- 2.13 The Looked After Children numbers have reduced from July 2022 by 12 from 555 to 543. This is below the original budget profile (554) for this period by 11 placements. However, the placement mix is showing higher than projected placements in external residential (2), Independent Fostering Agency (34), Leaving Care (17) offset by in-house fostering (54) and no cost placements (10).
- 2.14 The direct employee budget is £37.7m and is a combination of general fund, traded and grant funded services. The projected underspend at the end of September is £367k (after excluding placements staffing), which includes a general fund projected overspend of £293k and an overspend of £74k against DSG and traded services.
- 2.15 The general fund projected overspend on staffing of £293k relates to pressures in Children's Social Care (due to agency workers) and the Education Health Care Team (due to agency workers), offset by staff savings across Early Help, Commissioning & Performance. At the end of September there were 30 agency workers in CYPS, 22 across children's social care and 8 in Education Services.
- 2.16 A significant element of the CYPS non-pay budget relates to placements which has a net budget of £36.9m with a current projected spend of £40.3m, a projected overspend of £3.4m as shown in the following table:

<b>Service Pressure/(-Saving)</b>	<b>£m</b>
External Residential Placements	3.3
Independent Fostering Agency Placements	0.9
Emergency Placements	0.4
In-House residential	-0.3
Leaving Care	-0.6
In-House Fostering	-0.2
Non-LAC allowances	-0.1

- 2.17 The £3.3m residential pressure is due to a combination of the increase in placement costs (£0.4m), a reduction in the estimated residential step downs (£2.3m) as well as a reduction in the contribution from Dedicated Schools Grant due to a reduction in education placements (£0.6m).

### **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

- 2.18 The High Needs Block (HNB) is £51.6m (including the £3.3m transfer from the schools block) and demand remains high due to rising numbers of children supported in specialist provision and the rising costs of Education Health Care (EHC) plans. The High Needs Budget is based on the DSG recovery plan and includes anticipated growth of EHC numbers, and the implementation of new developments linked to the SEND Sufficiency Strategy.
- 2.19 The Council has entered into a Safety Valve agreement with Government to enable the Council to reduce the DSG deficit reserve. The central DSG reserve now stands at £12.8m following receipt of £8.5m Safety Valve funding during 2021/22. The Council will receive two further payments to fully remove the DSG reserve along with additional capital funding to ensure the Council is placed in a more sustainable position moving forwards. The High Needs Block outturn for the year is a forecast overspend of £23k (excluding Safety Valve funding). The pressures reflect demand for special school, resource units, top up funding and ISP's, offset by savings on external residential placements and transport.
- 2.20 The key areas of focus to reduce High Needs Block spend are:
- A review of high cost, external education provision to reduce spend and move children back into Rotherham educational provision.
  - Increase SEN provision in Rotherham linked to mainstream schools and academies, with further capacity becoming operational by the end of 2021/22.
  - Work with schools and academies to maintain pupils in mainstream settings wherever possible.
  - A review of inclusion services provided by the Council

### **Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, (£0.8m) forecast overspend**

- 2.21 The directorate is forecast to overspend by £0.8m. There are significant demand pressures within Adults however, they are currently mitigated by additional income and staff vacancies, giving a balanced position within Adult Care. Housing General Fund however is forecast to overspend by £0.8m.
- 2.22 The cost of adult care packages are forecast to overspend by £1m due to increased levels of demand. However, although there has been increased demand in the number of people within older people's residential and nursing care, there has also been a significant increase in Continuing Health Care contributions towards specific individuals care across several Learning Disability placements £0.8m, some of which have been backdated to previous years. In addition, staffing budgets are forecast to be £0.2m underspent due to vacancies, further mitigating demand pressures and creating a balanced budget position for Adults for the current financial year.
- 2.23 The forecast assumes all current placements remain for the rest of the year although they may reduce. Overall movements in numbers will be closely monitored as the year progresses.

- 2.24 Neighbourhood Services (Housing) is forecast to overspend by £0.8m. The key pressure is on homelessness, which is expected to overspend by £0.9m after accounting for grant income, this is mitigated in part by savings due to staff vacancies that reduce the overall pressure. The use of hotels has been more than forecast with numbers higher than anticipated (though reducing), and prices increasing due to inflation.
- 2.25 Public Health is forecasting a slight underspend at this stage.

**Regeneration and Environment Directorate (£3.1m) forecast overspend**

- 2.26 The projection for the directorate indicates a forecast pressure of £3.1m for this financial year. This represents a small worsening from the forecast pressure of £3.0m in the July monitoring, reported at September Cabinet. The forecast reflects the impact of ongoing demographic pressures in Home to School Transport, the remaining economic impact of the recovery from the lockdown restrictions, and the ongoing cost of living crisis on some of the directorate's services. For example, a continuation of the increases in waste tonnages believed to be resulting from changes in patterns of work life balance, and the impact on income generation, in particular in Parking Services. The forecast outturn projection includes the following specific budget issues.
- 2.27 Community Safety and Street Scene (CSS) is forecasting an overall pressure of £2.0m. The most significant pressure continues to be in respect of Home to School Transport, which has risen to £1.8m from £1.6m, due to ongoing demographic pressures leading to an increase in the number of new eligible passengers and fewer contractors in the market leading to increased prices. The revised forecast reflects the impact of the September pupil intake. Addressing the challenge of the increased costs and demand, a range of solutions are being explored to influence demand and maximise savings opportunities, using improved cost data analysis to support plans to implement lower cost routes. However, this is a pressure that is affecting other local authorities in the region.
- 2.28 Parking Services is continuing to forecast a pressure of £0.4m. The longer-term recovery post pandemic, the ongoing economic impact on town centre footfall and the closure of the Forge Island car park for the cinema development, has led to a reduction in income from parking charges.
- 2.29 Waste Management is now forecasting an overspend of £0.1m, an improvement of £0.2m from the July position. Although household waste tonnages continue to be above trend, the Council is starting to see a reduction in tonnages from the high point during lockdown. In addition, the service is continuing to see an improvement in recycling income, as the market stabilises. Additional income in Streetworks and Enforcement and vacancies in Community Safety and Regulation are helping to mitigate the pressures elsewhere in CSS.
- 2.30 Culture Sport and Tourism (CST) is forecasting an overall pressure of £0.3m. The service is still seeing reduced levels of forecast income compared to pre-pandemic levels at Rother Valley Country Park, Green Spaces, Theatre and the Music Service.

- 2.31 Planning, Regeneration and Transport (PRT) is forecasting an overall pressure of £0.9m, a worsening of £0.2m from the September Cabinet report. The major pressure continues to be in Asset Management, which has risen to £0.9m. The forecast assumes income under recovery in Estates, as staff vacancies have limited the ability to generate income. Pressures in Facilities Management include rising property costs, including repairs and maintenance and fixtures and fittings.
- 2.32 A pressure of £0.1m is being reported in respect of Facilities Services, due to inflationary pressures on food prices in School Meals (basic food, consumables and materials costs could be expected to rise further) and the closure of Riverside House Cafe. A forecast shortfall on Markets income arising from the number of void stalls and the ongoing difficult trading conditions, is being mitigated by grant income offsetting direct costs in other services in RIDO. In addition, a forecast over-recovery of income in Planning and Building Control is helping to mitigate the pressure in PRT.

**Finance and Customer Services (£0.1m forecast underspend)**

- 2.33 The overall directorate is reporting a £0.1m forecast underspend position. Whilst there are some financial pressures within the directorate, the service will continue to make savings on ICT Contracts and Legal disbursements and deliver a small underspend.
- 2.34 Within Customer, Information and Digital Services (CIDS), the service continues to generate cost reductions on the renewal or removal of ICT contracts. The removal of the kiosks across the borough and the promotion of online and over the phone payment routes has generated savings for the service as the cost of cash transportation has reduced (as less cash is needed) and transaction costs reduce as residents move to more efficient payment methods. The service has also incurred difficulties with recruitment, creating further temporary cost reduction.
- 2.35 Legal Services face continued demand for legal support across all disciplines. The reduced costs of CYPs legal disbursements and difficulties in recruiting to key posts are currently resulting in a forecast underspend. To address this demand, there is continued reliance on short-term locum solicitors whilst a permanent recruitment exercise can be completed.

**Assistant Chief Executive £0.1m forecast underspend**

- 2.36 The service is now forecasting an underspend due to delays in recruitment and additional income generation within HR. The HR service is projecting increased income generation from salary sacrifice schemes and external business from partnership arrangements.



### **Central Services (£10.1m) forecast overspend**

- 2.37 There are some significant financial challenges that were not evident at the time of setting the 2022/23 Budget, such as the war in Ukraine and its impact on the significant rise in energy prices, inflation and Local Government Pay Award. It is currently estimated that the impact of inflation and in particular energy price increases will be £4m above available budget. In addition, the Local Government Pay Claim 2022/23 has now been agreed. The settlement includes an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay points from 1st April 2022 and 4.04% on allowances. At the lowest spinal column point that the Council uses, this will be a 10.4% pay rise, reducing down to 1.1% for the most senior role. The financial impact of this pay award is £6.1m greater than the budget assumed within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which assumed a 2% pay award for 2022/23.
- 2.38 These financial challenges are being regularly reviewed as part of the Council's ongoing Medium Term Financial Strategy, with an update to the Council's MTFS provided on this Cabinet agenda. Whilst the Council's outturn position for 2021/22 placed the Council in a stronger position and more able to manage the impact rather than needing to consider making cuts in services, it is clear that the Council will need to utilise reserves to manage these impacts, whilst also looking at short term opportunities to reduce its costs to help balance the budget. The energy price rises, and inflation will impact the Council's costs in the provision of services. However, some of this cost impact will be mitigated in future years by increased core funding, for example business rates income is indexed to the rate of inflation. This position may change should Government announce changes to the funding of local authorities or if Government do not provide inflation uplifts in line with the Council's assumptions.
- 2.39 It is currently expected that the period of high inflation will last for around two years before returning to a more normal level. As such, the Council will face short term financial pressures that will need to be managed and mitigated through the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Council's reserves. The Council currently anticipates that the financial impact of these pressures on the Council's 2022/23 budget will be £10.1m, with a significant pressure over the period of 2023/24 to 2024/25. Though the economic position is very volatile at present requiring this position to be under regular review. The forecast impact is based on assumptions around the potential impact of inflation, energy prices and pay award, areas that are to a large degree outside of the Council's control and influence.
- 2.40 The Central Services budgets are made up of a number of corporate budgets for levies and charges such as the Integrated Transport Levy (ITA), PFI Financing, and Treasury Management. A list of the main budget areas within Central Services was provided as part of the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23, approved at Council 2nd March 2022. The costs within this area are largely fixed costs, set out prior to the start of a financial year, not specific to a particular Directorate and are therefore not controllable by the directorates and thus held centrally. For example, the cost of levies for 2022/23 was set at £11.8m at the outset of 2022/23. These wider Central Services budgets are forecast as balanced budgets.

### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

- 2.41 The Housing Revenue Account is a statutory ring-fenced account that the Council has to maintain in respect of the income and expenditure incurred in relation to its council dwellings and associated assets. The HRA is currently forecast to overspend by £1.8m.
- 2.42 The overspend largely relates to increases in energy costs which has an impact on building running costs as well as the District Heating (DH) scheme. The unit cost charged to DH tenants is fixed whilst wholesale gas and electricity prices are higher than anticipated. The forecast includes under recovery of dwelling rent and garage income.
- 2.43 There is a forecast under-achievement of income of £0.625m which is largely due to lower dwelling numbers than budgeted and higher void loss on garages. Interest income is forecast to over-achieve by £693k due to increased interest rates.
- 2.44 The HRA budget includes a contribution to HRA reserve of £2.037m. The transfer to reserve is forecast at £0.277m to reflect the forecast overspend which will bring the HRA back to a balanced position.

