

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

- Date and Time :-** Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 1.30 p.m.
- Venue:-** Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.
- Membership:-** Councillors Wyatt (Chair), Tinsley (Vice-Chair), Aveyard, Bennett-Sylvester, Browne, C Carter, Castledine-Dack, T Collingham, Cowen, Ellis, Havard, Hunter, Jones, Khan, McNeely, Monk, Reynolds, Taylor.
- Co-opted Members:-** Mrs. K. Bacon, Mrs. M. Jacques.

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

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

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 April 2022 (Pages 3 - 8)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 April 2022 as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. Questions from members of the public and the press

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

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

6. Draft Enviro-Crime Plan Objectives (Pages 9 - 24)

To consider an outline Enviro-Crime Plan and to provide feedback on each of three main objectives and associated activities.

7. Initial Work Programme 2022/23 (Pages 25 - 32)

8.

To consider and discuss an outline work programme for municipal year 2022/23 and invite suggestions of proposed items for scrutiny.

8. Scrutiny Review Recommendations - Markets: Engagement and Recovery (Pages 33 - 40)

To consider and endorse findings and recommendations from the recent spotlight review on markets recovery and engagement and associated site visit to the Rotherham Town Centre markets complex.

9. IPSC Representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel

To receive nominations for a representative member of IPSC to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel for municipal year 2022/23.

10. Urgent Business

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

11. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on 19 July 2022, commencing at 1.30 pm in Rotherham Town Hall.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 19 April 2022

Present were Councillors Wyatt (Chair), Atkin, Bennett-Sylvester, C Carter, Cowen, Ellis, Havard, Hughes, Jones, Khan, McNeely, Sansome, Taylor and Tinsley.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burnett and Hunter.

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

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

66. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH 2022

Resolved:-

1. That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 March 2022 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

68. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

69. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

70. CCTV UPDATE

Consideration was given to an update report in respect of use of CCTV assets tactically throughout the Borough. The presentation included an overview of CCTV projects as well as case studies of CCTV results, particularly in respect of enforcement procedures around fly-tipping. The report provided an overview of the local position in relation to CCTV capabilities within Rotherham from existing assets, with a focus on upgrades utilising existing assets the Council already owns.

In discussion, Members requested more information around the procedure if perpetrators do not pay. The response from officers noted that the Courts chase the payment, and the Council monitors and ensures payment of fixed penalty notices.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - 19/04/22

Members requested information in respect of mean time to repair CCTV units. The response noted that average downtime was 4 weeks, with additional time to install. In future, the units will be interchangeable, so that one can be taken down and another put up in the same visit.

An example was provided by Members to illustrate a question around control and inventory of CCTV assets. The response from officers described an interactive map showing where assets are. The Home Office funding had resulted in acquisition of assets which become the Council's own, which means that, in the short term, there was uneven distribution of assets, which were to become more evenly distributed in future.

Members also expressed interest in whether the CCTV cameras assist the police around speeding. The response noted that occasionally, enforcement around other types of infractions including parking enforcement and other nuisances have been assisted by CCTV technology, with potential for wider use as a deterrent.

The desire for Members to be informed of the location of CCTV assets in the wards was noted. Members were invited to get in touch with the service if they would like a demonstration or greater understanding of asset placement within wards.

Members also expressed interest in the best way to feed back information around perceptions of safety for women in Clifton Park. The response cited the new Community Safety Strategy, with a lead officer for each of several designated areas of focus. The service worked closely with the teams utilising the Towns and Villages Fund along with the Council's own investment monies.

Members requested more information around the approach to planned maintenance. Officers conveyed that the service is looking into a longer-term maintenance contract, as currently, redeployable CCTV units are maintained on an ad hoc basis.

Some communities may underreport crime and anti-social behaviour; Members wished to know how the service takes this into account. The response from officers noted this is an area the service are keenly aware of, proactively utilising information and intelligence submissions that come into the service via a variety of channels. Officers emphasised the importance of residents to have the trust and confidence in the service to report issues.