### **Market sustainability and fair cost of care fund 2022 to 2023**

- 2.45 The fund was announced on 16 December 2021. The primary purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to prepare their markets for reform, including the further commencement of Section 18(3) of the Care Act 2014 in October 2023, and to support local authorities to move towards paying providers a fair cost of care.
- 2.46 In total the national fund amounts to £1.36 billion (of the £3.6 billion to deliver the charging reform programme). In 2022 to 2023, £162 million will be allocated. A further £600 million was to be made available in each of 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025.
- 2.47 The government allocated the 2022/23 funds to all eligible Local Authorities to begin to implement the reforms. In 2022/23 the Council has received £908k. Local authorities are expected to use at least 75% of allocated funding in 2022/23 to increase fee rates paid to providers in scope, where necessary, and beyond pressures funded by the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23. Up to 25% of allocated funding can be used to fund implementation activities associated with meeting the fund purpose.
- 2.48 It is proposed that £37k of the fund is used to support additional posts that were recruited to undertake this work and the remainder of the available fund be apportioned (as a one-off payment) between Older People's Care Homes and Home Care providers.

- 2.49 The final value will depend on the number of people and hours of care they receive but it is expected that Older People's Care Homes will receive approximately 35% or £305k and Home Care providers will receive 65% or £566k. Each provider will be paid based on the number of Council funded placements and/or hours of care they provide.

### **Homelessness Rough Sleepers Initiative Grant funding 2022 – 2025**

- 2.50 The government announced allocations in September 2022 for the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) to provide local councils with long-term funding to support those sleeping rough or at risk of rough sleeping.
- 2.51 In total, national funds will provide up to £500 million to be used by local authorities, charities and other organisations in 303 areas across England. The Council will receive a total of £1,250,260 over the 3-year term, 2022 – 2025. The annual allocation of funding is:
- 2022-2023 - £465,981
  - 2023-2024 - £404,640
  - 2024-2025 - £379,640
- 2.52 Local authorities are expected to use the funds for the service provisions that the Council committed to as part of the funding bid process, in February 2022. This allows the Council to maintain and strengthen key services. Unspent funding will need to be returned to Government.
- 2.53 It is proposed that £513,213 of the funding will be used for the procurement of an 8 bed Emergency Accommodation Hub developed by the Council in response to the Rough Sleepers Initiative in 2019.
- 2.54 The breakdown of the total funding and allocation is shown in the table below.

**Table 3: Breakdown of funding allocation**

<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Year 1 (£)</b>	<b>Year 2 (£)</b>	<b>Year 3 (£)</b>	<b>Total (£)</b>	<b>No. of staff 22/23</b>	<b>No. of staff 23/24 - 24/25</b>
Emergency Accommodation Community Hub - Queen Street Hostel	171,078	171,078	171,078	513,234	6	6
Year-round flexible surge Accommodation	16,000	16,000	16,000	48,000	0	0
Rough Sleeper Initiative Team	218,902	182,562	182,562	584,026	6	5
Rough Sleeper Personalised Prevention Fund	20,000	15,000	10,000	45,000	0	0
Supported accommodation provision - SYHA Indigo	40,000	20,000	0	60,000	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>465,981</b>	<b>404,640</b>	<b>379,640</b>	<b>1,250,260</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>

## 2.55 Capital Programme Delivery Updates

This section of the monitoring report focuses on what has been delivered to date during 2023/23. In order to reflect the positive outcomes that the Council has achieved this financial year, the following list of key achievements has been provided.

- Earlier this year the Council completed the Canal Barrier. This is the largest Flood Alleviation Scheme the Council has ever delivered and has been constructed in Rotherham Town Centre to reduce flood risk to the Town centre and the Railway infrastructure including the Central Railway Station. The funding for the delivery of this project was provided by the Council, The Mayoral Combined Authority, Network Rail, The Environment Agency and the Government through the Levelling Up Fund.
- The Council is currently in year 3 of the “£24m to 2024 roads programme”. The percentage of the estate road network that requires repair is 14.85%, down from 24% in 2019. This means Rotherham’s estate roads are now in a better condition than the National Average 18 months ahead of schedule. The road repair programme is delivered in house with Council staff designing the road repairs and carrying out the road resurfacing on site and the team have delivered over 74 miles or 119km of road repairs since 2019.
- In the financial year to-date the Council completed or acquired 44 new homes. This includes 23 direct delivery via the Council’s construction contracts and a further 21 from acquisitions from private developers. The acquisitions are from four new contracts for Fairfields, Beaumont Grange, Laughton Gate and Clarence Street. In total these schemes are expected to deliver 72 new Council homes over a number of years.
- Herringthorpe Stadium capital works have been completed. The refurbishment scheme has seen new floodlights erected, improvements to the internal building by way of sink units, lighting, heating and redecoration. The running track has been upgraded in areas and the throws cage has seen significant investment. All of these improvements place the facility in a good position for April 2023 when UK:Track Mark certification through England Athletics will be considered.
- Working with its development partner Muse, the Council has secured pre-lets on the Forge Island development with a cinema, hotel and five restaurants. The scheme has been designed and tendered and construction works will start at the end of October 2022.
- Good progress is being made with the proposed redevelopment of Centenary Market, which includes a new Central Library, refurbished and modernised Indoor Market and improvements to public realm and accessibility, providing a safer and more welcoming environment for visitors and business alike. The planning application for the site has been prepared and submitted and is currently under consideration by the

Council's planning service. The appointment of a contractor to build the scheme is underway with an announcement expected in November. Construction on site is scheduled to commence in Summer 2023.

- The first of twenty-three projects as part of the Towns and Villages Fund have been completed at Greasbrough. Brimmagem Fold will link two-well used green spaces in the community, and includes new seating, footpaths, and tree planting. Projects at Dalton and Thrybergh, and Hellaby and Maltby West are currently being delivered, with twenty more schemes to be completed over the next eighteen months as part of the Council's pledge to invest in smaller town and village centres.
- The restoration of Rotherham's Keppel's Column is now complete. The restoration works included the repair of the interior staircase, repair to the exterior stonemasonry, replacement of a balustrade at the top of the column providing a safe viewing platform, lighting to the interior and structural support. The Grade II Listed monument will now be open to the public from April through to October on restricted days.
- As part of the Council's Regeneration Programme the Council has purchased the vacant former Mecca Bingo building in the town centre. The property will contribute to the further regeneration of the Leisure & Cultural Quarter.

## 2.56 Capital Programme Financial Update

The Capital Programme 2022/23 now totals £173.847m split between the General Fund £130.575m and HRA £43.272m. This is a decrease of £14.291m to the position as at the end of July reported to Cabinet on 19th September 2022. The majority of which relates to the reprofiling of schemes due to delays caused mainly through inflationary pressures on the programme and the high volume of capital activity taking place nationally that is straining resources from an external delivery point. The movement is based on the latest profiles of expenditure against schemes, both new and revised grant allocations of £3.065m, new corporate funding allocations £2.905m and slippage and re-profiles of (£20.261m). The overall Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2025/26 has increased by £50.541m, predominantly due to the addition of £47.43m corporate funding for the Forge Island development (as approved at Council on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022) along with other changes to grant allocations, as detailed in the following sections.

2.57 **Table 4: Variations to the Capital Programme 2022/22 to 2025/26.**

	<b>Total Impact £m</b>	<b>2022/23 Impact £m</b>	<b>Post 2022/23 Impact £m</b>
New Corporate Funding	47.514	2.905	44.609
Revised Grant and Funding Estimates	3.027	3.065	-0.038
Slippage / reprofiling	0	-20.261	20.261
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.541</b>	<b>-14.291</b>	<b>64.832</b>

2.58 The main re-profiles are:

- **Housing Acquisitions**, £7.8m slippage. Acquisitions are dependent on delivery of private sector developments which can be delayed/changed or cease altogether for reasons outside of the Council's control. £7.3m of the slippage is on phase 3 acquisitions and £0.5m is on Kirkstead Gardens. On review of the planned programme the private developer will not complete the builds in time to allow the Council to acquire units this financial year.
- **Town Deal and LUF Block Allocations**, of the original £24m profiled in 2022/23, £8.5m has been reprofiled to future years. In total £68.6m has been assigned to 19 specific projects (across all years of the capital programme). Major schemes within this allocation include land acquisition to facilitate the mainline station development, a business zone in Templeborough, new facilities at Rother Valley Country Park and works to the Riverside area. As detailed business cases and project plans are worked up a more realistic delivery profile has been generated on these schemes.

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

2.60 **Table 5: New Grant/HRA/Corporate Funded Schemes added to the programme**

<b>Directorate/Scheme</b>	<b>2022/23 £M</b>	<b>Post 2022/23 £m</b>
<b>Children &amp; Young People</b>		
School contribution to Whiston Worrygoose scheme	0.065	0.000

<b>Regeneration &amp; Environment</b>		
New SYMCA funding to meet the cost of century Phase 2 (£1m Gainshare funding and £2m Getting Back Better Funding)	3.000	0.000
Revised grant funding assumption for Levelling Up Fund	0.000	0.178
Revised grant funding assumption for Town Deal	0.000	-0.140
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.065</b>	<b>-0.038</b>

### **New Corporate Borrowing**

2.61 The Forge Island development budget has been added to the Capital Programme with a budget of £47.430 following approval at Council on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

2.62 An addition of £0.084m has been made to the Roads Programme capital scheme in 2022/23. This is a year end accounting correction relating to 2021/22.

### **2.63 Programme Variations**

The following variations to the capital programme cover significant virements between capital projects that are either key decision value or a change in use of corporate resources and as such need reporting to Cabinet.

- **ICT Budgets** Due to efficiencies in ICT capital projects corporate funding of £1.239 on The ICT Digital Strategy Scheme and £3.8m on the Telephony System replacement scheme have been removed and allocated to the inflation contingency budget for future ICT programmes.

### **MCA Approvals**

2.64 The South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) acts as accountable body for a number of different Government funding streams and as the accountable body for Gainshare. Since the July position was reported the MCA have approved an allocation of £1m Gainshare funding and £2m Getting Building Fund towards the Century Phase 2 scheme.

2.65 **The proposed updated Capital Programme to 2025/26 is shown by directorate in the Table below.**

**Table 6: Proposed Updated Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2025/26**

Directorate	2022/23 Budget £m	2023/24 Budget £m	2024/25 Budget £m	2025/26 Budget £m	Total Budget £m
<b>General Fund Capital</b>					
Children and Young People's Services	13.789	11.751	5.310	6.392	37.242

Directorate	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Regeneration and Environment	99.892	138.978	27.937	8.098	274.904
Adult Care & Housing	7.659	6.385	14.117	4.273	32.435
Assistant Chief Executive	0.496	0.210	0.210	0.210	1.126
Finance and Customer Services	7.739	9.978	3.290	8.029	29.036
Capitalisation Direction	1.000	1.000	1.000	11.000	14.000
<b>Total General Fund Capital</b>	<b>130.575</b>	<b>168.302</b>	<b>51.864</b>	<b>38.002</b>	<b>388.743</b>
<b>Total HRA Capital</b>	43.272	45.222	58.123	29.610	176.22
<b>Total RMBC Capital Programme</b>	<b>173.847</b>	<b>213.524</b>	<b>109.987</b>	<b>67.612</b>	<b>564.970</b>

- 2.66 The capital programme for 2022/23 remains ambitious even with a significant level of re-profiling of schemes into 2023/24. The Council will therefore need to keep close control of project spend profiles and delivery milestones to keep these projects on track. The Council will also need to review the deliverability of this significantly increased capital programme and potentially, re-profile some schemes into future financial years.

#### **Funding Position of Capital Programme 2022/23**

- 2.67 The £173.847m of capital expenditure is funded as shown in the Table 4 below.

#### **2.68 Table 7: Funding of the Approved Capital Programme**

Funding Stream	2022/23 Budget £m
Grants and Contributions	73.775
Unsupported Borrowing	53.745
Capital Receipts	1.878
Capital Receipts - Flexible Use & HRA Contribution	1.000
HRA Contribution	0.176
<b>Total Funding - General Fund</b>	<b>130.575</b>



Grants and Contributions	3.015
Unsupported Borrowing	2.441
Housing Major Repairs Allowance	32.272
Capital Receipts	2.818
Revenue Contribution	2.726
<b>Total Funding - HRA</b>	<b>43.272</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>173.847</b>

### Capital Receipts

- 2.69 The Council is continuing to undertake a comprehensive review of its assets and buildings portfolio with the aim of rationalising both its operational and non-operational asset holdings. This may contribute future capital receipts which are earmarked to support the revenue budget, in accordance with the Council's approved flexible use of capital receipts strategy.
- 2.70 To date General Fund useable capital receipts of £0.012m have been generated. Although loan repayments will be received during the financial year, these cannot be used to support the revenue budget as only those receipts by the disposal of property, plant and equipment can be used in that way.

Description	Total as at 30th September 2022 £m	
<b>Total Capital Receipts (Excluding loan repayments)</b>	-	<b>0.012</b>
Repayment of Loans	-	0.026
<b>Total Capital Receipts</b>	-	<b>0.038</b>

- 2.71 The detailed disposal programme is currently being updated and it is very difficult to forecast. Therefore, at this stage the forecast for useable capital receipts is between £0.6m and £1m. These receipts are made up of a small number of disposals and therefore any changes to these could impact on these forecasts significantly. It should be noted that there is no corporate requirement to disposal of General Fund assets.

### 3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 With regard to the current forecast net revenue budget the Council is forecasting an overspend of £18.2m, further management actions continue to be identified with the clear aim of ensuring a balanced budget position can be achieved. It is now clear that to achieve a balanced outturn position there will be a need to utilise an element of the Council's reserves given the significant pressures that have come to light since the Council set it's 2022/23 budget. This is in recognition that there are still financial implications that need to be fully understood and that may

not be fully known until later in the financial year. It is nationally recognised best practice to monitor the performance against the agreed revenue budgets and the Capital Programme throughout the year.

**4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 The Council consulted on the proposed budget for 2022/23, as part of producing the Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23. Details of the consultation are set out in the Budget and Council Tax 2022/23 report approved by Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022.

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

- 5.1 Strategic Directors, Managers and Budget Holders will ensure ongoing tight management and close scrutiny of spend this financial year.
- 5.2 Financial Monitoring reports are taken to Cabinet meetings during the year. The Financial Outturn report for 2022/23 was taken to Cabinet in July 2023.

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

- 6.1 The Council's overspend position is detailed within the report along with the estimated impact of current financial pressures from the war in Ukraine, inflation, energy price rises. This position continues to be monitored closely. Control over spending remains critical to both maintaining the robust Reserves Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 6.2 An update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy will be provided to Cabinet alongside this Monitoring Report. This provides a more detailed update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning factoring in the impact of the current year financial pressures and the longer-term impacts on the MTFS.
- 6.3 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report. Project specific implications have been addressed in the Key Issues section.

**7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 No direct legal implications.

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 No direct implications.

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

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

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

- 10.1 This is a finance update report, providing a review of current progress to date on the Council's revenue and capital budgets, any equalities and human rights impacts from service delivery have been or will be detailed as service budgets, capital projects are pulled together for inclusion within the Council's revenue budget or capital programme.

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

- 11.1 No direct implications.

## 12. **Implications for Partners**

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

## 13. **Accountable Officers**

Rob Mahon, Assistant Director – Financial Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	7.11.22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	3.11.22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	3.11.22

*Report Author:* Rob Mahon, Assistant Director – Financial Services  
01709 254518  
[Rob.Mahon@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Rob.Mahon@rotherham.gov.uk)

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

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## Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A)

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an equality analysis.

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

### 1. Title:

Is this a:

☐

**Strategy / Policy**

☒

**Service / Function**

☐

**Other**

**If other, please specify**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

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

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?		x
Could the proposal affect service users?	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		x
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?		x

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis**.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below and use the prompts for guidance.

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

*The Homes for Ukraine Scheme relates to a specific minority community with specific needs.*

- **Key findings**

*The community and their circumstances present specific needs that the scheme is design to address.*

- **Actions**

*Paragraph 2.48 of the report provides that an officer decision will be taken by the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to set out how the fund has been used to date, to meet specific emergency requirements as well as setting out how the Council will provide ongoing wrap around support moving forwards. This will address the equalities issues as required.*

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	This will be determined by the actions covered in paragraph 2.48.
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	This will be determined by the actions covered in paragraph 2.48.
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	n/a

#### 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Judith Badger	Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services	21/10/22

#### 6. Publishing

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

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

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	21/10/22
<b>If relates to a Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, Council or a Significant Operational Decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>	
<b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	21/10/22



Will the decision/proposal impact...	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across Rotherham as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from transport?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	<i>no impact</i>				
Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:					

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

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

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Rob Mahon, Head of Corporate Finance, Finance and Customer Services.
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 21 November 2022

**Report Title**

Review and Update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

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

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

**Report Author(s)**

Rob Mahon, Assistant Director of Financial Services  
01709 254518 or [Rob.Mahon@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Rob.Mahon@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The report sets out a review and update of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2025/26.

This is an update of the Council's Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2025/26, including the technical updates and following the volatility in the UK and international markets caused by the war in Ukraine, high inflation and high energy prices. The MTFS will be revised further in advance of the Council Budget setting meeting in March 2023, to take account of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24, when issued, along with budget policy proposals on levels of council tax and fees and charges and any budget savings or investments.

This position may change should Government announce changes to the funding of local authorities or if inflation assumptions change significantly from current assumptions. There is due to be a budget announcement on the 17 November, so after the publication of this report but prior to Cabinet, as such any impact of this Government announcement has not been factored into this MTFS update.

The MTFS review, alongside the latest Financial Monitoring 2022/23 report to Cabinet in November, envisages a significant financial overspend that will require the use of the Council's reserves to achieve a balanced financial outturn position for 2022/23. Of the current forecast £18.2m 2022/23 overspend position, £10.1m relates to additional

cost items outside of the control of the Council, that being inflation, energy prices and national pay award.

The MTFS forecasts identify that the Council faces a significant financial challenge in setting a balanced budget for 2023/24 through to 2025/26 due to these pressures outside of the Council's control. Therefore, it is expected that additional use of reserves will be required for 2022/23 and likely for 2023/24. This position is subject to review when the Finance Settlement for 2023/24 is received though there remains substantial uncertainty with the UK economy and the levels of public sector financing that are expected within the Finance Settlement for 2023/24.

It is therefore possible that announcements made by Government on the 17 November 2022 or within the subsequent Finance Settlement for 2023/24 add further financial pressures to the Council's MTFS position, either through Government not inflating public sector resources as assumed or through other cuts to public sector funding.

### **Recommendations**

1. That the MTFS update be noted.
2. That Cabinet note the requirement to use reserves in order to balance the Council's outturn position for 2022/23.

### **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Initial Equality Screening Assessment  
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

### **Background Papers**

Budget and Council Tax 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Strategy, Council March 2022.

Financial Outturn 2021/22, Cabinet July, 2022.

September Financial Monitoring Report, Cabinet October 2022.

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

No

### **Council Approval Required**

No

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## Review and Update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022/23 through to 2025/26 was approved at Council in March 2022. Since approval of the MTFS there have been significant financial challenges that could not have been anticipated at the time of setting the MTFS, that are largely outside of the Council's control and influence. Pressures such as the impact of the war in Ukraine and its impact on the rise in energy prices and inflation are anticipated to create £4m cost pressure for 2022/23 onwards, as the Council's base costs will have increased.
- 1.2 The Local Government Pay Claim 2022/23 has now been considered by national employers and has been accepted by Trade Unions. The offer includes an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay points from 1st April 2022 and 4.04% on allowances. At the lowest spinal column point that the Council uses, this will be a 10.4% pay rise, reducing down to 1.1% for the most senior role. The financial impact of this pay award is £6.1m greater than the budget assumed within the Council's Budget and MTFS which was based on a 2% pay award.
- 1.3 Taken together these pressures potentially increase the Council's base costs by £10.1m per year.
- 1.4 This update of the MTFS includes resource forecasts based on estimated increases to core funding streams that are inflated annually by CPI. These resource assumptions will be reviewed again when the Provisional Local Finance Settlement 2023/24 is released in December, which will set out the specific amounts of Government funding to be provided to the Council or should Government make any clear announcements before then. Government may clarify their expectations for inflating core funding streams in their announcement on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
- 1.5 This update of the MTFS also includes the Council's latest financial assumptions, taking into account estimated income from Business Rates and Council Tax, impact of inflation on service cost and demand pressures and the Council's timeline for the delivery of agreed savings across the MTFS. This update will support and inform the detailed budget setting process for 2023/24, alongside taking into account the outcomes of the Finance Settlement and Members' policy choices and decisions on Council Tax levels.

### 2. Key Issues

#### MTFS Update – Planning Assumption

- 2.1 The MTFS has been updated across the four years 2022/23 to 2025/26 and models the following:
  - Government Grant forecasts based on the Spending Review 2021, that set a 3 year spending review period 2022/23 to 2024/25.
  - The Council's anticipated resources from Council Tax and Business Rates.
  - The planning assumption for Council tax annual increases remains at 3%.

- Pay, Contractual, Price and Income inflation estimates including capital projects and National Living Wage. This includes maintaining the planning assumption of a 2% increase on fees and charges.
- Assumption that the agreed budget savings remain deliverable, within agreed profile. Work is underway to review this position.
- The ongoing costs of decisions made in previous budget rounds including financing costs of capital investment.
- Service demand and cost pressures are not factored into this update beyond 2022/23 but will be considered as part of the final MTFS within Budget and Council Tax Report 2023/24.

2.2 The Council's collection rates for council tax and business rates are holding up well during the impact of Covid. In 2021/22 the Council's in-year collection rate of council tax remained above 96% and was the 4th highest in-year rate of all 36 Metropolitan Councils. The in-year rate for business rates was 97%, the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest of all Metropolitan Councils. Similar collection rates are being maintained in 2022/23 which informs prudent forecasts of future years' income included within the MTFS.

2.3 The estimated impact of rising inflation and energy prices has been factored into the MTFS update, having the impact of increasing the Councils base costs. In addition, there are some areas of escalating cost with service demand pressures being experienced in a number of areas, in particular adult care services, home to school transport and waste services. These service demand pressures are being reviewed and as yet have not been factored into the MTFS update.

2.4 A significant assumption the Council has made within the current MTFS update is that Government will continue to honour the inflationary uplift in a number of core resources that have historically been inflated by September CPI (inflation on business rates is set in regulation). The impact of every 1% of inflation on these core funding streams is the equivalent of £1m extra resource for the Council. As such the Council will need to continue to closely monitor announcements from Government between now and the provisional financial settlement.

### **New pressures**

2.5 Since the Council's Budget for 2022/23 was approved at Council on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022, there have been significant changes that could not have been anticipated at the time of setting the Council's budget. Unbudgeted cost resulting from the wider financial impact of the war in Ukraine, inflation, energy price increases and impact of the 2022/23 pay award present a significant financial challenge to the Council's Budget for 2022/23 and planning assumptions for 2023/24.

2.6 Following review of inflationary impacts, energy price markets and the 2022/23 pay award, the following cost pressures (above budget assumed in the approved MTFS) in these areas have been projected and factored into the MTFS update.