More clarification was requested around the data collection and timescales to be able to show the effectiveness of CCTV. The response from Members noted the ambitious timescale, with just over a year until the first phase of this contract is due to be completed.

Further assurances were requested around timely repairs. The response illustrated that, without live viewing capability, it is only upon officers'

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION- 19/04/22

visiting a camera unit that it becomes noticeable that it requires repair. With live viewing, this will improve. This investment will be used to see a longer-term relationship with maintenance outcomes. If wards have purchased their own cameras, it could be useful to residents to understand the moneys required to support ongoing repair and maintenance, as the service works with ward members to resolve these needs on a ward by ward basis.

Members expressed interest in the potential benefits of having access to real-time footage of hotspots rather than reviewing. The response from officer noted that the South Yorkshire Police are responsible for staffing that area of the CCTV infrastructure. Those operators have plans to make use of a variety of approaches tailored for the specific area, such as virtual trip wires, such as on scrub land or waste land, drawing a virtual line around an area, that if crossed within a set time parameter beams live feed into an incident control room. These assets, however, are not redeployable.

Data protection before crime prosecution, seemed to Members an obstruction to the police which officers were invited to comment upon. The response noted that the Crime Disorder Reduction Act makes it clear that, where there is a clear use to deter crime, it is warranted to release certain information. The service works with information governance around this.

Members requested clarification in respect of environmental crime, if businesses and community buildings or private residents collect private CCTV footage, whether that information becomes usable. The response described how doorbell cams and dash cams can be used wherever possible; although, there is a balance in terms of how much time and resource can be used on small infractions or small fly tips. These often have to be backed up by a statement from the camera owner, and sometimes these images do not meet the threshold for quality.

Members also requested information around whether the cameras were insured. Officers noted that the Council only insures assets that are of a great enough value that it justifies the expense to insure. It was noted that people can now report through South Yorkshire Police to report crimes, for those who do not wish to call the 101 phone line.

Resolved:-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That valuable knowledge pertaining to the use of CCTV assets be made available to CAP meetings throughout the Borough.
3. That the next update be submitted in 12 months or at an appropriate time, to include relevant timelines, targets, measurements of effectiveness, and plans and budgets for ongoing maintenance.

4. That Members interested in a demonstration and briefing in respect of CCTV assets in their Wards reach out to the service leads to make arrangements.

71. TREE SERVICE PROGRESS UPDATE

Consideration was given to an update in respect of the progress by the Tree Planting Programme, which is enhancing and extending existing woodland as well as increasing the number of urban trees. This reduces the carbon footprint and encourages biodiversity in wooded areas. The report noted the review after 1 year of the Tree Planting Protocol was trying to find a pragmatic way to approach tree planting without encroaching on residents' quality of life. The Tree Service receives 1000 requests per year.

The tree planting programme is a 2-year program. 22,000 trees were planted in the first year of the programme. The service is currently reviewing the consultation process and ensuring that Members and residents have an opportunity to feed into tree planting plans in future. Details were provided around funding and grants that were availed and utilised for this programme.

In discussion, Members noted the frequency of questions to Members around trees. Clarification was requested around maintenance assistance offered to schools and community groups. The response from officers and the Cabinet Member noted that any tree that is owned by the Council and is growing on Council land is maintained by the service via a ring-fenced fund for maintenance of trees.

Members requested further information around responsiveness of the team to service requests. The response from officers noted that the small team receives a large number of inquiries and requests. Requests can be picked up through casework as well as at the tree service email inbox.

Members requested more information around whether the service avails the moneys available and cooperative schemes that exist. The response from Members described the funding and schemes that are availed by the service in respect of tree planting.

Members expressed interest in the prioritisation of fruit trees for planting. The tree engagement officer had supervised the planting of a community orchard, and expansion of fruit tree planting was encouraged.

Members reported responsiveness of the team to requests, and indicated areas for expansion of consultation with residents related to tree planting and maintenance. The response from the Cabinet Member illustrated that,

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION- 19/04/22

based on time pressures associated with changing seasons and working with communities had meant that this year, the service had not been able to do as much consultation as they would have liked. One of the things that working with community groups has allowed is the integral involvement of the school children who will see these trees grow up alongside themselves. The service has further consulted experts and have taken advice around which trees are best to plant now based on the temperatures expected in future. This approach helps keep trees healthy and safe in the long term.