- Pay Award £6.1m
- Inflation £1m
- Energy £3m
- **Total £10.1m**

- 2.7 The Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23 outlined that cost pressures within Adult Social Care would present the most significant future financial challenge to the Council, this still remains the case. Currently Councils are working through Government's market sustainability and fair cost of care review, which focuses on the cost of Home Care and Care Homes provision. It is an exercise carried out alongside care providers in order to establish a "fair cost of care" provision.
- 2.8 This exercise has not yet concluded, and the Council is not currently required to pay based on the outcome of the exercise but is expected to phase in the Fair Cost of Care, moving towards the Fair Cost of Care between 2022 to 2025. Additionally, the funding from Government to allow the Council to carry out and implement the exercise is an estimate and the Government have indicated that they may apply a new funding allocation methodology, though not indicated what basis this may be.
- 2.9 The Council can only increase its rates for Home Care and Care Home provision with additional resources from Government. As such the Council's approach to the Fair Cost of Care and the provision for inflation on care provider contracts will be tailored to the availability of additional Fair Cost of Care funding and inflation from Government.
- 2.10 **Delivery of Agreed Budget Savings**  
Delivery of the remaining agreed budget savings are included within the MTFS update based on the current approved profile of when it was anticipated that remaining savings could be achieved.
- 2.11 Financial Monitoring reports to Cabinet track progress in delivery. These reports have indicated the impact of Covid on progressing delivery of budget savings, in particular savings on social care services. Whilst good progress is being made, service demand and cost of social care services also continues to increase which has limited to some extent the amount of social care savings that can be delivered and the timescale across which savings that can be achieved are made.
- 2.12 However, the Council is able to report further secured delivery of planned savings for 2022/23. The table below provides an update on the £11.5m of planned savings to be delivered over the medium term. £4.2m, over a third of planned savings have been delivered already within 2022/23. This includes £971k for Early Help & Social Care Pathway (reductions in social care teams linked to reducing caseloads), £2.4m savings from reablement services. For R&E there has been £119k delivery of increased income at Waleswood and £97k in respect of planned cost reductions on operational buildings. Several assets are being made ready for disposal which will help progress toward delivering the property savings although the actual amount secured will be confirmed at the point of disposal.

2.13 **Table 1 – Delivery of Agreed Budget Savings across MTFS**

Saving	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 & Total FYE	Still to be delivered 2022/23	Total Secured as at 30th September 2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
ACHPH	2,800	2,800	2,800	400	2,400
ACHPH – One off saving	500	0	0	0	500
CYPS	971	4,739	7,411	0	1026
R&E	374	762	784	158	216
R&E Customer & Digital	200	500	500	155	45
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>4,845</b>	<b>8,801</b>	<b>11,495</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>4,187</b>

2.14 The Council's financial monitoring report to November Cabinet is projecting a forecast overspend of £18.2m. This includes Directorate overspends (excluding Central Services) of £8.1m, the main pressures being;

- CYPS placements, £3.9m (mix of placement types remains the key issue as demand continues to reduce)
- Home to School Transport, £1.6m
- Waste Management, £0.3m (increased tonnages to dispose and increased disposal cost)
- Asset Management, £0.6m (income under recovery and property cost pressures)
- Increased demand and cost of service provision for Homelessness, £0.9m

2.15 At present these pressures are not built into the MTFS on a re-occurring basis. Whilst the Council will aim to mitigate these in year pressures, it is anticipated that a significant level of the Council's reserves will be required to fund the 2022/23 revenue outturn position.

2.16 **Summary MTFS 2022/23 to 2025/26**

The MTFS in summary, taking into account the issues described in this report is summarised in Table 2 below:



	<b>2022/23 £000</b>	<b>2023/24 £000</b>	<b>2024/25 £000</b>	<b>2025/26 £000</b>
<b><u>Resources</u></b>				
Council Tax and Business Rates	168,544	179,015	186,064	192,333
Government Grant	91,158	96,939	98,582	100,311
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>259,702</b>	<b>275,954</b>	<b>284,647</b>	<b>292,644</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Base Budget Requirement	247,030	249,968	250,213	249,968
Inflation Provision	20,450	31,888	39,958	46,081
Service Costs and Demand	18,740	16,620	19,129	21,005
Directorate Savings	-4,845	-8,801	-11,495	-11,495
Use of CYPS reserve	-2,000	0	0	0
Use of Treasury Management Savings	-1,500	-4,000	-3,800	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>277,875</b>	<b>285,675</b>	<b>294,005</b>	<b>305,559</b>
<b>Funding Gap (Pre-Settlement)</b>	<b>18,173</b>	<b>9,721</b>	<b>9,358</b>	<b>12,914</b>

#### 2.17 Revenue Budget Position 2022/23

The latest Financial Monitoring 2022/23 report to Cabinet in November, envisages a significant financial overspend that will require the use of the Council's reserves to achieve a balanced financial outturn position for 2022/23. Of the current forecast £18.2m 2022/23 overspend position, £10.1m relates to items outside of the control of the Council, that being inflation, energy prices and Local Government Pay Award. Without those issues the plan would still be in balance as set in March 2022.

2.18 Following this initial update of the MTFs, the summary position reflects a highly challenging position for the Council, as it is for all councils, with the bulk of the cost pressures stemming from inflation, energy costs and the impact of the 2022/23 pay award.

2.19 It is important to note that this position is before the exact amount of Government grant funding for councils is provided within the Finance Settlement. This is also a

technical update of the MTFS before any Members' policy choices and decisions on levels of Council Tax.

- 2.20 Updated MTFS information will therefore form part of the Budget and Council Tax 2023/24 report to Cabinet in February 2023 and Council in March 2023 which will set out the full details of Budget and Council Tax proposals for 2023/24 alongside the final MTFS estimates for the medium term.
- 2.21 Given the significant and unexpected financial challenge faced by the Council, work has commenced with Strategic Directors to consider opportunities for scaling back some operations, reducing or delaying non-essential expenditure, assessment of need for recruitment with a view to temporarily generating some cost savings for 2022/23 to reduce down the £8.1m directorate overspending forecast in the current year and hence the required use of reserves to balance the 2022/23 year end.

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

- 3.1 In refreshing the MTFS the Council has made several financial assumptions as detailed within the main body of this report. Whilst various scenarios for how Government funding could be changed and the Council's costs could vary linked to in year and potential future cost pressures, the update presented is the Council's current MTFS.
- 3.2 Given the level of uncertainty within financial markets, the length of the war in the Ukraine and its impact on inflation, energy and the level of Government funding, elements of the MTFS remain complex to project. As such it is expected that when Government release the Provisional Financial Settlement for 2023/24, there may be substantial changes to the availability of public sector funding.

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

- 4.1 The Council consulted on budget proposals for 2022/23 ahead of the approval of the Budget and Council Tax 2022/23 report at Council in March 2022. Consultation on the 2023/24 budget is planned to be undertaken across December 2022 and January 2023.

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

- 5.1 The information, proposals and recommendations will feed into the development of specific budget proposals for 2023/24 within the Budget and Council Tax 2023/24 report to Cabinet in February 2023 and Council in March 2023.

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

- 6.1 The financial implications are set out in the report. The significant forecast overspend for 2022/23 is £18.2, of this £10.1m relates to financial pressures outside of the control of the Council due to inflation, energy prices and pay award. £8.1m of the forecast overspend relates to the Council's directorates and therefore these elements of expenditure are where the Council has some level of control. In order to mitigate the financial overspend position, the Council is implementing a housekeeping review of budgets, this is looking to ensure that where possible non-

essential spend is held. In addition, the Council is looking to identify across all directorates opportunities to reduce the forecast outturn, in order to further mitigate the £8.1m directorate pressures and reduce the call on reserves for 2022/23.

6.2 It should be noted that whilst the directorate overspend is £8.1m, the Council will be able to work to mitigate these pressures and reduce them before the financial year end, with a low level of use of reserves. However, due to the £10.1m of cost pressures outside of control of the Council there will be a significant call on reserves to balance the 2022/23 outturn position. These cost pressures raise the Council's base costs and it is these pressures that create the budget gaps for 2023/24 onwards. The Council did build into the MTFS prudent levels of inflation and has over recent years increased its levels of reserves, in particular the Budget and Financial Strategy Reserve, £17.8m at the end of 2021/22. Had these cost pressures outside of control of the Council not appeared, then the Council's MTFS position would not have been presenting a significant funding gap.

6.3 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

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

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

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

8.1 There are no direct HR implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

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

9.1 The implications are as set out in the report.

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

10.1 There are no implications arising from the recommendation in the report.

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

11.1 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendation in the report.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

12.1 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendation in the report.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 Risks and mitigation are described in the report

## **14. Accountable Officers**

Rob Mahon, Assistant Director – Financial Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	07/11/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	03/11/22
Assistant Director Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	03/11/22

*Report Author:* Rob Mahon, Assistant Director Financial Services  
01709 254518  
[Rob.Mahon@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Rob.Mahon@rotherham.gov.uk)

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

## PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

### 1. Title

**Title:**

Medium Term Financial Strategy

**Directorate:**

Finance and Customer Services

**Service area:**

Financial Services

**Lead person:**

Rob Mahon

**Contact number:**

01709 822064

Is this a:

☐

**Strategy / Policy**

☒

**Service / Function**

☐

**Other**

**If other, please specify**

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

The report sets out a technical update of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2025/26.

The information within the report will support the development of detailed budget proposals for 2023/24. No changes to the Council's approved budget and financial strategy are proposed within the report.

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		✓
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>		✓
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		✓
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

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?**

- **Key findings**

- **Actions**

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	

#### 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Rob Mahon	Assistant Director – Financial Services	31/10/22

#### 6. Publishing

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

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

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	31/10/22
<b>Report title and date</b>	Medium Term Financial Strategy Cabinet 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2022
<b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date</b>	

and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	



Will the decision/proposal impact...	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across Rotherham as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from transport?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	<i>no impact on emissions</i>				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	<i>no impact</i>				
Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:					

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

As this report is a technical financial update and doesn't approve anything directly to happen, it does not have any carbon implications.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Rob Mahon, Assistant Director – Financial Services.
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 21 November 2022

**Report Title**

New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

**Report Author(s)**

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

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

To consider the applications for the award of Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited. This is in accordance with the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy (approved by Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016).

**Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2022/23 financial year.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Initial Equality Screening Document  
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

**Background Papers**

Discretionary Rate Relief Policy - Approved by Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016

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

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited**

### **1. Background**

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

1.2 The Council can grant discretionary relief to:-

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

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

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

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

### **1.3 Application 1**

#### **Rotherham Rise, 18 High Street, Rotherham, S60 1PP**

1.3.1 Rotherham Rise is a registered charity which provides free counselling and support for adults, young people and children who have experienced any form of domestic abuse and/or child exploitation.

1.3.2 The organisation works to offer support services, activities and group work with the focus being on developing self-esteem and life skills.

- 1.3.3 Service users are representative of many disadvantaged groups including the homeless, those with a disability, single parents and those at risk from substance misuse.
- 1.3.4 Rotherham Rise has taken on additional rooms within their existing premises to provide more appointment and training rooms.
- 1.3.5 The additional appointment rooms are needed to accommodate the day to day operations of the charity and they have been struggling to accommodate within the current space they have.
- 1.3.6 The ability to provide training spaces for professionals and staff enables the charity to continue raising awareness and education around Domestic abuse and CSE.
- 1.3.7 Due to the increased demand on services, the rooms are also used for engagement activities for the wider community.
- 1.3.8 The organisation benefits from an award of discretionary relief at their existing premises which has been awarded continuously from January 2019 to date.
- 1.3.9 The organisation is commissioned to assist the Council to fulfil its statutory duties towards victims of domestic abuse and their children. Domestic abuse is a priority for the Council and its partners through the safer Rotherham Partnership.
- 1.3.10 The provision of educational support, welfare support and counselling complements and indirectly helps manage the Council's need to do so.
- 1.3.11 The continuation of this modest additional assistance is considered to be in line with the qualifying criteria as set out within the Council's policy.
- 1.3.12 The organisation is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2022/23 rates liability. The financial implication of awarding the relief is set out in Section 6 of the report.