Members requested clarification around timescales for projected work, for example, working with private landlords. The response noted that near the end of the year, the service expected to have completed the first phases of this work. The new supplementary planning document included green spaces, ensuring that developers know the requirements to plan trees within their new developments. Larger developments have specific schemes, down to the circumference and types of trees required. The changes over 10 or 15 years occur when saplings have successfully grown into mature trees.

Members expressed interest in learning more about how planning for the tree programme going forward will take into account inequalities. The Cabinet Member and officers noted the suggestion to expand urban tree planting in the areas of greatest deprivation wherever possible. Officers noted that there is a section in the Tree Management Protocol that illustrates various things that residents can do themselves with a toolkit coming on board in the next year. Further note was made of the intersections between the tree programme and objectives associated with Children's Capital of Culture.

Resolved:-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the value of Member and resident consultation and feedback be reflected in the review and next iteration of the Tree Management Strategy.
3. That the maintenance schedule of the Tree Service be further publicised.
4. That equalities be considered in the prioritisation of tree planting in deprived areas of the borough.
5. That opportunities for planting fruit trees be prioritised for expansion.

72. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair summarised updates to the Work Programme and forward plan of work including an upcoming review on selective licensing, coopting members who have selective licensing areas in their wards. An initial work programme will be brought to the 7 June meeting of Places. A wider audience will be included in the ASB review.

73. URGENT BUSINESS

Consideration was given to recent reports of the flooded state of graves in the East Herringthorpe Cemetery. The Chair noted that the Cabinet Member had been made aware of the reports and of Members' desire that Dignity, Ltd. and the service be asked to investigate and report back any actions taken.

In discussion, Members further affirmed the need to rectify the situation promptly and described the distress the condition of graves had caused to members of the community and their families.

Resolved:-

1. That the concerns of Members be noted and any actions taken reported back.

74. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

1. That the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on 7 June 2022, commencing at 1.30 pm in Rotherham Town Hall.

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 07 June 2022

Report Title

Draft Enviro-Crime Plan Objectives

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

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Sam Barstow, Acting Assistant Director Community Safety and Street Scene
Sam.barstow@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report and presentation seeks to engage and consult members of the Commission on the draft objectives which will underpin the Council's approach to tackling environmental crime.

Recommendations

Members of the Commission are asked to provide feedback on each of the following objective areas and associated activities:

1. Prevent
2. Engage and Educate
3. Enforce

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Presentation on Draft Objective Areas

Background Papers

[Agenda for Improving Places Select Commission on Tuesday 1 February 2022, 1.30 p.m. - Rotherham Council](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

Name of Committee – [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Draft Enviro-Crime Plan Objectives

1. Background

- 1.1 In February 2022 a report was delivered to the Improving Places Select Commission on the issue of fly tipping across the Borough and the Council's response. During that meeting, officers and members discussed the development of a shared approach to tackling environmental crime and members expressed a desire to be further consulted on the development of the approach.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The attached presentation (appendix 1) outlines the scope of the plan alongside three draft objective areas for further comment or consideration.
- 2.2 The objective areas are as follows:
- Prevent
 - Engage and Educate
 - Enforce

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The plan and its objectives are at the very early stages of development and engagement and discussion with the Commission at this early stage is the proposed approach. Alternative options or considerations are welcomed in order to inform the final product. The proposed objective areas have been selected in order to be concise and focussed on the key issues however they will be underpinned by a range of activities which are again detailed in the attached appendix.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Following initial consultation with elected members on the Improving Places Select Commission, officers will hold workshops across relevant services to finalise the activity which will underpin the objective areas. The completed plan will be subject to consultation with relevant partners and stakeholders.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Following consultation with the Commission, a workshop will be held with relevant services to finalise the plan and attach dates to specific actions alongside a performance framework. The final plan will be shared with members of the Commission by the end of August, commencing from September. The plan will be approved by officers and implementation will be monitored via a delivery Board, chaired by the Assistant Director.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 Activity described within the plan will be delivered through coordination of existing resources, including recent investment in areas such as Street Scene services.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 A range of offences are described within the Plan. Developing and coordinating the Council's approach will support effective enforcement action by ensuring high quality evidence is gathered and presented alongside a robust approach to prevent the issues.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 Delivery of the strategy will have no additional HR implications as activity will be delivered by existing resources.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 Enforcement decisions will be taken in line with the Council General Enforcement Policy, which considers the implications for children and vulnerable adults. The plan itself will not present any change in this area.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific issues arising from the development of the plan and objective areas however, when considering communications, these must be accessible to all, and this will be captured within the final detailed plan under engage and educate.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 Improving the management of waste will have a positive impact on climate change through improved management of resources.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 As noted within the strategy, partnership support will assist in tackling enviro-crime and the Council will work with partners to explore how they can contribute further to reducing the associated issues.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The delivery of the objective areas will likely face varying pressures and risks. In order to mitigate these, an enviro-crime board, made up of senior officers, will oversee implementation of the plan and objectives.

Accountable Officer(s)

Sam Barstow, Acting Assistant Director

Emma Ellis, Acting Head of Service

Barry Connolly, Head of Service

Lewis Coates, Service Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive		Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment	18/05/22
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment - Councillor Beck	18/05/22

Report Author: Sam Barstow, Acting Assistant Director Community Safety and Street Scene. Sam.barstow@rotherham.gov.uk

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Enviro-Crime Plan

Setting the Scene

- The following strategic aims and objectives in The Council Plan and the Year Ahead Plan are relevant to this plan
 - A cleaner, greener local environment
 - Every neighbourhood thriving
- Enviro-crimes (for the purpose of this plan) include the following:
 - Fly Tipping (and related offences)
 - Littering
 - Accumulations of waste
 - Dog fouling
 - Graffiti and Fly Posting
- Three objectives of the plan:
 - Prevention
 - Engage and Educate
 - Enforce



Objective 1: Prevention

This objective seeks to prevent enviro-crime from occurring in the first place through:

- Designing out crime in hot spot areas
- Deploying prevention tools such as signage and CCTV
- Working with private landowners to secure their land or property
- Work with local businesses to manage waste effectively
- Ensure appropriate levels of bins in hot spot locations



Questions to consider:

- What works in terms of prevention?
- What doesn't work?
- Is this an important area of focus?
- How can elected members be better engaged in prevention?



Objective 2: Engage and Educate

This objective seeks to educate people about the impact of enviro-crime and how to dispose of waste correctly through:

- An educational package focussed on the impacts of waste crime or other forms of environmental offences (targeted at young people)
- An education package focussed on effective management of waste and waste offences (targeted at adults)
- Effective communications to promote the environment
- Effective communications to promote enforcement activity to deter offences, including regular campaigns under #getridreyt
- Promote volunteering opportunities and the work of volunteers



Questions to consider:

- What works in terms of engagement and education?
- How do we reach adults and what messages are effective?
- Is this an important area of focus?
- How can elected members be better engaged in engaging and educating communities?



Objective 3: Enforce

This objective seeks to ensure an effective enforcement response through:

- Deployment of CCTV capability to identify offences
- Use of partnerships to increase capability such as working closely with neighbourhood policing teams
- Effective actions at all stages of the waste life-cycle
- Increase enforcement outputs such as producers, fines and prosecutions
- Effective ward based working to problem-solve locations
- Ensure cleansing and enforcement services are closely aligned



Questions to consider:

- What works in terms of enforcement locally?
- How do you think partners can help tackle enviro-crime?
- Is this an important area of focus?
- How can elected member support enforcement activity?



Any quick fixes we can do now?

Open discussion and questions?