#### 1.4 **Application 2**

**The Really NEET Project Limited, Units 7 & 8 Enterprise Court, Farfield Park, Wath Upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 5DB, Unit A1 Taylors Court, Parkgate, Rotherham, S62 6NU and Unit 1 Fusion @ Magna, Magna Way, Rotherham, S60 1FE**

- 1.4.1 The Really Neet Project Limited is a social enterprise not for profit organisation which aims to meet the needs of vulnerable young people through training and education.
- 1.4.2 The organisation also offers innovative and engaging learning opportunities which will develop the range of skills, personal attributes and qualifications required to progress into employment or further education.

- 1.4.3 The programme offers practical activity which supports the learning of maths and English together with individual learning opportunities which are flexible, engaging and varied.
- 1.4.4 There is the opportunity to access learning activities different from those of mainstream providers and to engage in activities which enhance employability and enterprise skills.
- 1.4.5 Students are referred to the organisation by the EHCP team from RMBC and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 1.4.6 Students meet the criteria based upon them not being able to access mainstream education due to a range of complex barriers, including Learning Disability, Mental Health, Criminal Justice and Domestic Violence.
- 1.4.7 The organisation benefited from an award of discretionary relief at their premises on Chemist Lane, Rotherham which was awarded continuously from April 2018 until they vacated in July 2022.
- 1.4.8 They have taken on additional properties to continue their work and are seeking our support with funding the business rates on these.
- 1.4.9 The Really NEET Project Limited have recently, over the past two years, taken increasingly complex young people that need sometimes to be educated away from other young people in their cohort as their behaviours can impact on the education of others.
- 1.4.10 The organisation works hard to ensure that there are suitable premises in their offer to enable this to happen, and to enable their flexible and person centred approach to be as inclusive as possible.
- 1.4.11 The Really Neet Project Limited's application for the award of discretionary relief is considered to be in line with the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in its policy.
- 1.4.12 The organisation is commissioned by RMBC to deliver an alternative provision programme to learners with Special Education Needs and thus provides a facility which RMBC would otherwise have to provide itself.
- 1.4.13 Learners meet the criteria based on them not being able to access mainstream education due to a range of complex barriers including learning disabilities, mental health, criminal justice and sexual exploitation.
- 1.4.14 The organisation is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2022/23 rates liability. The financial implication of awarding the relief is set out in Section 6 of the report.

**2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 To consider the applications for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited requesting an award of discretionary rate relief.

**3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

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

**4. Consultation on proposal**

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

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

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

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

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

The award would continue into the financial year 2023/24 with a new application being required for discretionary rate relief to continue beyond that into the financial year 2024/25.

Figures for the financial year 2023/24 will not be available until after the revaluation but are not expected to be significantly different from 2022/23.



6.3	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Amount of Relief</b>	<b>Cost to RMBC</b>
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**Rotherham Rise**

2022/23	£769.48	£377.05
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**The Really NEET Project Limited**

2022/23	£19,241.23	£9,428.20
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As indicated in paragraph 1.2.2. 49% of the cost of the relief is met by the Council with 50% falling on Central Government and 1% on the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

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

**7. Legal Advice and Implications**

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

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

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

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

9.1 The organisations provide services to children, young people and vulnerable adults throughout the borough which aim to make a difference to the lives of people within the local community.

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

10.1 The recommendation in the report is to grant discretionary relief which will positively impact the organisations ensuring continuity of service provision which helps tackle inequality. This recommendation is based on the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme under which other businesses are able to make an application.

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

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

**12. Implications for Partners**

12.1 As stated in 1.2.2, 1% of the cost of any relief granted is met by the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority. In this case this cost is minimal.

### 13. Risks and Mitigation

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

### 14. Accountable Officers

Rob Mahon, Assistant Director, Financial Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	07/11/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	03/11/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	03/11/22

*Report Author:* Rachel Humphries – Operational Manager, Local Taxation  
 01709 255159 or [rachel.humphries@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.humphries@rotherham.gov.uk)  
 This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

## PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

### 1. Title

**Title: New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief for Rotherham Rise and The Really NEET Project Limited**

**Directorate: Finance and Customer Services**

**Service area: Financial Services**

**Lead person: Rob Mahon**

**Contact number: 01709 822034**

Is this a:

☐

**Strategy / Policy**

☐

**Service / Function**

☒

**Other**

**If other, please specify**

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

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

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

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

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		✓
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>		✓
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		✓
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		
The recommendation in the report is to award discretionary relief to the organisations which will positively impact the organisation ensuring continuity of counselling, support, training and education which helps tackle inequality.		

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

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

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

- **Key findings**

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

- **Actions**

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

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	N/A

#### 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Rob Mahon	Assistant Director	

#### 6. Publishing

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

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

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

Diversity Internet page.	
<b>Date screening completed</b>	25/10/2022
<b>Report title and date</b>	<b>New Applications for Error!</b> Reference source not found.
<b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>	
<b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	25/10/2022

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 impact				
Emissions from transport?	No impact				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	No impact				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	No impact				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	No impact				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	No impact				
Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:					

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

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

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Rachel Humphries, Operational Manager, Finance and Customer Services
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	





Public Report  
Cabinet

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 21 November 2022

**Report Title**

Corporate Safeguarding Protocol

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

**Report Author(s)**

Lee Mann, Assistant Director HR & OD  
Lee.Mann@rotherham.gov.uk

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

A new Corporate Safeguarding Protocol has been developed which acts as a framework for the Council to ensure that safeguarding is embedded across all services and that all staff and Councillors are aware of their responsibilities.

The report also references the outcome from the recent Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services which demonstrates the effectiveness of safeguarding practice in the Council.

**Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet approve the updated Corporate Safeguarding Protocol.
2. To note the outcome of 'Good' from the recent Ofsted Inspection of Children and Young People Services.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Corporate Safeguarding Protocol November 2022  
Appendix 2 Equality Screening  
Appendix 3 Carbon Impact

**Background Papers**

Ofsted report of Children's Services August 12 2022  
[Children's Services: Ofsted report – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Corporate Safeguarding Policy 2016  
[Corporate Safeguarding Policy](#)

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**  
No

**Council Approval Required**  
No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**  
No

Corporate Safeguarding Protocol  
**Corporate Safeguarding Protocol**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council has a duty to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults. The Council believes that every child, young person and adult, regardless of their background, age, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, ethnicity or religious belief should be able to live and participate in a safe society without any fear, violence, abuse, bullying, discrimination or exploitation.
- 1.2 Safeguarding is everyone's business and everyone at the Council shares a responsibility, both corporately and individually, to ensure that every person is treated with dignity and respect and protected from others who may abuse them. All Council employees, elected members, contractors, and volunteers, have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of the most vulnerable people in Rotherham, young or old.
- 1.3 A range of development interventions, procedures and good practice are in place to ensure that every service and employee can demonstrate that they understand their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults.
- 1.4 An Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) took place on the week beginning 20 June 2022, which considered the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children. On 12 August the Council were notified that Ofsted judged Children's Services overall effectiveness to be Good.

Inspectors found services to be judged as:

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families – Good
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection – Good
- The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers – Good. This is an improvement on the previous judgment given in 2018, which was Requires Improvement.

**2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 The Council continues to challenge itself to be at the forefront of national and international best practice in safeguarding children and young people. The previous Safeguarding Policy which has been in place for five years is proposed to be superseded by this protocol based on current good practice.

- 2.2 The new Corporate Safeguarding Protocol at Appendix 1 demonstrates a corporate framework which sets out how all services across the Council work to deliver the Council's statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities.

- 2.3 The proposed statement is aligned to the Care Act (2014) and the Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance (2018), corporate responsibilities, the Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan.

- 2.4 Senior Safeguarding Officers across the Council have been consulted over the changes and the Statement has been agreed by the Safeguarding Champions Group.

- 2.5 To support awareness raising across the Council, the previous e-learning module has been updated to reflect current good practice, a safeguarding toolbox talk is being delivered by managers to their teams across the Council and updated information (z-card) has been distributed to Council staff. Awareness of safeguarding procedures is regularly featured in corporate communications and a whole Council approach is taken to key safeguarding events such as safeguarding awareness week.

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

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol. The recent 'Good' judgement from the Ofsted ILACS inspection demonstrates that there is a Council wide approach to safeguarding and the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol builds on this approach.
- 3.2 The alternative option is not to update the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol. This has been rejected as it would not provide a wider framework on how all services across the Council work to deliver the Council's statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities.

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

- 4.1 In addition to senior safeguarding officers across the Council, the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Services have been consulted during development of the updated statement.

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

- 5.1 The Statement will be published internally following Cabinet in November.

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

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications due to the recommendations in the report. The procurement considerations associated with this report as included in section 8.3 of the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol.

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

- 7.1 The Corporate Safeguarding Protocol is consistent with relevant legislation in particular the Care Act 2014, Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Statutory Guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). Otherwise, there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.

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

- 8.1 A range of development interventions are in place to ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in regard to safeguarding and the key contact information for raising any concerns. The staff development offer will be kept under review and regularly refreshed.

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

- 9.1 The updated Corporate Safeguarding Protocol will have a positive impact on safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults across the borough. The statement provides an overview of the Council's corporate commitment on the safeguarding agenda and will ensure all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities in identifying and reporting potential safeguarding concerns.
- 9.2 The outcome of the ILCAS visit provides evidence that Rotherham MBC Children and Young Peoples Services continue to safeguard children, whilst also improving the outcomes for children in need of help and protection.

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

- 10.1 Officers have had regard to equalities and human rights implications throughout development of the safeguarding statement. The safeguarding statement makes clear that everyone should be able to live and participate in a safe society without any fear, violence, abuse, bullying, discrimination or exploitation, irrespective of their background or protected characteristics.

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

- 11.1 There are no direct implications resulting from the recommendations in this report

## **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1. The Rotherham Together Partnership has a Safeguarding Partnership Protocol in place, which sets out how strategic partnership bodies work in a coordinated manner, working collaboratively to avoid duplication and ensure consistency. This includes Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership, Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board, Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board, Rotherham Children and Young People's Partnership and the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

### 13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 As referenced in the statement, safeguarding is everyone's business. The statement sets out roles and responsibilities for all Council Officers and includes key information on how to report any concerns.
- 13.2 In order to maintain a working knowledge of their roles and responsibilities, there will be review of the development interventions to support safeguarding awareness across the Council as well as regular corporate communications on the subject.

### 14. Accountable Officers

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive  
Lee Mann, Assistant Director HR & OD

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	07/11/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	03/11/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	03/11/22

*Report Author:* Lee Mann, Assistant Director HR & OD

*Lee.Mann@rotherham.gov.uk*

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

**Rotherham Metropolitan Borough  
Council**

# Corporate Safeguarding Protocol

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**November 2022**

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## 1 Foreword

Rotherham Council believes that every child, young person and adult, regardless of their background, age, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, ethnicity or religious belief, should be able to live and participate in a safe society without any fear, violence, abuse, bullying, discrimination or exploitation.

Safeguarding is everyone's business and everyone at the Council shares a responsibility, both corporately and individually, to ensure that every person is treated with dignity and respect and protected from others who may abuse them. All Council employees, elected members, contractors and volunteers, have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of the most vulnerable people in Rotherham, young or old.

Procedures and good practice are in place to ensure that every service and employee can demonstrate that they understand their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults.