Next Steps

- Officer workshop to finalise detailed plan
- Plan agreed alongside performance metrics (July)
- Plan commencement in August
- Quarterly Meeting of the Enviro-Crime Board (chaired by AD)



Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 07 June 2022

Report Title

Initial Work Programme

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
01709 254532 or katherine.harclerode@rotherham.gov.uk**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

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

Recommendations

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

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Work Programme – Improving Places Select Commission 2022/23

Background Papers

Minutes of Improving Places Select Commission meetings 2021/22

Minutes of Improving Lives Select Commission meetings 2021/22

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meetings 2021/22

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

IPSC – Initial Work Programme 2022/23

1. Background

- 1.1 The remit of the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) is to undertake scrutiny activity in respect of all matters pertaining to the borough of Rotherham as a place. In broad terms, this remit relates to business and economic development, employment, emergency planning, environment, housing, climate change, leisure, culture and tourism, transport and highways, as well as regulatory services such as trading standards and environmental health. The breadth of functions and services that fall within the Commission's remit is significant.
- 1.2 The way in which the Commission discharges its scrutiny activity is a matter for itself, having regard to the provisions of the Constitution and any direction from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The IPSC has chosen to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work.
- 1.3 The IPSC has eight scheduled meetings over the course of 2022/23, representing a maximum of 20 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 2.5 hours per meeting. Members therefore must be selective in their choice of items for the work programme. The following key principles of effective scrutiny are considered in determining the work programme:
 - Selection – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve.
 - Value-added – Items had to have the potential to 'add value' to the work of the council and its partners.
 - Ambition – the Programme does not shy away from scrutinising issues that are of greatest concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental wellbeing of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.
 - Flexibility – The Work Programme maintains a degree of flexibility as required to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration during the year and to accommodate any further work that falls within the remit of this Commission.
 - Timing – The Programme has been designed to ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, its findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. The Work Programme also helps safeguard against duplication of work undertaken elsewhere.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Members are required to review their work programme at each meeting during the 2022/23 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of the borough.
- 2.2 An initial draft of a work programme for Improving Places Select Commission is appended to this report.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

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

4. Consultation on proposal

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

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The decision to develop a work programme is a matter reserved to the Commission and will be effective immediately after consideration of this report.

5.2 The Statutory Scrutiny Officer (Head of Democratic Services) is accountable for the implementation of any decision in respect of the Commission's work programme. The Governance Advisor supporting the Commission is responsible on a day-to-day basis for the Commission's work programme. Members are recommended to delegate authority to the Governance Advisor to make amendments to the programme between meetings.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

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

7. Legal Advice and Implications

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

7.2 The authority of the Select Commission to determine its work programme is detailed within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Responsibility for Functions parts of the Constitution. The proposal to review the work programme is consistent with those provisions.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

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

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

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

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

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

12. Implications for Partners

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

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There are no risks directly arising from this report.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Report Author: Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor

01709 254532 or katherine.harclerode@rotherham.gov.uk

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Meeting Date	Items for Scrutiny
7 June 2022 (Reports 25 May)	Draft Enviro-Crime Plan
	Initial Work Programme
	Scrutiny Review Recommendations - Markets Engagement and Recovery
	IPSC Representative to Health, Welfare, and Safety Board
June/July 2022 Markets Review (Cont.)	Markets Regulations Review
19 July (Reports 8 July)	Tenant Scrutiny Review - Housing Repairs and Maintenance
	Aids and Adaptations Update
	Revised Work Programme
Autumn 2022 Review	Selective Licensing - Landlords
20 September 2022 (Reports 9 September)	Neighbourhood Working Annual Report
	Housing Energy Efficiency Update
	Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Update
	Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets Regulations
	Work Programme
25 October 2022 (Reports 14 October)	Bereavement Services Annual Report
	Flood Alleviation Update
	Work Programme
13 December 2022 (Reports 2 December)	Town Centre Update
	Allotments Update
	Scrutiny Review Recommendations: Selective Licensing - Landlords
	Work Programme
Winter 2023 Spotlight	Rent Arrears
07 February 2023	Environment Bill 2021 - Update
	Fly Tipping
	Work Programme
Room for Spring Review Item	Review TBC

21 March 2023	Item TBC
	Item TBC
	Work Programme
09 May 2023	Tree Programme Update
	Item TBC
	Recommendations from Scrutiny Review – TBC
	Work Programme
Potential Forward Plan Items	Planning White Paper
	CCTV - Update
	Estate Caretaking
	Active Travel Update
	Ward Housing Hubs
	Capital Works Programme 2022 – Housing & Housing Revenue Account 22/23
	Housing Strategy and Development
	Markets: Engagement and Recovery - Update

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 7 June 2022

Report Title

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report summarises findings and recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission spotlight review held on 18 March 2022, which examined the recovery and regeneration of the markets in Rotherham Town Centre. Members undertook a site visit to tour the markets complex and view the areas for redevelopment before consulting RiDo officers and markets industry experts in developing their recommendations. Members received a presentation illustrating the current situation facing the Rotherham Town Centre Markets following on from the pandemic. The presentation outlined plans for redevelopment of the markets complex and revitalisation of the markets microeconomy by attracting a new demographic to experience the markets. Members undertaking the review were Cllr Atkin, Cllr Bennett-Sylvester, Cllr Jones, and Cllr Wyatt (Chair).

Recommendations

1. That a review of the Council's Rules and Regulations in respect of Markets be added to the IPSC work programme.
2. That the following recommendations from the review be endorsed for submission to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board:

- a) That face-to-face consultations and clear communication be prioritised in all interactions with vendors and traders.
- b) That the service avail case studies and resources available in the libraries of NABMA and NMTF to inform the strategic refresh of Rotherham markets.
- c) That the service re-evaluate the support offer for new vendors, in consultation with the NABMA and NMTF, with a view to encouraging more new vendors to continue trading beyond the six-month introductory period.
- d) In view of relevant expert advice in respect of sustaining a market during redevelopment works, that retaining traders through the redevelopment phase be considered top priority.
- e) That any re-design of markets spaces duly consider usability and aesthetics, availing market research to optimise spaces for inclusiveness and accessibility, and to make the offer especially attractive to students and young people.
- f) That consideration be given to how the redesign and operation of the market may best cater to the needs and interests of younger generations by strengthening links with RNN student populations and extending opportunities to new entrepreneurs through the Young Traders Scheme.
- g) Recognising that the Town Centre markets complex represents a unique and distinct microeconomy with its own accompanying needs and character, that consideration be given to the ongoing management resource required to sustain the markets economy successfully over the long term.
- h) That consideration be given to design and development choices that would help the markets to incorporate cashless, up-to-date approaches to commerce that their potential customers expect.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery

1. Background

- 1.1 Members sought to undertake a review of Markets in view of growing concern about the recovery and financial sustainability of the Rotherham Town Centre Markets following the pandemic, which saw a reduction in footfall in the Town Centre that, at the time of reporting, has remained below pre-pandemic levels. Members aimed through this review to inform themselves of the current needs and challenges facing the Markets Service in order to recommend short-term and longer-term actions in respect of revitalising the markets area and making the markets spaces more visible and inviting to traders and customers alike. The Members undertaking the review noted personal experience as stakeholders in markets or retail enterprise which drives their desire to strengthen the markets offer in Rotherham Town Centre.
- 1.2 The previous overview of markets in Rotherham took place when the building opened in 1971, when the current regulations became active. These guidelines have served well over the decades, but it was agreed that a review of the recommendations should be added to the work programme so that Members can help feed into their updating to make them fit for purpose for the time at hand. When the regulations were put in place, a market stall had a very different role than in the present day. It was noted as a definition of terms that, according to Council policy, 5 traders or less is not considered a market, and no licence is needed from the Council. The law begins to control the legal status of a market that has 5 vendors or more. In recent years, some other markets in the area have witnessed dwindling stall numbers, and privatisation has in some profound cases resulted in further decline. Members therefore acknowledged the importance of rallying behind the Market Service in taking the Town Centre Markets in a direction that reflects the changing needs of consumers and maximises the future role Rotherham's markets will play in the community.
- 1.3 Methods utilised in this review included a site visit in which Members, officers and market industry experts toured the Town Centre Markets areas, followed by an in-person presentation and Q&A session with officers and with expert advisors from National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and National Market Traders Federation (NMTF).
- 1.4 The Aims of this review were to receive information in respect of the following topics pertaining to the Rotherham Town Centre Markets:
- Introducing and contextualising the markets
 - Describing of the current situation facing the markets
 - Summarising budget and financial arrangements in respect of markets
 - Navigating pandemic-related challenges
 - Redeveloping the markets
 - Engaging with young people