The Council continues to monitor progress, make improvements, and work closely with partners to ensure that safeguarding remains everyone's business.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Read', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Read Leader of the Council



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharon Kemp', written in a cursive style.

Sharon Kemp Chief Executive

## 2 Background and context

The Council, as an organisation, has a duty to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults.

This corporate framework reflects that there are similarities in many of the actions needed to safeguard children, young people and adults. However, the Council recognises there are also distinct differences. Further detailed information is contained in the relevant specific policies and procedures within [Adult](#) and [Children and Young People's social care and the multi-agency safeguarding children procedures](#).

This Protocol should be read alongside Council policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents including Code of Conduct, Safer Recruitment, Dignity at Work, Equality and Diversity and Whistleblowing.

### 2.1 Links to Rotherham Council Plan

The Council Plan outlines the priorities and outcomes that the Council will focus on. As well as making clear the Council's duty to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people and adults, the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol helps to contribute to achieving a number of the outcomes set out in the Council Plan, including:

- People have good mental health and physical wellbeing
- Children, families, and adults feel empowered, safe, and live independently for as long as possible
- Neighbourhoods are welcoming and safe

### 3 Corporate Safeguarding Protocol

This Protocol operates as a framework for every service in the Council to carry out its statutory safeguarding duties towards children, young people and adults and defines the roles and responsibilities for all employees, managers, elected members and volunteers.

Rotherham Council will ensure that:

- Safeguarding is person-led and outcome-focused; respecting the rights, wishes, feelings and privacy of individuals.
- Safeguarding is promoted as everybody's business; ensuring all employees, managers, contractors, elected members and volunteers understand the different forms abuse can take and how to identify them, their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding and that they are supported to develop and maintain this understanding.
- Clear procedures and protocols are in place to meet its duties and obligations towards the safeguarding of children, young people and adults.
- Clear overall accountability for safeguarding exists for all services.
- Assurance is provided to members of the public, service users, elected members, employees, partners and people working on behalf of the Council that there are arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults.
- Services are planned and delivered in a way which seeks to safeguard children, young people and adults; and employees can conduct themselves safely.
- We work with the Rotherham NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board and South Yorkshire Police to ensure collective accountability for safeguarding children, in line with the legislative changes from the Children and Social Work Act 2018.
- Local services work together where appropriate around the safeguarding needs of children, young people or adults, and that they are actively involved in developing and evaluating the services which are provided for them.
- Investment in preventative and early intervention services and endeavor to avoid situations where abuse or harm may occur.
- The Council and partner organisations, in relation to multi-agency working arrangements, have a shared understanding of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults.
- Unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and adults with needs for care and support through its safer recruitment practices.

## 4 Abuse and neglect

This section considers the different types and patterns of abuse and neglect. The list is taken from examples in the Care Act (2014) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). It is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to safeguarding concerns.

Defining abuse can be complex but it can involve an intentional, reckless, deliberate or dishonest act by the alleged source of harm. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more.

There are four categories of abuse to children stated in Government Guidance document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018:

- **Emotional** - the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development.
- **Sexual** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware what is happening or not.
- **Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- **Physical** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

The Care Act 2014 has ten categories of abuse relating to adults:

- **Discriminatory** - when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies mainstream opportunities to some groups or individuals.
- **Domestic Abuse** - incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse is not just about partners but all family relationships.
- **Emotional/ Psychological** - acts or behaviour which impinges on the emotional health of, or which causes distress or anguish to, individuals.
- **Financial** - unauthorised, fraudulent obtaining and improper use of funds, property or any resources of an adult at risk.
- **Modern Slavery** - encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

- **Neglect** - ignoring or withholding physical or medical care needs which result in a situation or environment detrimental to individual(s).
- **Organisational** - where the culture of the organisations places the emphasis on the running of the establishment above the needs and care of the person.
- **Physical** - the non-accidental use of physical force that results (or could result) in bodily injury, pain or impairment including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication and restraint.
- **Self-Neglect** - this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.
- **Sexual** - Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the 'Prevent duty'). This statutory duty is about safeguarding and supporting children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable to becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism.

Support is provided through [The Channel programme](#).

## **5 Safeguarding children and young people**

The Children Act 2004 places a statutory obligation on Borough/District Councils to ensure they have in place, suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (either directly or via their families) who may access or use Council services.

In summary, the Act requires the Council to ensure that:

(a) its functions are discharged with due regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and

(b) through working with others, arrangements are put in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Statutory guidance defines a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, is in Foster Care or is in an Adoptive placement does not change their entitlements to services or protection (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

### **5.1 Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership**

Children's welfare is of the utmost importance. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as a need is identified.

The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, requires that the three safeguarding partners (Local Authorities, NHS Integrated Care Boards and Chief Officers of Police), make arrangements to work in partnership together along with relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area.

This includes a shared accountability between the three key partners, and the key responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that there is a shared responsibility between organisations and agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.
- Agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services.
- Act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others.
- Implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents.
- Achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families ensuring they receive targeted services that meet their needs in a co-ordinated way.

The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted.
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children.
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively.
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats.
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

The Council, with its partners work together to ensure shared visibility when concerns are held below the statutory threshold level. The Early Help Assessment is the common assessment tool that is in place to facilitate this and ensure that families only need to tell their story once.

The Council works in a way that promotes the participation of children and young people in the development and provision of services for them and achieves this through a range of activities including consulting with children and young people, seeking feedback, inclusion in decision making, and linking in with the Children in Care Council.

ALL children and Young People have:

- A right to feel and be safe
- A right to have a voice and be heard
- A right to dream and have aspirations
- A right to be happy and healthy
- A right to feel loved and valued
- A right to education and achievement
- A right to have fun, have hobbies and access to social activities
- A right to a bright future of their choosing

## 6 Safeguarding adults

Section 42 of the Care Act (2014) places a duty on local authorities to safeguard adults. This duty applies where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there):

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of the care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

The local authority must make whatever enquiries it thinks necessary to enable it to decide whether any action should be taken in the adult's case and, if so, what and by whom.

Safeguarding adults is different from safeguarding children in many ways. A main difference is that adults with mental capacity have the right to make their own decisions and should be asked for consent, where it is safe to do so and prior to anyone raising a safeguarding concern.

### 6.1 Safeguarding Adults Board

The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is an inter-agency forum for agreeing how the different services and professional groups should cooperate to safeguard adults across Rotherham.

The SAB does this by assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance, making sure that arrangements work effectively to identify abuse or inadequate care, help vulnerable people and plan and implement joint preventative strategies.

SABs have three core duties. They must:

- develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute
- publish an annual report detailing how effective their work has been
- commission safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria for these.

The Council is committed to maintaining an effective working relationship with the SAB to help achieve its mutual aims in respect of adult safeguarding.



## 7 Safer Rotherham Partnership

The Safer Rotherham Partnership is the borough's Community Safety Partnership, set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Council and other responsible authorities have a duty to work together to protect local communities and help people feel safer. They work out how to deal with crime and local issues like anti-social behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and reoffending. They assess local crime priorities annually, consulting with partners and the local community about their priorities and monitor progress in achieving them. There are five responsible authorities that make up the Safer Rotherham Partnership:

- National Probation Service
- Rotherham NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue
- South Yorkshire Police

Voluntary Action Rotherham and the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner are also represented at partnership meetings.

Each year the Safer Rotherham Partnership reviews its priorities towards its vision *“Working together to make Rotherham Safe, to keep Rotherham safe and to ensure the communities of Rotherham feel safe”*. The current priorities are:

- Protecting vulnerable children
- Protecting vulnerable adults
- Safer and stronger communities
- Protecting people from violence and organised crime

The Council is committed to supporting the Safer Rotherham Partnership Board to carry out its duties effectively and efficiently and to strengthen the partnership for the benefit of everyone in Rotherham.

## 8 Corporate responsibilities for safeguarding

Rotherham Council is committed to ensuring the highest standards of safe recruitment, supervision and management of staff, particularly, but not exclusively those working directly with children, young people or adults, or those who have access to information about them.

The Council is committed to supporting all staff to understand their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding, through appropriate training, information sharing and guidance on what to do if there are concerns.

Every service within the Council has a role to play and has to take full ownership of their safeguarding responsibilities. Particular employees have specific roles in relation to safeguarding; notwithstanding this, every employee has an obligation to safeguard and take action when required to ensure children, young people and adults are helped and protected. This section clarifies the various roles across the Council, at different levels.

**The Chief Executive** has responsibility to ensure all staff are aware of their roles in safeguarding. Through the two statutory officers, the Chief Executive ensures that effective safeguarding arrangements for children, young people and adults are in place.

**The Director of Children's Services** is the key point of professional accountability with responsibility for the effective safeguarding of children and young people.

**The Director of Adult Social Services**, as chief officer and lead for adult safeguarding, has a particularly important leadership and challenge role to play in adult safeguarding. They are responsible for promoting prevention, early intervention and partnership working, which is critical in the development of effective safeguarding.

**The Strategic Leadership Team**, encourage, embed and maintain the best safeguarding practice across all directorates and services to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with national and local policies.

**Elected members** have an important part to play to ensure that the Council is discharging its statutory responsibilities and its services to safeguard vulnerable children, young people and adults. All elected members receive training which includes how to identify and report safeguarding concerns within the appropriate levels of confidentiality.

**The lead member for Children's Services** is the only role for elected members defined in legislation and is responsible for taking a strategic view in setting priorities and budgets, supporting the Director of Children's Services and championing the voice of children and young people in decision making across all Council services and partnerships.

**The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health** also has a key role to play in overseeing safeguarding activity, retaining the oversight of all commissioning activities and provision of adult social care, public health functions and the interface with NHS.

**Principal Social Workers**, the Principal Social Worker provides a key role to champion the voice of frontline social work practitioners and managers to senior officers and political leaders as well as supporting and advising on the quality of practice on all safeguarding issue (child and adult protection).

**Safeguarding Champions**, each directorate within the Council has a dedicated safeguarding champion, the group is led by the Chief Executive and their agenda is set to drive awareness and to embed adult and Children safeguarding issues into all Council staff and functions.

**Human Resources (HR)** ensure the effective implementation of safer recruitment practices and induction and that all staff employed to work with children and adults with needs for care and support are subject to the appropriate external checks including Disclosure and Barring, and prior to appointment.

**Line Managers** ensure that appropriate checks are made for all job roles that involve working with children and adults at risk, carrying out the induction process for all new employees, ensuring they fully understand safeguarding and that all staff in their area receive appropriate safeguarding information and training commensurate with the responsibilities of their role.

**All staff (including volunteers and contractors)** must ensure they are fully aware of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, treat all safeguarding matters seriously and take responsibility for reporting disclosures, concerns, incidents or allegations as set out in safeguarding policies.

## 8.1 Working with partners

Good inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working is promoted and maintained both within the Council and with other organisations. The Rotherham Together Partnership has a Safeguarding Partnership Statement in place, which sets out how strategic partnership bodies work in a coordinated manner, working collaboratively to avoid duplication and ensure consistency.

The signatories of this are:

- Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board
- Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board
- Rotherham Children and Young People's Partnership
- Safer Rotherham Partnership

## **8.2 Whistleblowing and Serious Misconduct Policy**

The Council is committed to ensuring that it, and the people working for it, comply with the highest standards of openness, honesty and accountability.

All employees have a duty of care to draw attention to bad or poor practice in the workplace and can come forward and express their concerns without fear of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage.