- Planning for future sustainability

2. Key Issues

Members findings and recommendations centred around four areas: Re-evaluating the introductory offer, designing responsively for economic sustainability amid present-day budgetary challenges,

2.1 Re-evaluating the introductory offer

Currently, the introductory offer includes a reduced rate and the freedom to discontinue with a week's notice. New traders are currently referred to the RiDO business start-up advisers, who provide them with support. For six months, a vendor pays £50 per week, which is roughly half the normal rate. This flexible trial period is intended to help businesses to test their business model without a long-term commitment, yet many new vendors leave at the end of the six months, indicating a need to re-evaluate the support offer for new traders.

2.2 The service has considered the possibility that the rates after the introductory period is over becomes a hurdle that many new vendors are not able to get past, but the rents at the Town Centre Market are lower than anywhere else in South Yorkshire and have been frozen since 2013. More information is needed around why traders leave after six months, and what it would take for them to stay on and continue trading.

2.3 A new approach to budgeting for sustainability

The distinction was made that the markets are maintained by two budgets: a budget for infrastructure, which sits with Asset Management, and a budget for operations, which generates between £100 and 160k per year. Issues with the infrastructure of the markets complex have required ongoing repairs. Due to the difficult trading conditions, traders have been offered a 10% discount on rents since 2017. Routine maintenance of infrastructure is no longer sufficient to keep up with the needs of the building, which include roofing and drainage issues. Whilst not a complete demolition and rebuild, upgrading and resolving issues in the fabric of the building will be necessary to sustain the markets into the future.

2.4 The financial structure of the markets industry has changed dramatically since the Council's approach to markets was put in place. Five decades ago, markets used to generate surpluses. A trader who had a stall in a market could rely on a significant income from trading. Surpluses have since disappeared, replaced by a need to subsidise markets for them to survive. The future will require new ways of managing, new financial arrangements, and innovative ways to reorganise the financial burden. Over 75% of members of NABMA expressed in a recent survey that they regard the future of the market industry with apprehension. Contributing to this view are macroeconomic trends that mean consumers have less disposable income, prompting them to cut down on nonessentials. To make matters worse, footfall remains lower than pre-pandemic. Markets across the country are feeling this funding gap, but the service is optimistic that redevelopment can help close that gap by attracting new clientele.

2.5 Navigating redevelopment by nurturing relationships

With more intensive works needed to address infrastructure issues, the service is now considering how best to keep traders safely trading during the future development phase, especially whilst the roof undergoes repairs. Traders are likely to be offered a rent reduction during the works to compensate for expected reduction in footfall. When options for temporary relocation are discussed, traders express a preference to stay in place during the works if possible. However, multiple case studies have demonstrated significant detriment to markets where traders tried to stay in place during remodelling. Even if the service could find a developer willing to do the works with traders in place, having traders in the building during the work could affect how much refurbishment can be accomplished and the project would take longer. Members recognise the service seeks to honour the preference of traders amid these challenges, and they recommend that any proposal prioritise retention of traders during the redevelopment.

2.6 Nurturing this economy of good will by strengthening relationships with the community of traders throughout the transitions ahead has been acknowledged as an area the service is particularly seeking to develop. A further way to do this is by strengthening the role of a designated a trader liaison to promote open and clear communication with the traders. The liaison approach provides a conduit for reliable information to help minimise the development and proliferation of any potential rumours - which expert advisors identified as a significant risk that can have damaging effects on a trading community. Expert advisors provided further examples to illustrate how much better it is bringing traders along on a development journey than trying to reignite a market that has fizzled out. Therefore, it was recommended that the service consult examples of good practice and other insights which have been amassed by the professional organisations NABMA and NMTF and have kindly been made available to help guide next steps during this transition.

2.7 Designing for long term success

Redesigning the space to make it more usable and attractive will help generate interest and make the experience immersive, inviting, and attractive to shoppers. For example, current food options are scattered; therefore, in the redeveloped spaces, seating design and placement will need to anticipate how visitors will move through and utilise areas such as the new food court. Consideration will need to be given to how the market looks, sounds, and smells.

2.8 Members agree there should be a buzz about a market, and cultivating that buzz is essential. As the markets currently serve mainly an older demographic, the service hopes the redevelopment inspires a younger generation to explore a new experience. The service seeks to partner with RNN Group, which consists of Rotherham College, North Notts College and Dearne Valley College, to help cater to the needs and interests of over 3000 college students who frequent the Town Centre. Furthermore, the Young Traders Scheme for 16- to 30-year-olds is an area for expansion, as young

traders enjoy being around other young traders. Rotherham has had success in nurturing sparks of interest from young traders in the past, and service hopes expanding the Young Traders Scheme, perhaps in partnership with courses at the college, could help stir up young entrepreneurial spirit once again.

- 2.9 Delivery of planned Town Centre housing developments is an opportunity to increase footfall, and at 5-10 minutes' walk from the train, the convenient location could be further publicised. Currently, it is not obvious to passers-by that the market is there; therefore, redesign of entrances and store fronts becomes an important part of redevelopment. Interconnectivity in the Town Centre offer would mean visitors to Forge Island might easily go across to the market, enticed by not just retail but an immersive participatory experience. Delivering this kind of experience will be an ongoing task that requires dedicated resource and understanding.
- 2.10 Members have seen that, in addition to a functional and attractive space, a successful market also requires hard work and attention over the long term. Failure to give a market the right level of management jeopardises its longevity. For example, striking the right balance of trade diversity can stimulate competition and drive better value for customers. Whereas an entire market made up of 40 fruit and vegetable stalls would not ordinarily be advantageous, the exception is where a market has a renowned niche. People will come from miles around to attend the fish market in Doncaster, for example. The knock-on effects of each addition must be considered, however, because investment in quality drops if there is insufficient turnover of stock. The market should present an opportunity for people to experiment and try things – locally produced food, produce and crafts. Where appropriate, the offer should be widened to cater to customer and trader needs, as is being done in respect of electricity and Wi-Fi connectivity in the redesign of the space. These design choices help foster a more up-to-date way of conducting business that many potential customers expect.
- 2.11 Lessons about resilience can be taken from how the markets responded during the pandemic, when essential goods stalls were given the option to open. The markets never shut down completely, although at times 4-8 stalls traded during reduced hours from 8am to 2pm. A few traders temporarily adopted a click-and-collect model, but this was not effective for all but 2 or 3 traders and was largely discontinued. Across 2020-21 and 21-22, traders paid a total of just under one year's rent due to agreed rent reductions for the lockdown period. The Market and Finance services assisted traders to ensure businesses received grants they were entitled to, but business rates relief did not extend to markets operators. Retention of traders at the Rotherham Town Centre market during the pandemic was among the highest in South Yorkshire during a very difficult period for trading. Retaining traders remains top priority for the service during the redevelopment phase ahead.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The discussion included some of the possible outcomes if traders were to temporarily locate versus remain in place during redevelopment, with the

ultimate recommendation that the service ensure that any proposal must prioritise foremost the retention of traders through the transitional period. Recommendations were developed by Members and derived from discussion during the Q&A session with service leads.

4. Consultation on proposal

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

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

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

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

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

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

7. Legal Advice and Implications

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

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

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

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

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

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

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

12. Implications for Partners

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

13. Risks and Mitigation

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

14. Accountable Officers

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Report Author: Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor

katherine.harclerode@rotherham.gov.uk

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