Safeguarding concerns about a child can be made by contacting 01709 336080 or MASH-Referral@rotherham.gov.uk

Safeguarding concerns about an adult can be made by contacting 01709 822330 or by completing an online form

Any person wishing to report any suspected serious wrongdoing (“a disclosure”) to the Council can do so by emailing whistleblowing@rotherham.gov.uk or calling the Whistleblowing Hotline on 01709 822400 and leaving a message. Alternatively, a disclosure can be made in writing and sent by post to:

Whistleblowing  
c/o the Head of Legal Services  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
Riverside House  
Main Street  
ROTHERHAM S60 1AE

## **8.3 Commissioning and procurement**

Safeguarding is everyone’s business and does not only apply to Council employees but also to suppliers delivering services to, or on behalf of the Council. As part of all contracts, suppliers have a duty to report anything that raises any cause for concern to the Council.

In addition to this standard duty across all contracts, for commissioning activity that involves vulnerable children, young people or adults, the Council’s Commissioning teams also build additional safeguarding criteria into specifications that is specific to the needs and requirements of the individual service.

## **8.4 Review of this Protocol**

This Protocol will be reviewed in line with any changes in legislation and the periodical reviews of Safeguarding Policy, Protocols and Guidance to ensure the Council meets requirements to safeguard children, young people and adults.

## Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A)

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an equality analysis.

<b>Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive</b>	<b>Service area: HR &amp; OD</b>
<b>Lead person: Lee Mann</b>	<b>Contact number: 01709 822285</b>

### 1. Title: Corporate Safeguarding Statement

Is this a:

☐

**Strategy / Policy**

☐

**Service / Function**

☒

**Other**

**If other, please specify; Statement setting out the aims, roles and responsibilities for safeguarding within and across the Council.**

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

The Council has recently updated its Safeguarding Statement with the aim of raising the awareness of how to raise safeguarding concerns as a member of Council staff and reiterate roles and responsibilities; ensuring that safeguarding is everyone's business.

The statement sets out the ambitions for the Council and key partners, includes an overview of what safeguarding is and sets out the roles and responsibilities for everyone in reporting safeguarding concerns. The document also provides further information on how the Council works alongside partners to deliver on this agenda.

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

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

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?		x
Could the proposal affect service users?	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		x
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?		x

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis**.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below and use the prompts for guidance.

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

*There is likely to a positive impact on children, younger people and vulnerable adults. Raising the profile, responsibilities and processes for reporting safeguarding concerns will have a positive effect on vulnerable residents.*

- **Key findings**

*The community and their circumstances present specific needs that the scheme is design to address.*

- **Actions**

*Paragraph 2.48 or the report provides that an officer decision will be taken by the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to set out how*

*the fund has been used to date, to meet specific emergency requirements as well as setting out how the Council will provide ongoing wrap around support moving forwards. This will address the equalities issues as required.*

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	This will be determined by the actions covered in paragraph 2.48.
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	This will be determined by the actions covered in paragraph 2.48.
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	n/a

## 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Jo Brown	Assistant Chief Executive	

## 6. Publishing

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

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

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	25/10/2022
If relates to a Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, Council or a Significant Operational Decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	25/10/2022

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Will the decision/proposal impact...	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across Rotherham as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	<i>No impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from transport?	<i>No impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	<i>No impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	<i>No impact on emissions</i>				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	<i>No impact on emissions</i>				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	<i>No impact</i>				
Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:					

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

This report sets out the development of a new Corporate Safeguarding Statement and therefore there are no direct impacts on emissions generating from its introduction.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Lee Mann, Assistant Director HR & OD
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 21 November 2022

**Report Title**

Refresh of Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025)

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

Yes

**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](mailto:martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The Council's Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2018. Following the publication of the new Council Plan (2022-25) it is now opportune to refresh the Strategy, taking into account the ambitions in the Council Plan and acknowledging that the Council's Neighbourhood Working Model is well embedded and evolving.

**Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet approve the refreshed Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025).
2. That Cabinet agree that the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy Delivery Plan and Full Equality Analysis are developed by April 2023 and presented to the Improving Places Select Commission in Spring 2023.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 - Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025 (refreshed November 2022)

Appendix 2 – Initial Equality Screening Assessment

Appendix 3 - Carbon Impact Assessment

**Background Papers**

Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy Annual Report (2021/22) – presented to  
Improving Places Scrutiny Commission (20/09/22)

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

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## Refresh of Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025

### 1. Background

- 1.1 Cabinet formally approved the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025) in November 2018 following the introduction of a new Neighbourhood Working Model in May 2017.
- 1.2 The Council Plan (2022-25) has further developed the Council's vision under its 'Every Neighbourhood Thriving' theme.
- 1.3 It is now opportune to refresh the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy so it can take into account the ambitions within the Council Plan and acknowledge that the Council's Neighbourhood Working Model is now well embedded and evolving.

### 2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-25) provided the platform for the Council to take a new approach to working with local neighbourhoods and developing the role of Councillors as Community Leaders.
- 2.2 The narrative within the current strategy lays out what the Council intends to do. Following four years of implementation, the language and appearance of the Strategy is dated and in need of refreshing.
- 2.3 The Council's Neighbourhood Working Model is now well embedded and continues to evolve. This is evidenced via annual reports presented to Improving Places Select Commission (the last one being on 20 September 2022) and the ward reports presented by Elected Members at each Council meeting.
- 2.4 The Council Plan (2022-25) has further developed the Council's vision under its 'Every Neighbourhood Thriving' theme -

*'Our vision for Rotherham is for every neighbourhood to be a thriving neighbourhood, where people are able to work together to achieve a good quality of life. We want to work with local people to find solutions to local issues and to build on our heritage and assets. We will help create vibrant communities in which people feel happy, safe and proud. To do this, we will make it easier to get involved in the local community, work closely with our partners and local voluntary and community groups, enhance our town and village centres, green spaces and libraries, and effectively tackle community issues'.*

- 2.5 The refreshed Strategy has a new look and feel (Appendix 1). It reflects the ambitions under the 'Every Thriving Neighbourhood' theme within the Council Plan, whilst maintaining the desired outcomes and other key components of the original strategy.

- 2.6 The main differences from the original strategy include –
- A foreword from the Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.
  - Reference to the Council's 'Place-Based' and 'Strengths-Based' approaches.
  - Greater emphasis on the role of the Councillor, referencing Birmingham University's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Councillor Model.
  - Reference to how success is measured.
  - Links to relevant webpages, which illustrate the progress made since 2018.
  - Removal of case studies – as there are now other avenues to promote these such as ward e-bulletins, ward webpages and Members' annual ward reports to Council.
- 2.7 On approval of the refreshed Strategy, it is proposed to develop a Delivery Plan, which will capture the key components of the Neighbourhood Working Model, how the Model will continue to evolve and how the impact will be measured. The Delivery Plan will be developed in consultation with local communities, Elected Members and other stakeholders between January and March 2023. This will also help further promote the Neighbourhood Working Model and the role of Elected Members as community leaders within their wards. On completion, this Delivery Plan will inform the key milestones for Every Neighbourhood Thriving theme within the Council Plan's Year Ahead Delivery Plan. It is recommended that the completed Delivery Plan be presented to Improving Places Select Commission in Spring 2023.

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

- 3.1 Cabinet could consider not refreshing the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy at this juncture, but given points articulated in Section 2 of this report the recommended proposal is to approve the refreshed version (Appendix 1) and the development of a Delivery Plan, as outlined in Paragraph 2.7.

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

- 4.1 Consultation on the ward-based Neighbourhood Working Model and the subsequent Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy took place in advance of the implementation of the Model in 2017 and the approval of the strategy in 2018.
- 4.2 Consultation on the Council Plan (2022-2025) took place in 2021. This confirmed that Thriving Neighbourhoods should remain a key theme for the Council and helped shaped the main priorities underpinning that theme.
- 4.3 As indicated in Paragraph 2.6, it is proposed that a Delivery Plan will be co-produced with local communities, Elected Members and other stakeholders between January and March 2023.
- 4.4 Elected Members may choose to do further consultation within their wards when refreshing their ward priorities and plans in Spring 2023.

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

- 5.1 Approval of the refreshed Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy will be followed by the production of a Delivery Plan, as indicated in Paragraph 2.6. The Delivery Plan will be completed by April 2023.
- 5.2 The Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report will be presented to Improving Places Select Commission in Autumn 2023.
- 5.3 Elected members will continue to present their ward reports to Council up to January 2024.

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

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in the report. Devolved Ward Budgets are managed in line with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules. Devolved Ward Budget and expenditure is published on the Council's website as referenced in the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy.
- 6.2 There are no direct procurement implications in this report.

**7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from recommendations within this report.

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct staffing implications other than the recruitment and deployment of Neighbourhoods staff as per the Neighbourhood Working Model.

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

- 9.1 The outcomes within the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy support the delivery of the Council Plan themes 'Every Child Able to Fulfil Their Potential' and 'People Are Safe, Healthy and Live Well'.
- 9.2 The Neighbourhood Working Model includes the need to identify ward priorities and agree action to address these through ward plans. The most recent ward priorities were published in July 2022 and illustrate where ward members are targeting resources towards Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults. This includes new or additional activities, improved facilities or improved access to services. A number Wards have priorities which will try to mitigate against the 'Cost of Living' crisis and continue to assist communities with Covid recovery.

## **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 strengths, 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 priorities and ward budget statements published on the website illustrate how Ward Members have targeted activity and resources toward communities with protected characteristics.
- 10.3 An initial Equality Screening Assessment is attached as Appendix 2. A Full Equality Analysis will be completed by April 2023. It will be written alongside and informed by the Delivery Plan, which will be developed in consultation with local communities, including those with protected characteristics. It is recommended that the Full Equality Analysis is presented to the Improving Places Scrutiny Commission in Spring 2023, alongside the completed Delivery Plan.

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

- 11.1 A number of ward priorities and plans have specific references to issues such as active travel, air quality and climate change that would positively contribute to tackling this agenda within these wards. The development of projects and awareness raising through e-bulletins and other engagement methods will encourage resident participation in this agenda.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1. Joint working with partners (from the public, voluntary and private sector) and Parish Councils is essential to the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and the Council's Neighbourhood Working Model.
- 12.2 The ward priorities and plans are informed by the experience and intelligence from these partners, which encourages the establishment of shared priorities and goals.
- 12.3 A range of neighbourhood-based partnerships and networks are in place to tackle the priorities within the ward plans. This includes Community Action Partnerships (CAPs) which operate in all 25 Wards and provide a vehicle to tackle community safety related issues.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 Risks and the associated mitigations relating to the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy are captured and tracked in the Assistant Chief Executive Directorate Risk Register. These include –
  - Failure to enhance community cohesion throughout the Borough



- Lack of development or support for Elected Members preventing them maximising their role as community leaders
- Capacity of Council services and partners to respond to local priorities and issues
- Parish Councils not actively involved in neighbourhood working

**14. Accountable Officers**

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Martin Hughes, Head of Neighbourhoods

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	07/11/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	01/11/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	01/11/22

Report Author: Martin Hughes, Head of Neighbourhoods

[martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk)

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

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# THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Rotherham Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018 – 2025

(Updated November 2022)



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

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# FOREWORD FROM DEPUTY LEADER/CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING

**I'm very proud to be writing the foreword for this updated version of Rotherham's Neighbourhood Strategy. This document identifies what we want to achieve to make all our neighbourhoods thriving and it goes on to say how we will do that.**

Central to our aspirations is to strengthen the role of local Councillors as community leaders who can work with their communities, their partners and service deliverers to bring about the changes that communities want to see.

People within our neighbourhoods are really important to us and this is why we'll be making them the core focus of what we do; we want to make sure our neighbourhoods are places people want to live.

We've come a long way in working on a neighbourhood basis but there's an equally long way to go which is why we're so keen to hear from communities what matters to them and how we can work together to tackle local issues, to continue to grow our neighbourhoods into welcoming, safe, thriving places.

Hopefully I'll see some of you out and about in your neighbourhood and I'll look forward to hearing your views.



**Councillor Sarah Allen**

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working  
Deputy Leader of Rotherham Council

# VISION

**The Rotherham Council Plan (2022/2025)** sets out our vision for every neighbourhood in Rotherham to be a thriving neighbourhood, where people are able to work together to achieve a good quality of life.

We want to work with local people to find solutions to local issues building on our heritage and assets. We will help create thriving neighbourhoods by ensuring communities are at the heart of everything we do to make people feel happy, safe and proud.

To do this, we will make it easier for people to get involved in the local community, work closely with our partners and local voluntary and community groups, enhance our town and village centres, green spaces and libraries, and effectively tackle community issues.



***This Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy provides a framework for how the Council will:***

- Deliver its neighbourhood working model
- Enhance the role of local Councillors as community leaders and maximise their skills, expertise and knowledge
- Ask and listen to communities by providing a range of opportunities to engage on the things that matter to them
- ‘Work with’ communities rather than ‘doing to’
- Build on the strengths and assets within our communities and our voluntary, community and faith sector
- Be an enabling organisation that empowers communities to do things for themselves
- Support people from different backgrounds to get on well together
- Build trust and pride
- Promote early intervention and prevention thus reducing reliance on public sector services and allowing resources to be used more effectively
- Improve services that are personalised and flexible
- Find local solutions to aid Covid recovery and work to reduce the impact of the Cost of Living crisis

# WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

## Neighbourhoods that are safe and welcoming with good community spirit where...

- People get involved in their neighbourhood and help each other out
- Local councillors provide leadership and support community action
- People from different backgrounds have the chance to interact
- Communities are strong and help people to feel safe
- Vulnerable people are protected



## Residents are happy, healthy and loving where they live with...

- Access to libraries, cultural activities, parks and green spaces
- Clean streets and public places
- High quality homes
- Improved town centre, local towns and villages
- People feeling less lonely and isolated
- Enjoyable things to do for people of all ages



## Residents using their strengths, knowledge and skills to contribute to the outcomes that matter to them leading to...

- Every child being able to fulfil their potential
- Everyone having the ability and means to get online
- More people working together to find solutions to local problems
- A strong community and voluntary sector
- Local assets being harnessed for the benefit of the community





# OUR APPROACH

The Council's Plan has four guiding principles that run through it, informing our way of working and helping us to achieve better outcomes for our communities.

- **Expanding opportunities for all:** target the most help at those who need it, so no one is left behind.
- **Recognising and building on our strengths to make positive change:** making the best use of local assets, including buildings, parks and public spaces, as well as harnessing the knowledge and skills of community groups and local residents.
- **Working with our communities:** ensuring residents are at the heart of everything we do. Involving local residents in the things that matter to them and making sure we design our services based on input from those who use them.
- **Focussing on prevention:** reduce the risk of problems arising in the first place, and when they do, we will intervene early to prevent them from worsening.





***These principles are embedded in the Council's Neighbourhood Working Model through the use of a 'place-based' approach:***

## A 'place-based' approach

Ward Councillors are community leaders and are acting as a driving force and catalyst for bringing people together to tackle locally identified priorities.

Taking a place-based approach councillors are working collaboratively with council services and other organisations that deliver services including the Police, Parish Councils, voluntary community and faith sector organisations, residents and other stakeholders to tackle local priorities that are identified in 'Ward Plans' that are produced annually.

Ward Councillors are supported by a dedicated Neighbourhoods Team, whose role it is to facilitate community involvement and co-ordinate local networks and partnerships tackling those local priorities.

Council services such as Housing, Streetscene, Grounds Maintenance and Enforcement have been reorganised on a locality basis, working closely with multi-agency partners such as local policing teams.

***This Place Based approach will allow us, amongst other things, to:***

- Work alongside our partners to ensure Rotherham is a safe, inclusive and welcoming place for local people, including responding effectively to community safety issues such as anti-social behaviour and hate crime
- Deliver improvements to the town centre and local towns and villages
- Invest in and develop library services as neighbourhood hubs, promoting access to books, computers and community events
- Bring our communities together through a range of enjoyable activities, cultural and social events, which inspire hope and pride in Rotherham
- Further expand and promote a range of volunteering opportunities



## A 'strengths-based' approach

Rotherham Council takes a strengths-based approach when working in our neighbourhoods. This recognises and builds on the skills, resources, knowledge, experience and heritage within our communities rather than focusing on the deficits.

This approach empowers Councillors and residents to work together, and with partners, to find creative solutions to the local issues that matter most to them and help create vibrant communities in which people feel happy, safe and proud.



### *Therefore, Rotherham Council will:*

- Place communities are at the heart of everything we do
- Always ask and listen to ensure we are addressing the things that matter to residents
- Be innovative in how we involve residents so that it maximises their skills and knowledge
- Problem solve collaboratively with communities
- 'Working with' our communities and not 'doing to' them
- Identify and support the motivation to act within communities
- Nurture relationships within neighbourhoods
- Build the capacity and resilience of the community and local community organisations



# ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and our Neighbourhood Working model supports councillors to be true community leaders within their wards and neighbourhoods.



**Orchestrator:**  
bringing people together,  
mediating and helping to broker relationships



**Steward of place:**  
ensuring local resources are targeted appropriately in line with their ward priorities and plan, including the investment of their devolved ward budgets



**Advocate:**  
acting on behalf of all residents



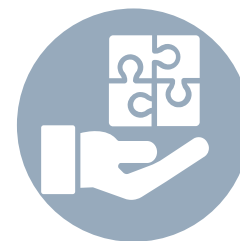
**Entrepreneur:**  
problem solving by working with the community and partners to find solutions to local issues



**Buffer:**  
exploring solutions to reduce the impact of unforeseen issues, such as the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Cost of Living Crisis, particularly for those who are most vulnerable



**Catalyst:**  
empowering residents and community organisations to achieve their ambitions



**Sensemaker:**  
explaining local issues, the role of services and any decisions that have been taken which impact on the neighbourhood

*Adapted from 'The 21st Century Councillor', University of Birmingham*



## Councillors devolved ward budgets

Ward Councillors have access to several different budgets which they can use to fund local projects, activities and additional services that can help tackle their ward priorities. These include:

- **Community Leadership Fund:** a small individual budget allocated to each Councillor to fund local community organisations or projects, provide additional activities or put on events
- **Ward Capital Budget:** allocated to each ward and used to purchase physical assets or equipment
- **Ward Housing Hub Budget:** allocated to each ward for environmental improvements that directly benefits council tenants
- **Community Infrastructure Levy:** money generated from new developments that is allocated to wards that do not have a Parish Council. It is primarily used to reduce the demands a development could place on the neighbourhood



# MEASURING SUCCESS

The Council Plan sets out the key actions required to help us achieve the outcomes and commitments in this Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy:

- **Council Plan theme Every neighbourhood thriving**  
Annual **ward reports** will be presented to the Council by Ward councillors which will include a wide range of case studies
- **Ward budget statements** will be published annually to illustrate how Councillors have invested in their neighbourhoods to tackle their ward priorities
- Each year, Rotherham Council directorates will produce service plans which will demonstrate how they contribute to tackling the priorities within the Ward Plans





# GET INVOLVED AND FIND OUT MORE

Our vision for every neighbourhood to be a thriving neighbourhood cannot be achieved without the involvement of local people. That's why this strategy sets out how we will continue to place communities to be at the heart of everything we do.

There are lots of different ways you can get involved with your local communities. You can provide views on our services via consultations, or work with local Councillors to help shape their ward plans and priorities, or volunteer with a local community group and take local action. You can keep up to date with the latest news and views from your neighbourhood by signing up for [your Neighbourhood's monthly e-bulletin](#).

For further information about this strategy, your local councillors and what is happening in your neighbourhood please visit [your ward page on the Council's website](#).



## PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

### 1. Title

**Title:** Refresh of Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy – 2018-2025

**Directorate:** ACEX

**Service area:** Neighbourhoods

**Lead person:** Martin Hughes

**Contact:**  
[martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk) OR  
 07766442269

Is this a:

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

**If other, please specify**

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

The Council's Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2018. Following the publication of the new Council Plan (2022-25) it is now opportune to refresh the Strategy, taking into account the ambitions in the Council Plan and acknowledge that our neighbourhood working model is well embedded and evolving.

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		X
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

If you have answered **no** to **all** the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.



#### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

##### How have you considered equality and diversity?

The Service Planning process provided the opportunity for the Neighbourhoods Team to consider equality and diversity and the new EDI Strategy in the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and the neighbourhood working model.

A Full Equality Analysis will be completed by April 2023. It will be written alongside and informed by the Delivery Plan, which will be developed in consultation with local communities, including those with protected characteristics. It is recommended that the Full Equality Analysis is presented to Improving Places Scrutiny Commission in Spring 2023, alongside the completed Delivery Plan.

##### Key findings

Whilst there were some processes in place to involve and engage with communities with protected characteristics (through ward planning, specific issue-based conversations and support local community organisations) it was neither **consistent, recorded or measured**. The actions listed below were included in the Neighbourhoods Service Plan and approved by the Assistant Chief Exec.

**Actions** (all have been included in Neighbourhoods Service Plan 2022/23)

##### Development of Ward Priorities and Plans –

- Development of new ward profiles using new census and other available data will help identify local demographics and inform future ward priorities
- Support organisations that work with communities with protected characteristics to get involved in the identification of local priorities and the delivery of any agreed action
- Ward Communication and Engagement Plans will be developed in line with ward priorities. This will include a specific equalities section which will capture how we plan to engage with communities with protected characteristics

##### Community groups / events

- Continue to provide consistent support for a range of groups/organisations that work with and support groups with protected characteristics to achieve their aims and objectives, e.g. facilities for youth people, activities and trips for older people, engagement events for BAME communities
- Organise and support community events that, amongst other things, aim to bring

communities of place together to build good community relations

#### Targeted engagement and conversations –

- Continue working with VCS to ensure there are ongoing mechanisms for communities with protected characteristics to have conversations with councillors and service providers to inform the delivery of accessible and responsive services that meet diverse needs.
- Support conversations on specific issues, programmes, projects, etc. e.g. engagement with BAME residents and young people in partnership with VCS on COVID19 recovery

#### Measuring Performance

- Service performance indicators include capturing data linked to equalities. This will identify any gaps and allow the service to take corrective action.
- The introduction of an equality analysis of the ward planning, ward budget allocation and communication / engagement processes will help identify areas of good practice, gaps and what can be improved. This equality analysis will take place in a team setting to provide opportunities to share and learn from each other and embed our approach.
- Where possible, ward budget spending will indicate investment into groups, activities and services that target different communities and protected characteristic groups

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2023
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Martin Hughes Head of Neighbourhoods

### 5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Jo Brown	Assistant Chief Exec	

### 6. Publishing

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

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

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
<b>Report title and date</b>	Refresh of Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025)  21 <sup>st</sup> November 2022
<b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>	Scheduled Report date – 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2022  Scheduled date for publication – 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
<b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2022

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Will the decision/proposal impact...	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across Rotherham as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	No impact on emissions				
Emissions from transport?	Reduces emissions	None	A number of ward priorities and plans have specific references to active travel projects that would positively contribute to reduce emissions from transport	N/A	None
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	No impact on emissions				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	No impact on emissions				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	No impact on emissions				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Reduces emissions	None	A number of ward priorities and plans have specific references to tree planting and improving air quality projects that would assist with carbon capture.	N/A	None

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

None

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

A number of ward priorities and plans have specific references to issues such as active travel, tree planting, air quality and climate change that would positively contribute to tackling this agenda within these wards. The development of projects and awareness raising through e-bulletins and other engagement methods will encourage resident participation in this agenda.

**Supporting information:**

Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Martin Hughes Head of Neighbourhoods Assistant Chief Execs
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	None
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	N/A
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	